PART I

ACADEMIC ADVISING: THEORY-INTO-PRACTICE

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of the PMU Academic Advising handbook is to assist faculty members, administrators, and staff in promoting quality academic advising that goes beyond course selection and registration. The intention is to make available a quick and easy-to-read reference that helps you in providing timely, accurate, and concise information on advising-related issues. Besides, the aim is to guide you through the strictly structured academic programs of PMU while providing an in-depth and research-based practical knowledge on the art of academic advising to ensure a positive, academic experience for students, faculty, and advisors.

As academic advisors, our role is very crucial to the advancement of the university's academic vision and mission. As a reference tool, the handbook provides you with the necessary information that makes you familiar enough with the curricula in the major field to talk expertly about the diverse options that meet your advisees' academic abilities and aspired future careers. In addition, it highlights some important, research-based fundamentals in the field of academic advising that PMU aims at achieving.

Noticeably, this guide is not a substitute for the PMU academic catalog. In fact, it highlights the academic advising vision of the university, complements the academic catalog, and keeps you up-to-date on changes in the curriculum and policy procedures

that could impact advising and students' choice of courses.

Overview of the Handbook

The handbook is organized into four parts:

Part one, "Academic Advising: Theory-Into-Practice", situates academic advising within the cultural narratives of the teaching-learning process that PMU advocates. It underlines a descriptive and research-based model of academic advising that PMU adopts. The section also focuses on the intellectual legacy on which the descriptive model has built its theoretical assumptions.

Part two, "Goals and Procedures of Academic Advising at PMU", guides the reader through the complexities of academic advising, highlighting certain advising guidelines. Central in this section are the procedures of the academic advising process that make the advisor better able to plan, conduct, and evaluate goal-oriented academic advising sessions.

Part three, "Advising for Academic Purposes", takes you through key aspects of the academic advising process regarding the preparatory and core curriculum programs. It introduces the academic advisor to a number of common concerns facing students who wish to change their majors outside of their chosen colleges. The section focuses on the importance of warning students that changing from a Business program, for example, to any Engineering program would result in an extra year of coursework. This part encourages academic advisors to take on the responsibility of letting their advisees gain a sense of the route they are taking, because if students do not know the destination, how do they go from where they are to where they want to be?

Part four, "Academic Regulations and Policies", selects from the academic catalog relevant information that advisors need to be aware of. The section provides information that concentrates on attendance policy, academic integrity, and definition of terms such as plagiarism, academic probation, and grading system.

PMU Academic Advising Vision

PMU views academic advising as an important key to students' success. At PMU, we look at academic advising as a holistic, developmental, procedural and descriptive process that goes beyond course selection and course registration to an educational activity deeply rooted in teaching and learning.

The challenge, then, becomes how to enhance academic advising in such a way that makes it integral to the educational process at PMU. Central to the vision that the PMU advocates and promotes is to operationalize academic advising in the manner that helps students in the development of comprehensive and meaningful plans that address and assess their academic potentialities and future career goals. In this regard, effective and knowledgeable advisors are those who assist students in making the best academic decisions possible.

Broadly speaking, the articulated academic advising vision builds on the university's vision and mission, seeing the academic teaching and learning/advising process in terms of cycles, the outcome of each cycle depends on the way in which consecutive cycles are approached. Seen from this perspective, academic advising/learning: is cyclical, is a never ending process and will cause all of us to reflect on, consider and reconsider our practice. This is as it is because we tend to teach the

way we advise and advise the way we teach. We are always already teaching while advising and vice versa. Both of teaching and advising, in this sense, are interrelated, interdependent and interwoven.

Historicizing Academic Advising

The concept of academic advising goes as far back as the Sophists. The word Sophist in the Greek tradition means a person of wisdom (Sophia). The Sophists[1] were a group of teachers who used to advise young Athenians on the know how of the art of rhetoric.

Also, the art of academic advising goes as far back as Socrates who used to academically advise his students through the Socratic Teaching Methodology in which the advisor tries to enlighten his advisees through goal-oriented questions. So, tracing the origin of advising to the Greeks with its roots in Sophism depicts the academic advisor as a knowledgeable person of insight, understanding, intelligence, sensibility, and responsiveness.

