

# Keene State College

## Family Guide to Advising

Prepared by Academic and Career Advising

### Introduction

We welcome you and your student to Keene State College! This guide is intended to serve as a resource to family members of students attending Keene State. And while it will not answer all the specific questions you may have about your student's situation, we hope to cover the most frequently asked questions and provide you with an understanding of our advising processes.

### Transitions

Your student is beginning college which becomes a transition for both parents and students. As a parent, you have seen your son or daughter every day; you know their teachers, their friends, where they are going and when they come home. You have seen their grades each marking period; you know their class schedule; you feel comfortable going to their school. A new chapter begins when your son or daughter comes to college. For many, this means moving out of the house (they'll come back...with lots of laundry!) and out of daily contact. For those who are commuting to classes from home, there is still a change. College classes generally don't meet every day; your student could have classes just 3 or 4 days a week; he/she could be in class until 10:00pm.

In addition, there are federal regulations concerning the information parents are entitled to once a student turns 18 years of age...even if you are paying the tuition. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; also known as the Buckley Amendment) is a federal law that protects the privacy of a student's education records once they are 18 years old. Students are the only ones who can request a transcript of their grades, for example. The student must give written permission for his/her grades to be shared with anyone else (including parents). It's important to have a conversation with your son/daughter about their academic records. Forms are available at the Registrar's Office in Elliot Center and on the web for students to sign for their parents to have access to their records. Personnel here at the college have access to grades because of the need to see the students' progress as we advise them.

## Advising System at KSC

Speaking of advising... what can you expect of KSC's advising system? Your student is entering KSC undecided about a major or having a major in mind, called an intended major. Those who are undecided are assigned to an Academic Advisor in Academic and Career Advising. Those with an intended major will have the name of a contact person within the department of their major; often it is a faculty member assigned to do advising.

In any case, some of the advising for first year students will happen within a group setting, while other advising will be done one-on-one. The undecided students will receive reminders to meet with an advisor as the time for new course registration approaches. These advising sessions will begin approximately 2 to 3 weeks into the current semester. During the advising sessions, students get individual assistance in planning for course registration - what courses are required, options for courses in areas of interest, etc.

Many departments hold Information Sessions during the first few weeks of classes. A list of information sessions is posted in Academic and Career Advising and on the home page of your student's MyKSC account. Any student can attend any information session. These meetings provide an overview that includes:

- Introduction of faculty in the department
- Career options for majors
- Information about a minor in the department, if one is offered
- Course selection information

## What are the components of a Degree at KSC?

- An Associate's degree has 60 credits
- A Bachelor of Arts degree has 120 credits
- A Bachelor of Science degree has a minimum 124 credits
- Most classes are four credits each.

Each degree has three areas:

- *Integrative Study Program (ISPs)*: Established by the College, this program purposefully and intentionally helps students engage ethical and global issues from multiple viewpoints, apply diverse perspectives to their thinking and their actions and analyze key social and environmental issues confronting us all.
- *Major requirements*: Specified by the faculty, these courses offer depth of scholarship through specialization in a field of interest.
- *Electives*: Selected by the student, these courses provide the opportunity to develop a minor, to fulfill teacher certification requirements or to take courses in other areas for personal and professional growth.

## **Academic Policies and Support**

The College Catalog contains a vast amount of information, including the requirements for the various degree programs KSC offers, descriptions of the courses listed by department and the academic policies we all follow. KSC Catalogs can be found at [www.keene.edu/catalog](http://www.keene.edu/catalog).

Students at Keene State are expected to maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 to be in good academic standing. At the conclusion of their first semester, students must achieve a GPA of 1.0 or they will be suspended from the college.

Advisors in Academic and Career Advising are available and strongly encourage students having academic difficulty to seek assistance. Advisors can strategize and recommend resources for students who are experiencing academic difficulty.

Students are also encouraged to declare their major area of study as early as possible in their college career. Advisors can help students with this process.

Many students at Keene State take courses at other colleges and transfer those credits to Keene State College. Advisors can help students determine how credits taken at other schools will work into their KSC program.

For more information on these and other policies, visit the KSC Catalog at [www.keene.edu/catalog](http://www.keene.edu/catalog).

### **What is the Role of a Parent in Advising their Student?**

College is a time for students to make decisions on their own, to learn about resources and options. As advisors we do not make decisions for them; we provide information so that students can make their own informed decisions.

As parents, it is difficult to let go and let grow. We all want to prepare students for a lifetime of success. The Academic & Career Advising staff encourages you to support your son/daughter by empowering them to seek assistance when they need it. It is far more useful for students to talk *with* an advisor than for parents to talk *for* them. The advisor should be the first person a student turns to when there is an academic issue. It is appropriate for you to refer your son/daughter to his/her advisor or to the Academic & Career Advising office.

## What Advising Resources are Available?

Students all have access to MyKSC- a web-based portal, which is how the college communicates. One of the tools in this portal is Program Evaluation, which does an audit of credits for any degree offered at KSC and has already proven to be a valuable resource for students as they map their degree progress.

The web page for Academic and Career Advising is a great place to start exploring the various resources Keene State offers in academic and career planning. Visit [www.keene.aca](http://www.keene.aca) and you can explore from there.

Listed below are various web resources you and your student may find helpful.

**Academic and Career Advising** – [www.keene.edu/aca](http://www.keene.edu/aca)

**Course Offerings** – [www.keene.edu/courses](http://www.keene.edu/courses)

**Keene State College Catalog** – [www.keene.edu/catalog](http://www.keene.edu/catalog)

**MyKSC Announcements/Bookmarks** – Go to [www.keene.edu](http://www.keene.edu). Put your cursor over Student Life and then click on MyKSC.

**Registrar's Office** - [www.keene.edu/registrar](http://www.keene.edu/registrar)

**Resources for Parents** - [www.keene.edu/parents](http://www.keene.edu/parents)  
[www.keene.edu/alumni](http://www.keene.edu/alumni)