

**FIRST YEAR**

ADVISING  
 SYLLABUS

YOUR ADVISER	Christina Kerr
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APPOINTMENTS	<a href="https://meetme.so/ckerr">meetme.so/ckerr</a>
WEB SITE	<a href="http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising">www.washington.edu/uaa/advising</a>

As your UAA adviser I will be one of your initial academic partners and collaborators at the UW. Over the next several years we will work together to grow your ability to envision and design an effective course of college study. The first step is to establish a good working relationship to explore interests and develop a plan that includes both academics and activities that will shape your UW experience. Let's start with what academic advising is:

**ACADEMIC ADVISING AT THE UW**

What role will academic advising play in your college experience? Advisers and faculty members do some of the same kinds of work with students, but with a different scope and context.

HOW FACULTY WORK	HOW ACADEMIC ADVISERS WORK
Teaching and instruction begins in the classroom.	Teaching and instruction begins at orientation, happens primarily in my office on a one-on-one basis, and will continue from one quarter to the next.
Faculty are focused on guiding you through the ideas, problems and methods of an <i>individual class and topic</i> .	Academic advisers are focused on guiding you through the ideas, problems and methods of college overall. Your academic adviser is facilitating a <i>meta-class</i> .
Faculty utilize a variety of assessment tools in their work with students, including essays, multiple choice and/or short answer exams, group projects, and portfolios, and in most instances assign grades based on student performance.	Academic advisers will not be assessing you with grades but will ask intellectually-demanding questions, encourage solutions-based thinking and creativity around course and major selection. Our role is to catalyze your own interests, and to offer knowledgeable feedback, while creating a space for you to draw conclusions and experiment with different choices.

## LEARNING GOALS

Although college is the continuation of your previous learning experiences, you will be presented with many new challenges and opportunities at the UW. Your first year will be spent developing the skills and knowledge that will serve as the foundation for your undergraduate education. By the end of your first year I want you to be finished with a few of these and have the others well underway. My primary role is to guide you to these outcomes by the end of your second year at the UW.

- ***Begin the process of making an informed choice of major.*** In fall quarter, in addition to the experience you are gaining in your first college courses, take a good look at the list of available UW majors on our website or in MyPlan. Research majors that interest you. Investigate if their frame of reference matches your instincts and abilities. You may have already chosen a major to study, but at this point we encourage you to treat all of your choices as hypotheses to be tested and evaluated by your ongoing college experiences, which may open up fresh, unexpected avenues of interest.
- ***Understand the purpose of academic advising*** at the UW as explained above and on our website.
- ***Practice effective course registration.*** This includes not only the mechanics of researching and registering for classes using the tools available in MyPlan, but also knowing what constitutes a balanced mixture of courses that advances your educational goals.
- ***Create a strategic course of study.*** MyPlan allows you to map out a tentative course plan for your stay at the UW, and to evaluate it using audits to ensure that all the requirements for graduation are satisfied. Of equal, or maybe greater, importance is developing a plan for participating in out-of-the-classroom experiences (undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, volunteering, etc.). What you envision now will probably change over time, but it is useful to be thinking holistically about your intentions by the end of your second quarter at the UW.
- ***Understand the significance of the Areas of Knowledge,*** not just as the framework for your education at the UW, but as the foundation for your role as an engaged member of society. I encourage you to read the following short work that explains how the Areas of Knowledge are a central part of your liberal education:

[www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/downloads/onlyconnect.pdf](http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/downloads/onlyconnect.pdf)

## OUR EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

- **Examine and attempt to clarify your interests, values and abilities** as you define your educational goals and develop your educational plan.
- **Be willing to share** what you discover. This does not mean all of your questions or ideas must be perfectly formulated. This is a process.
- **Develop an educational plan**, including long-term and short-term goals, that takes into account your interests, values and abilities while ensuring timely academic progress toward your UW degree.
- **Take primary and increasing responsibility** for your academic decisions. Your higher education exists in the choosing between many different possibilities, far more than the concrete results of any one particular choice. Your facility with judgment and discernment is being developed.
- **Interact with me at least once every quarter**. There are many ways to accomplish this. See the section on Advising Methods, below.

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISER

- **I will be reasonably and predictably accessible to you** via multiple channels of communication and interaction.
- **I will create a reflective, supportive, and safe environment** for you to communicate, think aloud, and explore academic ideas.
- **I will focus my questioning and inquiry on refining and improving your learning** both about yourself and your engagement at the UW, while respecting who you are and where you come from.
- **I will support the final decisions you make about your higher education** even if those decisions are at odds with my professional opinion or judgment.
- **I will advocate for your best interests** within the structure of the UW.
- **I will stay current** with UW degree requirements, academic programs and policies, and campus resources, and make useful referrals to other departments and offices as necessary.

