

## **Predicting satisfaction with advising among Hmong undergraduate students**

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### **Abstract**

This exploratory quantitative study examines the advising satisfaction of 295 Hmong undergraduate students. Findings from the logistic regression analysis revealed statistically significant associations between advising satisfaction and advising engagement variables representing advising from where, advising by who, and type of advising approach. Receiving advising from student support programs, by academic advisors, and developmental advising significantly increased the odds of being satisfied with advising in general and various aspects of the advising experience. The author concludes with implications for research and practice that colleges and universities can consider to increase advising satisfaction among Hmong students.

**Keywords:** Hmong students, academic advising, advising engagement, advising satisfaction

## **Predicting satisfaction with advising among Hmong undergraduate students**

While Hmong Americans have demonstrated substantial growth in college enrollment and completion rates over the last several decades (Hmong National Development, Inc., and Hmong Cultural Resource Center, 2004; Lor, 2024; Xiong, 2012, 2023), they continue to experience disproportionate outcomes in postsecondary education. For example, Xiong (2023) found that Hmong Americans (22.5%) have earned college degrees at rates far below the national average (32.8%) and among the lowest in comparison to most ethnic populations in the nation. Similarly, Lor (2024) found that more than 30% of Hmong Americans who have attended college did not complete their degree. These outcomes suggest advancing Hmong student success continues to be a struggle for institutions of higher education and more research is needed to better understand factors contributing to their success in college.

The literature on academic advising has generally documented the critical role of advising on the success of students in college (Goemans & Kapinos, 2024; Mayhew et al., 2016; Swecker et al., 2013; Tippetts et al., 2022), particularly advising satisfaction. For example, Soria (2012) examined factors influencing the retention of first-year university students and found that satisfaction with advising from a school or college staff member was a significant predictor of student retention from year one to year two. Similarly, Harrell and Reglin (2018) found that community college students were satisfied and retained at higher rates when receiving advising by faculty within a faculty advising program. Moreover, greater satisfaction with advising has also been found to be associated with increased engagement with advising (Keetch, 2021). Given the importance of satisfaction with advising on increased engagement with advising and retention in college, research regarding advising satisfaction of Hmong students can help build the capacity of colleges and universities to retain and support them to degree completion.

The literature on Hmong Americans in higher education have documented Hmong undergraduate students' engagement with advising (Hang & Walsh, 2021; Lor, 2008; Vang & Schademan, 2023). For example, some research has suggested that Hmong students engaged frequently with advising (Xiong, 2021) and validating experiences with academic advisors contribute to their increased engagement with advising (Xiong, 2024). Yet, research from Xiong and Lam (2013) indicated that some Hmong students have had minimal interactions with academic advisors. Other research has suggested that Hmong students encountered negative experiences with academic advisors (Xiong, 2024), and unsupportive advising environments have led to limited interactions with advisors within student support programs and decreased engagement with advising services over time (Xiong & Lee, 2011). While these studies provide initial insights into positive and negative advising experiences of Hmong students, the extent to which they are satisfied with the advising they experienced has not yet been examined. The current study is the first attempt to address this knowledge gap in the literature.

The purpose of this study was to examine predictors of advising satisfaction among Hmong undergraduate students. In particular, this study focused on the extent to which advising satisfaction is based on advising engagement factors such as where advising is received, who advising is delivered by, and what type of advising is experienced. The analyses revealed specific advising engagement factors that are associated with being satisfied with advising in general and other aspects of the advising experience. The current study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1. What are the advising engagement factors that predict satisfaction with advising in general among Hmong undergraduate students?

RQ2. What are the advising engagement factors that predict satisfaction with receiving accurate information among Hmong undergraduate students?

RQ3. What are the advising engagement factors that predict satisfaction with receiving sufficient notice about deadlines among Hmong undergraduate students?

RQ4. What are the advising engagement factors that predict satisfaction with availability of advising among Hmong undergraduate students?

RQ5. What are the advising engagement factors that predict satisfaction with having sufficient time during advising sessions among Hmong undergraduate students?

## **Methods**

### **Procedure**

The Academic Advising Inventory, a valid and reliable instrument developed to measure student experiences with academic advising (Winston & Sandor, 1984), was distributed via Qualtrics to the total population of 1,133 Hmong undergraduate students enrolled in Fall 2023 at a large, public university in the western United States. At the time of this study, the institution served more than 21,000 students at the undergraduate level, 12% of whom identified as Asian, and the largest Asian ethnic student population was Hmong students. Students received a \$10 Amazon gift card for their participation.

