Ethical Issues in Advising

Professional Aspects of Advising
A professional is a person who has an understanding of his or her profession sufficient to be self-monitoring. One outgrowth of this self-monitoring is that professionals have thought through ethical issues, principle and practices, including the following:

1. You understand the limits of your expertise.
2. You acknowledge what you do not know.
3. You take the initiative to seek consultation whenever there is a question.
4. You make referrals when necessary.
5. You are a continuous learner.
6. You avoid dual relationships.
   (These principles apply, as well, to every academic discipline.)

Four Ethical Ideals of Advising

1. Beneficence: Bringing about the most benefit and the least harm that one possibly can.
2. Justice: Treating all individuals equally, granting no one rights or privileges that are not granted to all.
3. Respect for persons: Treating individuals as ends in themselves, never merely as means to your own ends.
4. Fidelity: Living up to commitments that you have made, whether explicitly or implicitly.

Ethical Principles of Advising

1. Maximize educational benefit to the advisee.
2. Treat all students equitably; don’t play favorites or create special privileges.
3. Enhance the advisee’s ability to make decisions.
4. Tell the advisee the truth about policies and procedures. Tell others the truth as well. Respect the confidentiality of advisee interactions.
5. Advocate for the advisee with other offices when warranted.
6. Support the educational philosophy and policies of the institution.
7. Maintain the credibility of the advising program.
8. Accord colleagues appropriate professional courtesy and respect.

Minimum Standards of Conduct

1. Do not exploit your unequal relationship with advisee.
2. Be available to your advisees. Keep office hours and keep appointments. Be on time.
3. Know the information that you need in order to give useful advice.
4. Meet deadlines.
5. Do not discriminate against students.
6. Do not limit advising to the quick signature.
7. Do not malign colleagues.