Course of study advising: Supporting student diversity by supporting individual courses of study.

EFYE
Agenda

1) Project and organisation
2) Course of Study Advising
3) Network
4) Methods
5) Empirical results
6) Discussion
Background

- Transition from high school to university is “an organisational challenge in an unknown social world” (Feldmeier et al. 2015: 35).
- Self-regulation is crucial for successful studies (Gerholz 2012)
- Subject-specific knowledge and interdisciplinary competencies (Feldmeier et al. 2015: 36)
- Diversification of student body
  > problems in course of study
  > Support by First Year Offers and Course of Study Advising
- Lack of communication and co-operation between advising units
Course of study advising: Supporting student diversity by supporting individual courses of study.

Success factors:

• Approach
• Low-threshold
• Network
• Evaluation

→ Supporting ALL students (low- and high-achieving) in making the transition to higher education and to realise individual courses of study that fit their needs.
1) PROJECT AND ORGANISATION
Niederrhein University of Applied Science

10 DEPARTMENTS

30 BACHELOR PROGRAMMES

25 MASTER PROGRAMMES

14 DUAL PROGRAMMES
Project structure
Peer-Tutoring & Course of Study Advising

• Project funded by the German Ministry of Education (within the Qualitätspakt Lehre)
• Funding period: 9 years (2011-2020)
• Based at the Office of the Vice-President for Teaching and Learning
Centrally employed but based at the departments

80% at the departments

- Course of Study Advising
- Teaching
- Coordination of Tutorials and Revision Courses
- Organisation of Introduction Week

20% project

- Co-operation and networking
- Publications
2) COURSE OF STUDY ADVISING

05.04.2016 | Course of study advising | Krüger & Westerholt | Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences
Advising concept

Theoretical background

• Solution-focused therapy (Steve de Shazer 2013)
• Resource-focused approach (Bamberger 2005)

Aims

→ Optimized courses of studies at individual pace
→ Increasing students’ satisfaction by enabling students to take informed and deliberately decisions

Approach

• Confidential
• Neutral
• Empowerment: Responsibility stays with the students themselves
Advising sessions

Individual, confidential advising for students facing questions and problems in their course of study.
## Frequency of „advising topics“

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study planning</td>
<td>65,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed exam</td>
<td>20,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time planning</td>
<td>13,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change-of-programme</td>
<td>12,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning/ exam preparation</td>
<td>11,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final thesis</td>
<td>10,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work load</td>
<td>8,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>7,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family tasks</td>
<td>7,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from one's studies</td>
<td>6,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of exam regulation</td>
<td>5,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>5,2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n: 3779 – % refers to case count
How do we get attention of students?
The early-warning system

Early-warning system:

• Collaboration with the exam office
• Letter of invitation: anonymous & criteria-based

Invitation criteria:

• During the summer semester:
  • After the 1. and 3. semester: if less than 30% of the required credit points

• During the winter semester:
  • 3. attempt
  • More than 1,5-times of the regular study time
3) NETWORK
Co-operations at Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences
Forwardings

Number of forwardings (more than 5% of the cases):

- Examination board: 30.5%
- Lecturer: 27%
- Examination office: 15%
- Student office: 13.8%
- Psychosocial counselling: 5.8%

→ Most of the students are forwarded within the department (examination board + lecturer)

1229 cases – % refers to case count
4) METHODS
Documentation & quantitative evaluation

Beratungsprotokoll - Studienverlaufsberatung

Name Ratschendes:

E-Mail-Adresse:

Erstberatung ______ Folgeberatung Nr. ______

Informationen zum Beratungsansatz: (unterstützende, ergänzende Angaben, Erwartungen, Ziele des RSt)

Besprochene Punkte: (z.B. Methoden, Lösungs- oder Bewertungsschritte)

Folgetermine und Vereinbarungen:

Datum:

Beratungssemester:

- WS 14/15
- SS 2015
- WS 15/16
- SS 2016

Beratungsprozess:

- Erstberatung
- Folgeberatung Nr. 1
- Folgeberatung Nr. 2
- Folgeberatung Nr. 3

Art Hochschulzugangsberechtigung:

- Allg. HSK
- FhR
- beruf. Qualifikation

Aufmerksam geworden durch...