### **Participants**

A total of 419 students submitted the survey, yielding a response rate of 37%. After removing incomplete survey submissions, a final sample size of 295 was retained for analysis. Most participants identified as single (92.2%), between the ages of 18 to 24 (81.4%), female (72.2%), junior and senior class standing (69.5%), and working (58.0%). Participants consisted primarily of first-generation college students (71.2%), however, most students reported not being

the first in their family to attend college, having one or more siblings who have attended college (81.4%). Participant demographic information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

<i>Participant Demographic Information (n = 295)</i>		
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Age		
18-24	240	81.4
25 or older	55	18.6
Gender		
Male	82	27.8
Female	213	72.2
Marital Status		
Single	272	92.2
Married	19	6.4
Divorced	1	0.3
Separated	1	0.3
Widowed	2	0.7
Class Standing		
Freshman	49	16.6
Sophomore	41	13.9
Junior	92	31.2
Senior	113	38.3
Working		
Yes	171	58
No	124	42
Highest Parental Education		
Less than a bachelor's degree	210	71.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	85	28.8
First in Family to Attend College		
Yes	55	18.6
No	240	81.4

## Key Variables

**Advising satisfaction variables.** The dependent variables were single-item variables that assess students' satisfaction with the advising they experienced and included the following five measures of satisfaction (Winston & Sandor, 1984): (a) advising in general, reflecting students' satisfaction with their overall advising experience; (b) accurate information, indicating students' satisfaction with receiving accurate information about courses, programs, and requirements; (c) sufficient notice, assessing students' satisfaction with receiving sufficient notices about deadlines related to campus policies and procedures; (d) availability of advising; reflecting students' satisfaction with the availability of advising when they need it; and (e) sufficient time; assessing students' satisfaction with having sufficient time during advising sessions. All satisfaction items were measured on a 4-point Likert-scale that includes 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Scores of 1 or 2 indicate Dissatisfaction and scores of 3 or 4 indicate Satisfaction.

**Advising engagement variables.** The independent variables represented three measures of advising engagement: 1) advising from where; 2) advising by who; and 3) type of advising. The first predictor variable was a single-item, categorical variable asking students to indicate where they received advising. The response options included advising center, student support program, and individually. The second predictor variable was a single-item, categorical variable asking students to indicate who they received advising from. The response options included faculty advisor, academic advisor, and other individuals (e.g., friends, classmates, siblings). The third predictor variable was a composite variable based on student responses to 14 items about the nature of the advising relationship on a prescriptive-developmental continuum ( $\alpha = .81$ ). Scores from 14 to 56 indicate a prescriptive advising approach where advisers primarily told

students what to do regarding their academic needs. Scores from 57 to 112 indicate a developmental advising approach where advisers primarily facilitated students' decision-making process regarding their holistic needs, including academic and non-academic needs.

### **Statistical Analyses**

Data were analyzed using the jamovi statistical software version 2.6 (The jamovi project, 2024). Logistic regression analysis was conducted to predict each of the satisfaction outcome variables with advising from where, advising from who, and type of advising as predictor variables. The satisfaction outcome variables were recoded into dichotomous variables, dissatisfaction and satisfaction. The reference group is “dissatisfaction” since the current study is focused on variables associated with the outcome of satisfaction. The “advising from where” variable was recoded into three dummy variables: 1) *advising center*: 1 = advising center; 0 = otherwise, 2) *student support program*: 1 = student support program; 0 = otherwise, and 3) *individually*: 1 = individually; 0 = otherwise. The “individually” category was used as the reference group. The “advising from who” was also recoded into three dummy variables: 1) *academic advisor*: 1 = academic advisor; 0 = otherwise; 2) *faculty advisor*: 1 = faculty advisor; 0 = otherwise, and 3) *other individuals*: 1 = other individuals; 0 = otherwise. The “other individuals” category was used as the reference group. The “type of advising” variable was recoded into a dichotomous variable, prescriptive and developmental. The “prescriptive” category was used as the reference group. All assumptions (e.g., dichotomous dependent variable, independence of observations, no multicollinearity, no outliers) for logistic regression analysis were met.

