

# The Ideal Student Journey To and Through College

**This journey map** was developed by 3 students from different institutions with different intersecting identities and college experiences. The reason we developed this map is because through our different and shared experiences we believe that higher education advising needs to be reevaluated. The current state of higher education advising is falling short of students' needs. Through collaboration, we created the ideal advising experience model. This journey map may not represent all students and their needs, but it was designed to be adapted to the individual.



## Goal and Process of Creating the Journey Map

The journey map is meant to be an aid in holistic advising for students and advisors alike. The intention for this map is to allow the student a visual aid to see the projection of potential pathways in their academic future. For advisors, this map can be used as a tool to adapt their advising to the individual student no matter the major. At our separate institutions we gathered qualitative interview research from peers and faculty. This research allowed us to incorporate multiple views, ideals, and opinions. The information we compiled is important to the future of advising and student success because this is a way to understand the intersectionality of experience of each student. We believe that holistic advising cannot be complete without all needs of a student, academic or otherwise, being met. This map allows for students and advisors to identify their unique needs and critical time periods during their post-secondary journey.



## Themes

Throughout our experience gathering information and developing this map we were able to identify consistent gaps in current post-secondary advising that affect student success. Firstly, we noticed that institutions are set up for students coming from high school but our ideal would be support for students coming from any situation. It is important for advisors to understand that there is broad diversity in student starting points. That diversity in experiences continues throughout their entire higher education journey. Another recurring theme is that institutions do not account for the variety of non-traditional students within their student body. Without recognizing the diversity it is impossible to identify the needs of all students which ultimately deters student success.

## How to use the map

This map is valuable to any advisor or student. Everyone has unique journeys and this map allows a student/advisor to prepare as best as they can. As you review this map keep in mind where your role fits. Think about if there is anything missing, what you would add, what doesn't apply. Think of any systems or processes within your institution that already exist and could be improved.

**Review the questions to ask yourself as you work across the journey map. This should take about 15 minutes.**

- What ideas does this map provide for improving advising?
- How does this journey map help inform redesign of advising at your institution?
- In what ways does your institution recognize the unique journeys of students?
- How does your institution support these unique journeys?
- How can you better support student access and success?



## Reflection

Throughout the process of creating this journey map we have come across multiple areas in institutions that we feel require some restructuring. One recurring issue we learned with input from faculty interviews is that professors/lecturers/instructors lack pedagogical training. The how to teach and what to teach seems to be lost on some of the instructors. Although that doesn't directly correlate to the holistic advising experience we believe that this issue ultimately lowers student success. Having professors who are exceptional teachers makes a difference. Having teachers who understand how to teach can also alter the equity within the classroom. There are best practices when it comes to everything, but when you become a teacher best practices can change person to person. It is critical to student development.

We discovered that there is a large demand for more information regarding individual classes. Students would like to be able to see the basic syllabus for classes that they are interested in without having to enroll in the class. The

basic syllabus would provide information regarding the general expectations of the class and homework/classwork load. This will allow students the opportunity to plan their semesters more efficiently and realistically. This is less of an issue that needs to be fixed, but an idea to make the current process better.

We also think that having a continuous survey that students can fill out to communicate their needs would help aid in the connection between advisor and student. This survey can range from "are you happy with your classes this year?" to "Have there been any significant changes in your personal life that has affected your academic life?"

And most importantly, the responsibility of a student's well being academically or personally does not fall on advisors alone. The responsibility should be shared between all faculty within the institution. There needs to be support in place for everyone so we can all help keep each other motivated and successful.

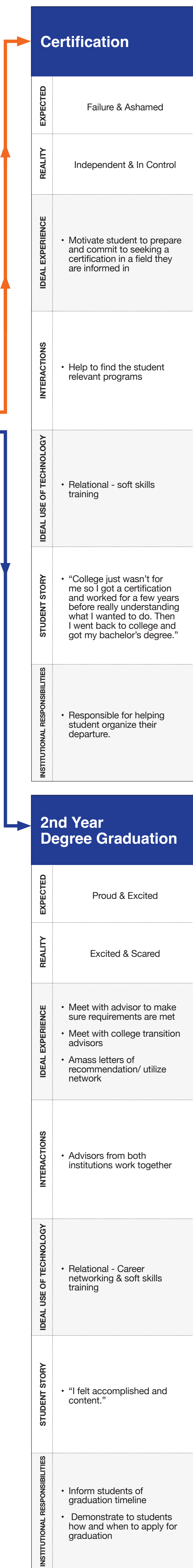
# Student Journey Map



## Entry into the Institution

- Students are coming into the institution from various life experiences, including but not limited to:
- Re-enrolling due to a hiatus
  - Dual-enrollment
  - Current or former military service
  - Coming from incarceration
  - Immigration status and experience
  - Coming from a profession or different institution
  - Transfer from a two-year or technical institution