Current Advising Models

In the modern era, the concept of advising can be traced to Colonial America where instructors served as moral and intellectual advisors. Advising, in this sense, was considered as an instructive task to teach the prevailing ethics and the advisors were considered as mentors who had to structure the behavior of their advisees.

[1] The Greek Sophists were a varied collection of itinerate intellectuals, teachers, and orators who, generally speaking, focused on teaching young Athenians art of rhetoric so that they would be professionally successful rhetoricians in the civic life of Athens during the fifth century (Schiappa, 1991).

Yet the 1960s witnessed an intellectual and cultural paradigm shift in the way higher education in the USA looked at academic advising. Since then, it became apparent that the need existed for personal, vocational, and academic advising for both men and women. By the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, academic advising focused on academically assisting students and retaining them in higher education.

During the 1970s, studies began to link academic advising to student retention. In 1976, California held the first state-wide advising conference. The first national conference was held in the U.S. just one year later. Since then, academic advising has become a process of utmost importance that guides students through a crucial part of their personal and academic life.

Predominant Academic Advising Models

The literature on academic advising centralizes two models: A **prescriptive**, authoritarian model which considers students as voiceless, empty vessels, immature, irresponsible and with no life experience to be validated. According to this model, students are not important to the process of academic planning as the advisor assumes the role of a planner and the only trusted designer of what should be done. The other predominant model is **descriptive** in nature. It assumes that students have a voice to be honored and are capable of making decisions for themselves.

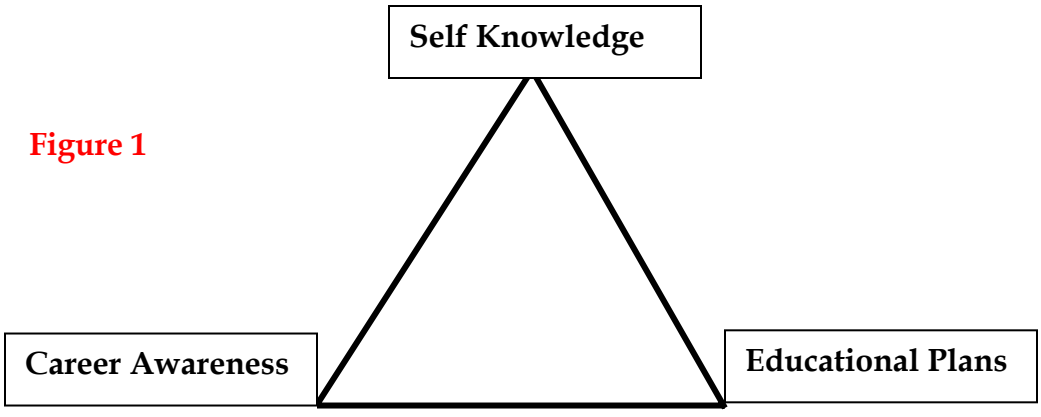
The advisor, in the descriptive model, is a coach, a mentor, and a facilitator who works with the students in co-exploring and co-developing meaningful degree plans that address and assess their academic and professional needs and goals. This

descriptive model, developed by Terry O'Banion in 1972, also is developmental in nature.

O'Banion's model considers academic advising as a process of helping students self explore their personal and academic abilities and future career goals. The model looks at the task of major and course selection as a procedural and developmental process. For students to effectively develop a comprehensive and meaningful degree plan that addresses their academic and professional career goals, they need to be engaged in some type of a sequential process where students are advised to self explore their potentials and life goals. The key factors in this model are self-awareness, current educational plans and career awareness. This model considers one of the main goals of academic advising to be in helping students self-explore their life goals and make a desired link between their professional goals and the world of work (see figure 1).

Feature of the Descriptive Model

Figure 1



The literature on academic advising informs us that academic advisors oftentimes presuppose that students experience some type of a sequential, self-exploratory process to come up with their aspired academic plans. Yet the truth of the matter is that usually few students go through this self-exploratory process without goal-oriented guidance. Therefore, putting a premium on course selection may deviate both of the advisor and the advisee from co-developing and establishing a desired sequential decision-making process. Research also informs us that effective, descriptive academic advising has a positive impact on students' learning outcomes.