## ADVISING METHODS

### APPOINTMENTS

**What it is:** half-hour one-on-one conversations with me

**Best for:** complex questions and reflections on your academic experiences, goals, options, and decisions

**How to make an appointment:** In general, I am available to meet in person with you Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at my office in 141 Mary Gates Hall. You can make an appointment through my online appointment scheduler, or by calling (206-543-2550) or visiting our front desk staff. If my calendar is full, check the next day, as appointment slots are continually opened up within a two-week horizon. Because appointments are time-intensive, if you cannot keep a scheduled appointment with me, make sure to cancel and free that time for another student. During Period 1 registration our calendars quickly become booked. It is important that you plan ahead to ensure appointment availability.

**What to prepare:** think through what you want to talk about and distill a few questions that can guide our conversation.

### QUICK QUESTIONS

**What it is:** 5–10 minute drop-in interactions with me or another academic adviser, or a peer adviser

**Best for:** well-defined, technical, less complex questions pertaining to an immediate or time-sensitive matter.

**What to prepare:** Check our website and/or the UW website first. The answer might be there. If not, write your question down and come to MGH 141. You may need to wait between 15–45 minutes before an adviser is available to see you.

### EMAIL

**What it is:** formal, written, asynchronous communication with me

**Best for:** moderately-complex questions or longer-form reflections on your educational life at UW. Email allows for deliberation and careful crafting of ideas and thoughts. Some students find this a lower-pressure way to interact with their adviser than in-person meetings. Not everything lends itself to email and if the question turns out to be more complex than it first seems, I will likely ask you to schedule an appointment.

**What to prepare:** a well-structured piece of writing, including appropriate salutation and proper grammar, sent from your UW email account. Allow at least 48 hours for a response. Response times may be longer during busier times of the year, such as during the first few weeks of courses, and Period I registration.

### CHAT

**What it is:** internet-based, short-message interaction with me or a peer adviser

**Best for:** well-defined, technical, less-complex questions pertaining to an immediate or time-sensitive matter

**What to prepare:** Check our website and/or the UW website first. The answer might be there. If you can't find an answer, see if I am online, or if a peer adviser is online, by clicking on the "Live Chat" button at the bottom of any of the pages on our website.

## ACADEMIC ADVISING CALENDAR

### FALL

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***Focus on developing effective course registration practices***

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BY WHEN	TASK	DATE COMPLETED
Week 1	Review academic advising syllabus	
Week 2	Finalize classes for the quarter	
Week 3	Go to office hours the first time for every class	
Week 4	Attend a study or writing center, such as CLUE	
Week 5	Review/revise your sleep schedule	
Week 6	Bookmark possible winter classes in MyPlan	
Week 7	Discuss winter course ideas with your academic adviser	
Weeks 6-8	Register for winter quarter	
Week 8-10	Participate in study groups to prepare for finals	

### WINTER

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***Practice designing a strategic course of study***

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BY WHEN	TASK	DATE COMPLETED
Week 1	Finalize classes for winter quarter	
Week 2	Go to office hours the first time for every class	
Week 3	Solidify your study routine	
Week 4	Identify two to three provisional majors	
Week 5	Sketch a hypothetical degree plan in MyPlan	
Week 6	Bookmark possible spring courses in MyPlan	
Week 7	Discuss your degree hypothesis with your academic adviser	
Weeks 6-8	Register for spring quarter	
Weeks 8-10	Participate in study groups to prepare for finals	

# SPRING

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## *Deepen your understanding of the Areas of Knowledge*

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BY WHEN	TASK	DATE COMPLETED
Week 1	Go to office hours the first time for every class	
Week 2	Solidify your study routine	
Week 3	Review your plans for summer	
Week 4	Reflect on the Areas of Knowledge	
Week 5	Review and revise a hypothetical degree plan in MyPlan	
Week 6	Bookmark possible fall courses for next year in MyPlan	
Week 7	Discuss your plans for next year with your academic adviser	
Weeks 6-8	Register for fall quarter	
Weeks 8-10	Prepare for finals using your most reliable study techniques	

### **ESSENTIAL RESOURCES**

UAA Advising website

<http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising>

UW Registrar Student System Help Center

<http://helpcenter.uw.edu/registration-resources>

UW Center for Learning & Undergraduate Enrichment (CLUE)

<http://depts.washington.edu/aspuw/clue/home>