- Dozenten
- Kommilitonen
- Internet
- Anschriften
- Psychosoziale Beratungsstelle
- Vorstellung in LVs
- Persönlicher Kontakt
- Erst-Woche

Fachsemester:

- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10

Aktueller Studienstand in CP's:

- 0-30
- 31-60
- 61-90
- 91-120
- 121-150
- 151-200

Studienfach:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

Geschlecht:  männlich
- weiblich

Alter:

- <= 20
- 21-23
- 24-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- >= 36

Beratungsthemen (Mehrfachauswahl möglich)

a) Stress / Belastung
b) Organisation / Studienplanung
c) Lernen / Prüfung
d) Schreiben

e) Sonstiges

a) Arbeitsbelastung (Job etc.)
- Motivation
- Queuerlegung
- Studium planen
- Studiengangswechsel
- Schulplanung
- Wiss. Arbeiten

b) Abbruch Stadium
- Aufschieben
- Motivation
- Queuerlegung
- Studium planen
- Studiengangswechsel
- Vielfach PO
- Zeitplanung

Nächste Schritte: (Mehrfachauswahl möglich)

- Besuch eines Repetitoriums
- Besuch eines Tutoriums
- Lernplan entwickeln

Weiterleitung an:

- Alg. Studienberatung
- Lehrende
- Prüfungsausschuss-Vorsitz

Gesprächsdauer:

- < 15 Min.
- 16-30 Min.
- 31-45 Min.
- > 45 Min.

05.04.2016 | Course of study advising | Krüger & Westerholt | Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences|
### Survey data

#### Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Summer term (n=429)</th>
<th>Winter term (n=579)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2013</td>
<td>950 cases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2013/14</td>
<td></td>
<td>995 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2014/2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Total number of cases

1945
5) EMPIRICAL RESULTS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advising cases</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ More women than men attend advising
→ Strong differences regarding sexes between the departments
### Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Course of Study Advising</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≤20 y.</td>
<td>9,9%</td>
<td>&lt; 16,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 y.</td>
<td>52,4%</td>
<td>&gt; 47,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 y.</td>
<td>25,4%</td>
<td>= 24,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 y.</td>
<td>7,1%</td>
<td>= 7,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥ 36 y.</td>
<td>5,2%</td>
<td>≥ 4,2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Largest group:** 21-25 years
- **Forecast:** Due to the large size of the category 21-25 years, conclusions are difficult. New categories are 21-23 and 24-25 years.

1893 cases
## Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sem.</th>
<th>Frequency (Summer + Winter term)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sem.</td>
<td>12,6% of all sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sem.</td>
<td>15,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sem.</td>
<td>16,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sem.</td>
<td>13,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sem.</td>
<td>12,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sem.</td>
<td>7,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sem.</td>
<td>4,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sem.</td>
<td>3,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 8. Sem.</td>
<td>14,3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Counselling is mostly used by students in the 2. and 3. sem.
- Third largest group is above the 8th sem.
- Relatively many students still in first sem. (no invitation letter!)

1927 cases from winter term 13/14 onwards
Credit points (winter term 14/15 & summer term 15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CP Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-30 CP</td>
<td>40.8% (349 absolute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-60</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-90</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-120</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121-150</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-180</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ Most of the students have only a few CP, when they attend an advising session.