PMU Academic Advising and Instructional Models

The advising model that the PMU promotes and advocates is in harmony with O'Banion's descriptive, developmental model. PMU supports a student-centered, active and constructivist approach to teaching/learning in the classroom. This philosophy is in harmony with the descriptive approach to academic advising which views the student as an active participant in the student's program of study.

The instructional model that the PMU advocates endorses Inquiry-Based Learning[2], at the center of which is the educational philosophy of learning by doing. It also speaks of collaborative, project-based learning where instructors and advisors play

[2] Inquiry Based Learning has its roots in constructivist learning where students as inquirers seek to validate their experience through connecting what they know to what they want to know. In this respect, students are supposed to fully examine a phenomenon or an object of interest to them in the world in relation to their own socio-culturally and historically situated horizons. The instructor's role is very crucial. As a guide he/she is supposed to scaffold the learning enterprise through, for example, suggesting relevant, reliable, and rich resources and materials that help students as inquires to accomplish their academic objectives (Jonassen, 2004).

the role of facilitators who coach and scaffold the learning/advising experience. Students' degree plans will be born out of scaffolded and dialogic human interactions.

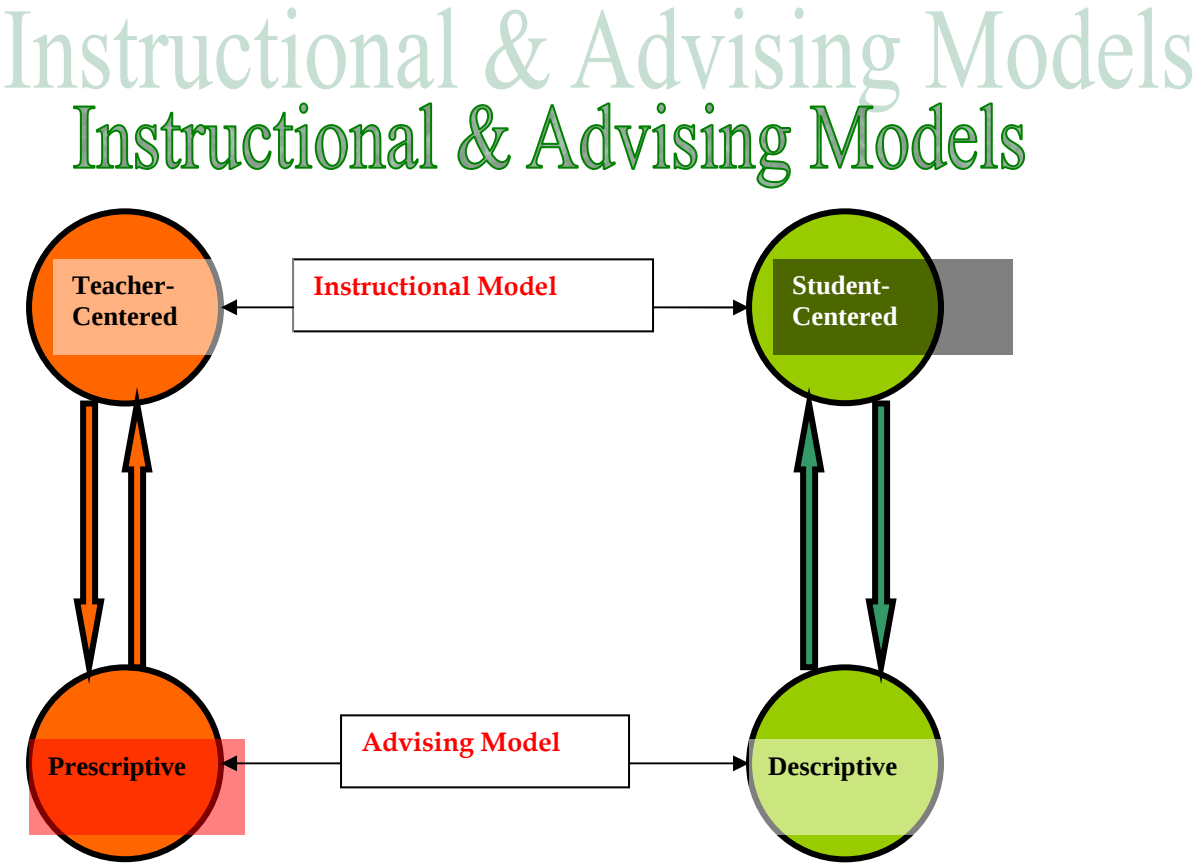
It is important to note that the pedagogical vision that the PMU advocates is very much consistent with the descriptive academic advising model that it promotes. This inquiry-based, instructional model puts a premium on exploring the topic under inquiry through an interpretation of the available resources that address and assess a topic or a subject. Exploring the topic allows students to self construct funds of knowledge related to the subject under inquiry. After constructing the required funds of knowledge, it is recommended that students collaborate to further share information and reflectively enter into a conversation with the minds of the others (in our case the advisor) and the world outside of their communal conceptual schemas to enrich their understanding of the issue before they take decisive academic decisions.