### **Limitations**

This study focused on Hmong undergraduate students at a single institution that has been recognized both as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and an Asian American/Native American/Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). The institution also operates through a decentralized advising model where academic advising is dispersed across the campus among primary-role academic advisors within the university-wide advising center, primary-role academic advisors within college/major advising centers, faculty advisors within academic departments, and primary-role academic advisors within student support programs. Therefore, the results from this study may not be generalizable for Hmong undergraduate students beyond this institutional context because their advising engagement and satisfaction may vary at institutions with different minority-serving institution designations and advising structures.

## **Results**

Participants included 295 Hmong undergraduate students, where almost half of them received advising from advising centers (46.8%) and approximately one third of them received advising from themselves (32.5%) followed by advising from student support programs (20.7%). The majority of participants received advising by academic advisors (62.8%) followed by other individuals (25.4%) and faculty advisors (12.2%). Most participants received developmental advising (74.9%) in comparison to prescriptive advising (25.1%). With regard to advising satisfaction, the majority of participants reported being satisfied with advising in general (79%), receiving accurate information (82.4%), receiving sufficient notice about deadlines (79%), availability of advising (79.7%), and having sufficient time during advising sessions (82.4%).

### **Advising in General**

The logistic regression model was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 45.2, p < .001$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .221$ . Receiving advising by academic advisors (OR = 3.04,  $p = .004$ ) had

Table 2

*Logistic Regression Predicting Satisfaction with Advising among Hmong Students (n = 295)*

Variable	$\beta$	$p$	Odds Ratio (OR)	Nagelkerke $R^2$
<b>Advising in General</b>				
Where: Advising center	0.320	0.401	1.377	0.221
Where: Student support program	0.553	0.271	1.738	
Who: Faculty advisor	0.784	0.129	2.190	
Who: Academic advisor	1.113	0.004	3.043	
Type: Developmental advising	1.556	< .001	4.738	
<b>Accurate Information</b>				
Where: Advising center	-5.690	1.000	1.000	0.213
Where: Student support program	1.144	0.089	3.139	
Who: Faculty advisor	0.359	0.499	1.432	
Who: Academic advisor	0.782	0.062	2.186	
Type: Developmental advising	1.628	< .001	5.096	
<b>Sufficient Notice about Deadlines</b>				
Where: Advising center	-0.061	0.866	0.941	0.153
Where: Student support program	1.506	0.022	4.510	
Who: Faculty advisor	-0.082	0.867	0.922	
Who: Academic advisor	0.496	0.206	1.642	
Type: Developmental advising	1.079	< .001	2.940	
<b>Availability of Advising</b>				
Where: Advising center	-0.434	0.249	0.648	0.215
Where: Student support program	16.978	0.983	2.360	
Who: Faculty advisor	0.346	0.486	1.413	
Who: Academic advisor	0.886	0.031	2.426	
Type: Developmental advising	0.841	0.010	2.319	
<b>Sufficient Time During Advising Sessions</b>				
Where: Advising center	-0.07	0.857	0.932	0.194
Where: Student support program	2.442	0.020	11.497	
Who: Faculty advisor	0.097	0.846	1.102	
Who: Academic advisor	0.933	0.027	2.543	
Type: Developmental advising	0.360	0.003	2.781	

significantly increased odds of experiencing satisfaction with advising in general by participants in comparison to advising by faculty advisors and other individuals (see Table 2). Receiving developmental advising (OR = 4.74,  $p < .001$ ) also had significantly increased odds of experiencing satisfaction with advising in general by participants in comparison to prescriptive advising.

### **Accurate Information**

The logistic regression model was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 40.7, p < .001$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .213$ . Receiving developmental advising (OR = 5.10,  $p < .001$ ) was significantly associated with increased odds of experiencing satisfaction with receiving accurate information about courses, programs, and requirements by participants in comparison to prescriptive advising (see Table 2).

### **Sufficient Notice about Deadlines**

The logistic regression model was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 30.5, p < .001$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .153$ . Receiving advising from student support programs (OR = 4.51,  $p = .022$ ) had significantly higher odds of experiencing satisfaction with receiving sufficient notice about deadlines related to campus policies and procedures by participants, in comparison to advising centers and individually (see Table 2). Receiving developmental advising (OR = 2.94,  $p < .001$ ) also had significantly higher odds of experiencing satisfaction with receiving sufficient notice about deadlines related to campus policies and procedures by participants, in comparison to prescriptive advising.

