The recommendations for changing the nature of academic advising at Southeastern Louisiana University are based on the total intake model. In this model students have access to both advisors in a centralized advising center and mentoring from faculty in their majors. The total intake model involves a two-step sequential format in which beginning freshmen and transfer students receive intensive, intrusive advising from a trained professional advisor in the Center for Student Excellence. The advisor possesses the necessary skills and knowledge to offer advice and/or to make referrals as appropriate to help students during their first year of college experience build a strong foundation for success. Movement to a faculty mentor after the first year allows the student to receive more discipline-specific academic advising as well as information about pertinent research opportunities, graduate school opportunities, and career information related to the discipline. Consistent and individually structured academic advising throughout the two-step format provides the support students need to progress and graduate.

As noted previously in the Operational Definitions section, the Center for Student Excellence will integrate services in three areas critical to student success – academic advising, academic support services (such as tutoring and academic success counseling), and career exploration services. These areas have a natural overlap in terms of their conceptual relatedness and their importance to individual student success as well as overall student retention and progression. The organizational structure for the Center for Student Excellence will provide for a Director of the Center who will have administrative oversight of the entire operation. Thus the integration of services and resources will be easier to achieve, and the responsibility for communication and collaboration with the academic departments, the Colleges, Student Affairs, etc., will have one central management point.

The Center for Student Excellence – Physical Location and Facilities
The Center for Student Excellence will be in a newly-constructed building centrally located on Southeastern’s campus, in the current location of McKneely Hall (which will be demolished). As shown in Figure 3 below, the site is across the street from Sims Memorial Library, next to the Student Union, and close to D Vickers Hall and Fayard Hall where the departments of English, Mathematics, History and Political Science, Communication, Foreign Languages and Literatures are located. These departments provide a majority of the General Education courses for incoming freshmen so the Center will be highly visible and conveniently located for scheduled and unscheduled access by students.

The building will be funded by a bond issue and will be constructed as a private building project, thus facilitating a quick time frame for design and construction. The facility is currently in the process of architectural design, and it will also accommodate the Center for Faculty Excellence and a number of classrooms, (which are presently located in Tinsley Hall, a facility that is deteriorating and will be demolished). Separate entrances for the Student Excellence and Faculty Excellence facilities are being considered. At present, the building will be approximately 35,000 square feet total (gross area), at an estimated total cost of $3.5 million to $4.375 million (between $100 and $125 per square foot).

Aesthetically, the building will be constructed so as to convey a warm and inviting atmosphere throughout. In the Student Excellence portion of the building, a reception area will provide a one-stop information point to answer student questions, schedule appointments with specific staff, and direct students to specific rooms and resources. Classrooms and computer lab facilities will be “smart” classrooms with full technology access to campus networks as well as the Internet. Classrooms will be multi-purpose, usable for scheduled classes at certain times of the day and for Center functions at other times.

The facility will provide appropriate office space for professional staff and clerical staff. The design will include work stations for graduate assistants and student workers, storage areas, conference rooms, a break/vending room, a
The Director of the Center for Student Excellence and the Center’s Advisory Council

The Director of the Center for Student Excellence will oversee the three major areas related to retention: career exploration, academic advising, and student academic support services. The Director will report directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and will work closely with the Center for Student Excellence Advisory Council. The Advisory Council consists of a cross-sectional group (including representation from advisors, faculty mentors, undergraduate program coordinators, department heads, deans, Student Affairs, Admissions, students and others) that advises the Director as well as the Dean of Enrollment Management and the Provost on retention issues as they relate to the Center’s activities and coordination.

Minimum qualifications for the Director of the Center for Student Excellence include:

- Doctorate preferred, Master’s degree with exceptional experience considered. Additional consideration given to candidates with university teaching experience.
- Demonstrated experience in all three areas of higher education student academic support (student advising, student tutoring services, and career exploration services) with a minimum of three years administrative experience in at least one area, five years of experience preferred.
- Understanding of national trends and research, knowledge of information technology and its application to academic support, and a vision of student academic support as an integral part of the mission of the university.
- Ability to build and maintain strong relationships with faculty and staff and to work collaboratively across academic and administrative departments.
Evidence of implementing successful student services, application of student-centered philosophy, strong communication and interpersonal skills, and strong supervisory and leadership skills essential.

Evidence of commitment to student retention and progression required.

Experience with managing budgets and supervising personnel required.

