Academic Advising Project

Building meaningful relationships through structured and reflexive dialogue: Academic advising in the Social Sciences undergraduate curriculum

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AIM
The BSc Social Sciences (DN700) was introduced in Sept 2018, with an annual intake of 500 students. The programme design included an academic mentoring component to provide support and guidance to students and enable student success. Delivery has been challenging for both students and academic staff. This project aims to systematically review, evaluate, and enhance the current approach to better support meaningful learning conversations, and shift the focus from academic mentoring to more focused academic advising.

OBJECTIVES
- Undertake a literature review of academic advising in large undergraduate programmes;
- Build on the student experience map developed by UCD Agile (https://www.ucd.ie/agile/ourservices/mappingourstudentsexperience/thevalueofexperiencemapping/) to understand how we can best position academic advising through the student lifecycle;
- Analyse and evaluate current practice and experiences of students and academic colleagues;
- Identify supports/recommendations for all stakeholders to enable the shift from academic mentoring to academic advising and support more meaningful and focused conversations.

STRATEGY
- Literature review; briefing on and review of the original programme aims in relation to academic mentoring; mapping academic advising potential to student lifecycle and experience map
- Evaluation of current approach through quantitative and qualitative methods. A series of interviews with academics in the College and student focus groups will be undertaken to understand their perceptions, experiences and needs for/from academic advising.
- Recommendations will be developed through a world café style workshop, facilitated by the Deputy Principal, with the entire project team and the College T&L Cttee which includes students, academics and College office staff.
- Planning for enhancement to the programme including development of any necessary resources and disseminating project findings internally and externally.