### **Availability of Advising**

The logistic regression model was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 43.3, p < .001$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .215$ . Receiving advising by academic advisors (OR = 2.43,  $p = .031$ ) was

significantly associated with increased odds of experiencing satisfaction with the availability of advising when needed by participants, in comparison to faculty advisors and other individuals (see Table 2). Receiving developmental advising (OR = 2.32,  $p = .010$ ) was also significantly associated with increased odds of experiencing satisfaction with the availability of advising when needed by participants, in comparison to prescriptive advising.

### **Sufficient Time During Advising Sessions**

The logistic regression model was statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 36.9, p < .001$ , Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .194$ . Receiving advising from student support programs (OR = 11.50,  $p = .020$ ) had significantly higher odds of experiencing satisfaction with having sufficient time during advising sessions by participants in comparison to advising centers and individually (see Table 2). Receiving advising by academic advisors (OR = 2.54,  $p = .027$ ) had significantly higher odds of experiencing satisfaction with having sufficient time during advising sessions by participants in comparison to faculty advisors and other individuals. Receiving developmental advising (OR = 2.78,  $p = .003$ ) also had significantly higher odds of experiencing satisfaction with having sufficient time during advising sessions by participants in comparison to prescriptive advising.

### **Discussion and Implications**

Findings from this study provide initial insights into the advising satisfaction of Hmong undergraduate students and contribute to the current literature in several ways. Indeed, previous research on Hmong college students has focused on the frequency and quality of engagement with advising (Xiong, 2021; Xiong & Lam, 2013; Xiong & Lee, 2011). However, none of these studies have examined their satisfaction with advising. This study extends the literature by identifying specific advising engagement factors that contribute to advising satisfaction among Hmong students. Findings from this study revealed statistically significant associations between

advising satisfaction and advising engagement variables representing advising from where, advising by who, and type of advising. Specifically, receiving advising from student support programs was predictive of satisfaction with receiving sufficient notice about deadlines and having sufficient time during sessions. In addition, receiving advising by academic advisors was predictive of satisfaction regarding advising in general, availability of advising, and having sufficient time during sessions. Furthermore, receiving developmental advising was a significant predictor of satisfaction across all aspects of the advising experience—advising in general, receiving accurate information, sufficient notice about deadlines, availability of advising, and sufficient time during advising sessions. This study adds empirical evidence that satisfaction with advising among Hmong students may be based on advising from student support programs, by academic advisors, and receiving developmental advising.

This study has several important implications for research and practice. First, advising administrators and institutional leaders should understand that fewer participants in this study have received advising from student support programs and consider ways they can implement targeted outreach and recruitment strategies to provide eligible Hmong students equitable access to receiving advising from these programs. Second, advising administrators and institutional leaders should also understand that most participants in this study received advising by academic advisors and consider ways they can reinforce the importance of frequent engagement with an academic advisor to Hmong students and sustain their engagement with academic advisors at different academic milestones throughout their time at the institution from matriculation to graduation. Third, advisors should understand that the majority of participants experienced developmental advising rather than prescriptive advising. While prescriptive and developmental advising approaches both have value in the advising process, advisors should consider the critical

role of developmental advising on advising satisfaction and prioritize advising Hmong students from a more developmental approach rather than a prescriptive approach.

Fourth, future qualitative studies should explore Hmong students' advising experiences specifically with academic advisors, student support programs, and developmental advising. Findings from these types of studies would provide a qualitative understanding of the association between these experiences and advising satisfaction. Finally, future quantitative studies should examine the relationship between advising satisfaction and other factors found in previous research to be positive advising experiences for Hmong students, such as receiving advising by Hmong advisors and validating advising (Xiong, 2024). Findings from such studies would help to identify additional factors that might also influence satisfaction with advising among Hmong students but were not examined in the current study due to limitations of the available variables in the Academic Advising Inventory.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined predictors of advising satisfaction among Hmong undergraduate students. The findings from this study point to student support programs, academic advisors, and developmental advising as important considerations in the advising satisfaction of this student population. Hopefully, providing greater access and opportunities to engage with these types of advising experiences can lead to greater advising satisfaction, and in turn contribute to increased advising engagement and retention in college among Hmong students.

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