

**Director** – James McKeel

**Coordinator** – Cheryl LaCroix

**Peer Advisors** – Wudneh Gaga, Breanna Peterson, Julie Larson, Cameo Haaksma, Jenny Vaydich, Kendra Olson

**Overview**

2003-04 marked the fifth year of the AAC as a year of progress on new initiatives, continuing work on future goals, and a transition in staff. At the request of the Director, James McKeel, and with the support of the Registrar, Mary Cisar, and Human Resources, Cheryl LaCroix was promoted from Academic Administrative Assistant to Full-Time Coordinator of Academic Advising. Also at the request of the Director, as he completes his three-year term, the faculty title/role in the AAC will be changed from Director to Faculty Liaison to allow a clearer and more economic division of responsibilities between the Coordinator and the new Faculty Liaison (Mary Cisar).

This restructuring of the AAC, given the current budget cuts, will allow the AAC a fulltime presence for faculty and students through the Coordinator's position and a direct access to faculty, students, staff, and administration through the Faculty Liaison/Registrar position.

This year, in addition to making advisor/advisee assignments, developing and delivering advisor/advisee support materials, training and overseeing new faculty and peer advisors, planning and leading Week-One schedule planning meetings with the ASC, providing support for students at Registration, and meeting one-on-one with students in need of special academic advising, the AAC was also involved in the First-Year Experience Task Force, the Student Information System Task Force, the Lilly Program, the Minnesota Private College Advising Network, the Registrar's Office, and lead information sessions for the Spring Open House.

The AAC has also collaborated with the Center for Experiential Learning, the Academic Support Center, and all academic departments as it seeks to improve its services and creative innovative programs for the future. Issues of continuing concern include: Week-One advising/schedule planning, advising load equity, awards/recognition for faculty advising, the future of advising with online registration, advising assessment, continuing advisor training, and quality advisor/advisee interaction.

This spring the AAC said farewell to three excellent veteran Peer Advisors and interviewed and welcomed in our new Peer Advisor staff which includes Wudneh Gaga, Breanna Peterson, Megan Jensen, Amber Johnson, Elizabeth R. Johnson, and Valerie Veo.

Following is an outline of AAC initiatives.

## **AAC Initiatives for 2003-05**

James McKeel, Director of Academic Advising

May 12, 2004

- **Exploration program** – Fall 2004. In collaboration with Pat Smith and Colleen Nugent of the CEL the AAC will introduce to students, faculty, parents, and staff a program that encourages an intentional exploration of the liberal arts by highlighting and coordinating existing academic and advising programs.
- **Departmental Templates** – Summer 2004. The AAC will send sample departmental advising templates to chairs for their perusal and feedback. If utilized the templates could be used to clarify short and long-term schedule planning within and across disciplines in conjunction with the course catalog, class and lab, and faculty advising handbook.
- **Week-One Advising** – Fall 2004. In cooperation with the ASC and academic departments the AAC will continue to improve its training of new faculty and peer advisors, advisor prep and advisee meetings, and FYS Schedule planning sessions.
- **AAC Web Page** – Summer 2004. The AAC will update and improve its web page with advising handbook and step-by-step upgrades, a transparent description of the AAC functions, peer advisor profiles, and more useful and direct links to other faculty/student services.
- **Best Practices** – Summer/Fall 2004. In response to dept. chair, faculty, and student feedback the AAC will encourage new initiatives in the following areas: Advising recognition, faculty advising mentors, mid-semester advisor/advisee check ups, dept. collaboration with APAs, advising equity, AAC assessment, and departmental advising sessions during Week One.
- **AAC Manual** – Summer 2004. In collaboration with Mary Cisar and Cheryl LaCroix I will create an AAC manual that outlines the duties and calendar of the coordinator and faculty liaison.

Current FYS services

Summer -     Advising Questionnaire  
                  Placement Test Information  
                  Summer Preparation Sheet  
                  Advisor Assignment  
                  Advisor Information to Students and Faculty  
                  Advisor Information Packets  
                  Advising Folders Preparation  
                  ASC and AAC Preparation for Schedule Planning  
                  (New Advisor, Cluster, and APA training with ASC)

Fall - Spring   Week One:

                  Advisor/Advisee Picnic Meeting  
                  Meeting with International Students  
                  Four Schedule Planning Sessions  
                  Large and Small Group Planning with APAs and ASC  
                  APAs advising visits to all FY dorms and rooms  
                  Departmental Information Sessions  
                  Schedule Planning Meeting with Advisor  
                  Advising Support at Registration with APAs  
                  (AAC Web Page/New Step-by-Step Guide to Academic Advising  
                  Faculty Advising Handbook)

                  Semester I and II:

                  AAC Email Invitation to Students  
                  Office Advising Meetings  
                  Advising Refresher Email to Faculty  
                  Advisor Packets  
                  Advisor/Advisee Schedule Planning Meetings  
                  Support at Registration with APAs  
                  Change of Advisor Help

Future FYS Services and Improvememnts

Exploration Program with CEL  
Departmental Advising Sessions  
Improved Advisor/Advisee Meetings  
Departmental Advising Templates  
Improved Veteran Advisor Training and Support  
Mid-Year Follow-up Advisor Meetings  
Continuous Reporting System for Advising  
Stronger Links to other Support Services and Departments  
Improved Campus Visibility and Assessment  
Improved Registration Technical Support