Steps	Pre-college Registration & Prep	Orientation	College Registration	Class Registration	Ongoing Coordinated Culture of Care	Subsequent Semesters
<b>Emotional Journey</b>	EXPECTED: Aware & Excited REALITY: Nervous & Excited	Confident & Supported Overwhelmed & Apprehensive	Confident & Prepared & Curious Intimidated & Confused & Determined	Empowered & Supported Confused & Ready	Experienced & Confident Confused & Unsure	Accomplished & Integrated Growing confidence
<b>Ideal Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare students for application process</li> <li>• Equip students with preparation checklist</li> <li>• Prepare for the following steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend orientation and engage in activities</li> <li>• Intro to teachers/advisors</li> <li>• Familiarize with college culture, jargon 101</li> <li>• Understand how basic classes are structured</li> <li>• Basic core classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider all pathways</li> <li>• Create feasible schedule, understanding how some classes work together</li> <li>• Meet student basic needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisor makes sure needs are met including costs and materials.</li> <li>• Declare major/don't</li> <li>• Core classes to learn the ropes</li> <li>• FAFSA/Scholarships completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student aware of all institution class requirements</li> <li>• Student clearly knows where to go online to register and how to register</li> <li>• Declares major and receives new advisor that is major specific</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully integrate student into college culture.</li> <li>• Maintain an ongoing relationship with advisor plus other supports</li> <li>• Student is aware of where to find resources and supports. Familiarize student with possible extra curricular opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Interactions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with first year transition advisor and being to discuss postsecondary options</li> <li>• Research and apply to colleges</li> <li>• Research scholarships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with advisor</li> <li>• Attend a peer panel with experienced students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with advisor and/or peer mentor if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with advisor if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with advisor to make sure needs are met and be up to date about current needs</li> <li>• Meet with students in same major/ peer mentor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major specific advisor</li> <li>• Relevant faculty</li> <li>• Extra curricular representatives</li> </ul>
<b>Ideal Use of Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directional - Skills Assessment &amp; Career Guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigational - User friendly school site &amp; resource hub</li> <li>• Relational - Better Communication &amp; student advisor matching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directional - Integrated data for full student profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transactional - Degree audit and tracking &amp; optimize class demand</li> <li>• Navigational - Detailed class information &amp; campus maps &amp; Resource hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directional - predictive analysis &amp; flexible course delivery options &amp; enrollment, retention, and engagement analytics</li> <li>• Transactional - Optimize class demand</li> <li>• Navigational - Connections to resources</li> <li>• Relational - Automated scheduling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All technology available</li> </ul>
<b>Student Story</b>	• "I was really looking forward to the college experience."	• "The orientation that I attended was really uninteresting, so I ended up bailing after getting the important documents."	• "I wasn't as confident in my institution choice as I would have liked to be."	• "I was a little disappointed that I would be taking the core classes first thing in college, but it worked out for the better."	• "After I was given my first semester of classes I was on my own. I depended on older and more experienced friends to teach me how to register from that point on."	• "I felt a little lost and kind of abandoned."
<b>Institutional Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized and accessible information</li> <li>• Provide first year / college transition advisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and organize school orientation</li> <li>• Distribute information regarding orientation (syllabi, orientation schedules/events, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advisors and peer mentors</li> <li>• Provide any other information needed to make a confident decision regarding where to attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide well trained and connected advisors that understand the institution as a whole, not just academic requirements</li> <li>• Provide extra support when able</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage students in university culture that will assist/inform them in their future decisions at the institution</li> <li>• Provide major specific advisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibilities from steps 1-5 continued</li> </ul>



■ = 2 year education route  
■ = 4 year education route

### 4 Year Institution

EXPECTED	Proud & Excited
REALITY	Excited & Scared
IDEAL EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm handoff from previous institution to 4 year institution</li> <li>• Student is completely informed</li> </ul>
INTERACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisors from both institutions work together</li> </ul>
IDEAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transactional - Transfer Matrix</li> </ul>
STUDENT STORY	• "I felt more confident than I expected to. They [Northern Arizona University] were surprisingly efficient."
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for scheduling and management of graduation ceremony.</li> <li>• Provide cap &amp; gown</li> </ul>

### Transfer to Another Institution\*

EXPECTED	Prepared & Curious
REALITY	Intimidated & Confused
IDEAL EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm handoff between previous institution and current institution.</li> <li>• Student enters new institution aware of all the possible changes and/or consistencies within their transcript</li> </ul>
INTERACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capstone teacher</li> <li>• Faculty advisor</li> </ul>
IDEAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable live feed of graduation</li> </ul>
STUDENT STORY	• "I felt more confident than I expected to. They [Northern Arizona University] were surprisingly efficient."
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide well trained and connected advisors that understand the institution as a whole, not just academic requirements</li> <li>• Provide extra support when able</li> </ul>

### Graduation from 4 Year Institution

EXPECTED	Proud & Excited
REALITY	Excited & Scared
IDEAL EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach out to let student know when to apply for graduation</li> <li>• form for cap and gown automatically accessible to graduating student</li> </ul>
INTERACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capstone teacher</li> <li>• Faculty advisor</li> </ul>
IDEAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable live feed of graduation</li> </ul>
STUDENT STORY	• "I felt more confident than I expected to. They [Northern Arizona University] were surprisingly efficient."
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for scheduling and management of graduation ceremony.</li> <li>• Provide cap &amp; gown</li> </ul>

	Job/Career	Alumni Feedback & Evaluation
EXPECTED	Anxious & Unprepared	Accomplished & Supportive
REALITY	More confident than expected	
IDEAL EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the degree you obtained for relevant work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate a community that shares what's working and what needs improvement</li> </ul>
INTERACTIONS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with university/college to provide feedback to improve processes</li> <li>• Work as mentors with current students</li> </ul>
IDEAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relational - better communication</li> </ul>
STUDENT STORY	• "I felt much more confident on my first day of work than I was expecting to."	
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and organize alumni events</li> <li>• Analyze received feedback</li> </ul>

\*Students may transfer to another institution for several reasons, including reverse transfer, enrollment at a different 2- or 4-year institution due to things such as non-supportive environment, finances, lack of classes for major pathways, impacted majored, and lack of opportunities.