865 cases (winter term 14/15 & summer term 15)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>&lt;br&gt;(n)</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>&lt;br&gt;(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex/gender (advising session)</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed exam</td>
<td>46.8% (176)</td>
<td>≤</td>
<td>53.2% (200)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time planning</td>
<td>51.5% (122)</td>
<td>≥</td>
<td>48.5% (115)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning/exam preparation</td>
<td>54.6% (118)</td>
<td>≥</td>
<td>45.4% (98)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final thesis</td>
<td>26.7% (50)</td>
<td>≤</td>
<td>73.3% (137)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>51.1% (48)</td>
<td>≥</td>
<td>48.9% (46)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family tasks</td>
<td>21.8% (27)</td>
<td>≤</td>
<td>78.2% (97)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from one's studies</td>
<td>55.3% (68)</td>
<td>≥</td>
<td>44.7% (55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sex & advising topics

(2) Results

1.361 cases

Topics discussed by more men than women

→ Examination and organisation
→ Failure in studies

Topics discussed by more women than men

→ Final thesis, scientific working
→ Personally burdening situation
Sex & semester of study

Results:

• ♂: Earlier access to advising than men (2. & 3. Sem.: Largest group)

• ♂: 3. Sem. largest male group > 8. Sem. second largest male group

• BOTH: 2.+3. Sem: Highest advising request (both sexes)

1812 cases; 40.5% M – 59.5% F
Age & semester & advising topics

- Categories age & semester are similar, but not the same
- Combination age or semester with „advising topics“ is quite similar → focus on the most interesting results
Age & advising topics

→ All groups mention most frequently „Study planning“

- Change-of-programme: 25.3%
- Time planning: 12.7%
- Change of exam regulations: 12.6%
- Failed exam: 21.9%
- Learning/exam preparation: 18.5%
- Final thesis: 18.2%
- Time planning: 17.0%
- Family tasks: 19.2%
- Work load: 23.2%
- Family tasks: 27.4%

1,371 cases

Years

20 25 30 35
### Semester & advising topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. S** | 12.3% of all advising | - 66.4% Study Planning  
- 23.5% Change-of-programme  
- 15% Family tasks  
- 11.9% Work load  
- 11.1% Learning/ exam preparation  
- 10.6% Illness (24 absolute) |
| **2. S** | 16% | - 25.9% Change-of-programme  
- 17.6% Failed exam  
- 23.5% Personally burdening situations |
## Semester & advising topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.-4. S</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>Appr. 24% failed exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.-6. S</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>Study planning, time planning, final thesis and failed exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.-8. S</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>- 32.5% Change of exam regulations → largest group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;8. S</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>- 27.2% Final thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 17.5% Failed exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1835 cases

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Semester & advising topics
- Results

• **Work load**: Especially burdening for entrants and long-term students
• **Illness**: Especially 1.-4.Semester
• **Familial tasks**: Especially during the first year

Note: „Familial tasks“ can be a burdening situation…
  • …because of family of origin, and/or
  • …due to the own family
SUMMARY
**Summary I**

**SEX**
- More women than men attend advising
  - ♂:
    - Second largest group of men > 8. Semester!
    - Topics: Examination & organisation; failure in studies
  - ♀:
    - Earlier access to advising than men
    - Topics: Final thesis, scientific working, personally burdening situation

**AGE**
- Largest group: 21-25 years
Summary II

CREDIT POINTS
40% of the students have only a few CP (0-30), when they attend an advising session.

SEMESTER
• Counselling mostly used: 2.& 3. Semester
• Third largest group > 8. Semester

ADVISING TOPICS
• Work load: entrants and long-term students
• Illness: 1.-4.Semester
• Familial tasks: During the first year
6) DISCUSSION
Needs of the target groups got clearer:

→ Basis for target group specific offers
  • Topic-specific coaching groups
  • Contacting students more target-specific
  • Adjust offers to the needs of students in different semesters (and implement the offers in the department)
Critical reflection of the study

- Many diversity criteria may not be gathered
- Changing of items during the project vs. comparability during a longer time period
- Results of this sample can be transferred only partly on our total student body
Challenges

- Temporary financing
- Advising of international students is still challenging
- Special attributes of a university with many commuting members
- We do not reach all „invisible“ students with the invitation letter
Questions

• Do you have a similar offer at your university?
• During course of study advising, what do you experience?
• Have you done research regarding course of study advising? How do you collect your data?

• Do you have any questions left?
List of literature


THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
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