Constructivist-Learning Mode

Explore ⟹ Construct ⟹ Collaborate ⟹ Communicate

The premise that stands behind this constructivist and student-centered teaching view speaks of the advising model that centralizes collaboration, self-exploration, and scaffolded academic self planning. The following diagram (Figure 2) explains the interrelatedness of the instructional and the advising models that PMU promotes and aspires to accomplish.

Figure 2



The above-mentioned diagram indicates that there is always already a consistency between the way we teach and the way we advise. That is, we teach the way we advise and we advise the way we teach. The behaviorist, teacher-centered instructional model speaks of a prescriptive academic advising methodology; whereas, the constructivist, student-centered instructional model speaks of a descriptive advising methodology.

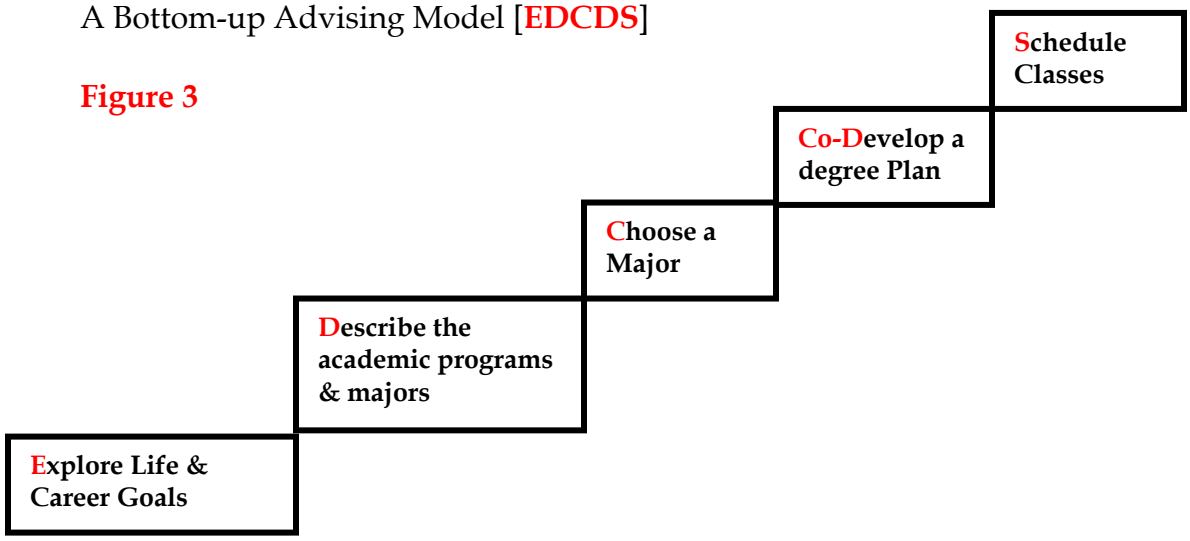
Since PMU adopts a constructivist, student-centered instructional vision, academic advisors are expected to integrate a descriptive, procedural and developmental model of academic advising. The instructional model of the PMU

centralizes a bottom-up and descriptive academic advising model in which the advisor acts as a guide and a facilitator who assists his/her advisees in making academic decisions. Viewed as such, the academic advising process would be a learning experience in which the advisor models the process of decision making (See Figure 3).

