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Dean's Column by Ron Rosati, PhD

Thankful for Aggie advisors

In keeping with our theme of gratitude during the month of November, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture this week extends appreciation to all who serve in an advisory capacity for our students at NCTA.

When one thinks of an advisor in the academic setting that usually means the person who advises a student about their course load, which classes to take and in what order during the collegiate experience, and helps the Aggie student stay on track to graduate in a productive, time-efficient and least-cost educational format. That would be correct description, indeed.

We have extremely dedicated and knowledgeable faculty who advise students in their career goals. I am grateful to these professors and instructors who set aside times each week to avail themselves to student appointments.

College advisors also help students with personal issues such as adjusting to college life, living in a new community, and developing the skills and characteristics needed for a successful adult life. Our faculty and staff often find advising sessions as the ideal "teaching moment" to help our students learn about integrity, character, time management and other important characteristics of a successful and satisfied life.

Kevin Martin and Vicky Luke in our Student Services office are experienced advisors who listen to our students and their concerns, reminding them about important behaviors leading to college success. Kevin and Vicky also help students navigate an updated electronic catalog of courses and advising on the status of their individual college programs.

Fortunately here at NCTA, since we are a small campus with a close-knit "family" of Student Services staff and academic faculty, our students have excellent opportunities for success.

Registration started last week for Spring 2018 classes. Students are preparing now for the next semester which begins on January 8.

External Campus Advisory Groups

A second set of advisors we rely upon at NCTA are groups specific to the overall campus mission. NCTA is focused on providing workforce development for Nebraska's agricultural industries. We rely on input from these advisors when we determine our academic priorities. These are some of the individuals, businesses, organizations or institutions included in key advisory committees:

- NCTA Statewide Advisory committee - Individuals and entities from across the state who represent alumni, peer educational institutions, agricultural partners in production agriculture, business and industry stakeholders, commodity and agricultural membership organizations, and many others affiliated with the college. The group meets annually.
- NCTA Community Advisory - Curtis-area and regional individuals who meet quarterly with college administration to discuss pertinent local issues.
- Academic division advisory committees - These advisors guide the courses and priority initiatives for each academic area.
- Specialty advisory stakeholders - Special groups that provide leadership and guidance to specific NCTA initiatives such as Heifer Link, the Reinke Irrigation Technology Program, and Aggie Stock Dog Team.

NCTA is currently undergoing the development of a new strategic plan. Input from external advisors is critical. We verify that NCTA goals for the next five years are relevant and meet the needs of Nebraska's agricultural stakeholders.

This ongoing process is transparent and inclusive, led by Dr. Brad Ramsdale, associate professor of agronomy. Input from the community is encouraged. Our previous college strategic plans may be found on the college website (<https://ncta.unl.edu/mission-statement>).

We are a vital part of the University of Nebraska system. I invite your participation in our campus events and welcome your input to our NCTA strategic plan and mission:

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture is devoted to a statewide mission of preparing students for successful careers in agriculture, veterinary technology, food and related industries. The college provides open access to innovative technical education resulting in associate degrees, certificates, diplomas and other credentials

Online article at: <https://go.unl.edu/zt4m>