The duties and responsibilities for the Director include the following:

- Responsible for organizing, implementing and directing a successful center for student excellence which includes advising (total intake model), student tutoring services, and career exploration services.
- Must work effectively with university advisory council in setting and reaching goals for the Center based on student needs and the University’s retention initiatives.
- Must create a campus-wide synergy for Center activities and the importance of retention in coordination with academic departments and colleges.
- Provide supervision and training for center staff and support resources for faculty mentors.
- Plan, implement, and communicate program evaluation results for continuous improvement.
- Manage multiple budgets and play an active role in the University’s strategic planning process.

The general qualifications and position description for the Director are found in the Appendix of this document.

**Academic Advising Office**

As one of the three major areas included in the Center for Student Excellence, the Director of the Center for Student Excellence will oversee the academic advising activities for incoming freshmen students and transfer students.

See Figure 4 below for Southeastern’s Academic Advising Office’s organizational chart based on the total intake model.

![Figure 4: Southeastern Louisiana University Academic Advising Total Intake Model](image-url)
Senior Advisors
Following Southeastern’s total intake model, Senior Advisors will provide Academic Advisors support and will be actively involved in retention and freshmen affairs within specific colleges. Senior Advisors will serve as the liaison to the academic departments, working directly with the department’s Undergraduate Program Coordinator(s).

Academic Advisors
Academic Advisors will be Orientation class instructors with students assigned based on specific majors. Academic Advisors will provide one-on-one academic advising, assess student needs and provide information to help students identify and achieve personal, educational and career goals.

Undergraduate Program Coordinators
Undergraduate Program Coordinators will coordinate faculty mentoring activities, freshmen opportunities for the major, and provide support for Faculty Mentors. Undergraduate Program Coordinators may also engage in freshmen recruitment activities.

Faculty Mentors
Faculty Mentors will provide students one-on-one academic advising tailored to meet discipline-specific academic needs. Faculty Mentors will provide students support for academic progress, information on university programs and services, and discipline-specific knowledge about course choices, career and/or graduate school choices, and other academic opportunities available.

Student Flow Through the Academic Advising Office

Step 1
At Admission
Once the student is admitted to Southeastern, a welcome letter from the Advising Office is sent to the student. The welcome letter contains important information for the student including information about the Center for Student Excellence and its location, and the “Inside Southeastern” website with login/password information for accessing the student’s account online. The “Inside Southeastern” website will contain orientation information, the student online assessment questionnaire, information on majors and careers, FAQs, registration information and tutorials on what the student needs to know about academic advising.

The student will also receive a welcome letter from the academic department. Students who are undecided on a major will receive a welcome letter from the career exploration office. In addition, e-mail contacts will be made prior to orientation from the Center for Student Excellence and the academic department.

Step 2
Two-day Orientation – takes place prior to regular registration
Students are grouped according to major and assigned an Advisor who conduct the two-day orientation session with the help of student orientation leaders. The two-day orientation session creates a culture and defines expectations for students through fun activities that build community with fellow majors and the freshman class at large. Discussions are also conducted on the differences between high school and college life and how to develop and fulfill personal educational and career goals. Students are introduced to the Center for Student Excellence and other offices including Residential Life and Student Affairs, and are provided a Student Advising Handbook. They also receive assistance as they register for classes at the close of the two-day orientation session.

Step 3
First Semester – ORNT 101
In addition to attending the two-day orientation session, entering students are required to take Orientation 101 during their first semester. The class sections are organized by majors, and the student attends the class conducted by his/her assigned Advisor. In addition to students being oriented to Southeastern’s campus and structure during ORNT101, students will also meet individually with their Advisors, complete an academic map, complete an at-risk assessment and follow through on prescribed actions, participate in department events including contact with faculty in the department, participate in University events, and complete assignments related to academic expectations, college study skills, time management, career exploration, student support services available, etc.
At the close of the first semester, students will meet individually with Advisors and complete registration for the following semester. Those students who meet exit criteria (successfully completed ORNT 101, have a high degree of confidence in choice of major, and have no at-risk factors) will then be assigned to Faculty Mentors in the department of the major. All other students will continue to work with their assigned Advisors in the Advising Office.

**Step 4**

*Second semester*

Students who successfully completed the exit criteria and were assigned Faculty Mentors at the end of their first semester will receive communication from their Faculty Mentors and will meet to review their academic map and plan for third and fourth semester in their second semester.

Those students who are continuing with the Advising Office will receive communication from their Advisors about expectations for the 2nd semester, which is also reinforced by the academic department. These students will continue to meet with their assigned Advisors both face-to-face and electronically, and are to complete requirements by the end of the 2nd semester. Once students meet the exit criteria, they are assigned to Faculty Mentors.