A Bottom-up Academic Advising Model

A Bottom-up Advising Model [**EDCDS**]

Figure 3



PART TWO

GOALS AND PROCEDURES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING AT PMU

Goals of Academic Advising at PMU

The descriptive, academic advising model that PMU promotes sees the academic advisor as a role model, a mentor—someone to challenge, inspire, and guide the student throughout his/her college career. As a mentor, the advisor has several goals such as

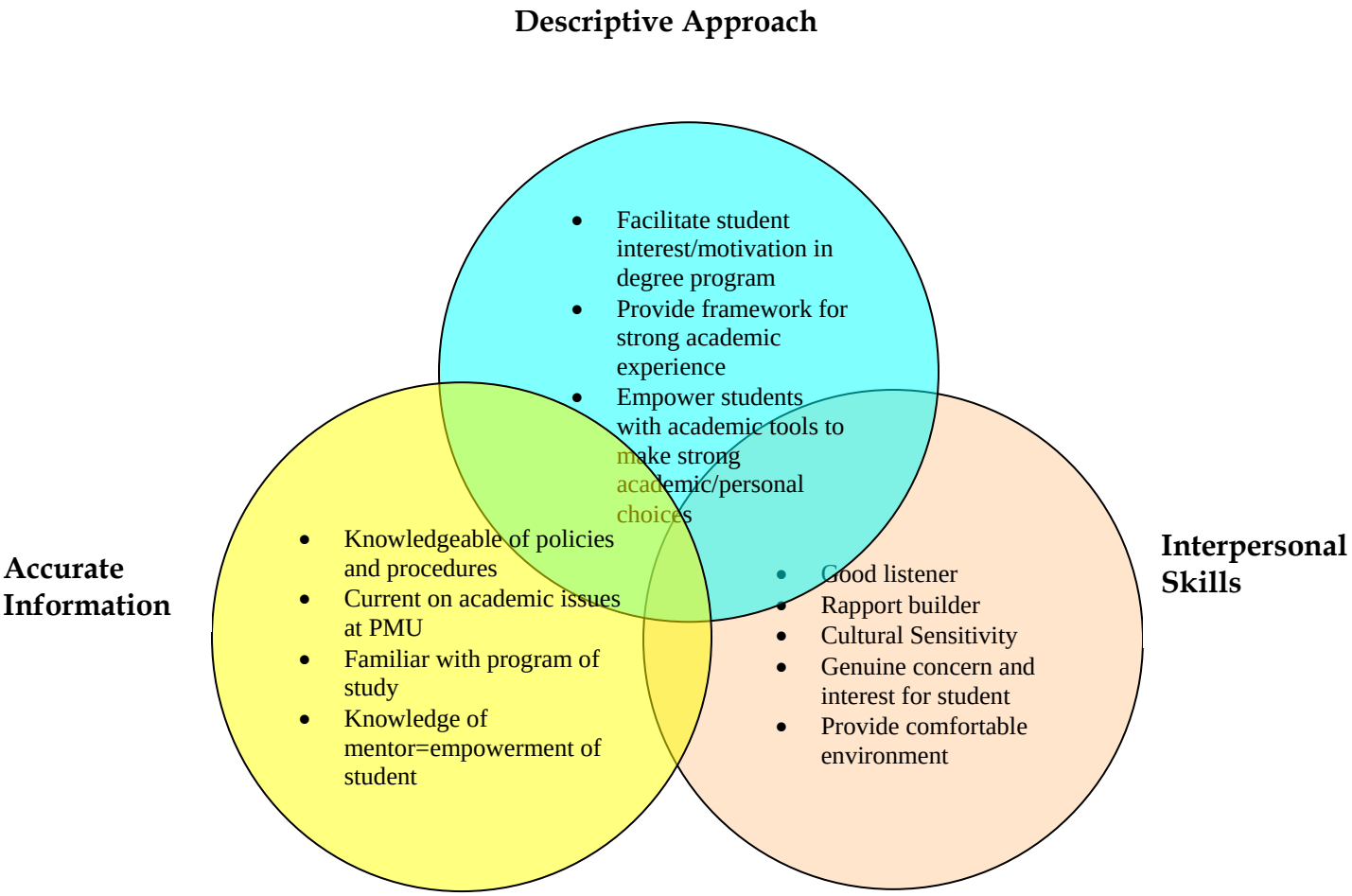
- developing a rapport with his/her—new freshmen students who may feel intimated and confused about their first meeting with a university faculty member; it is the mentor's role to develop a rapport with the student that puts him/her at ease,
- helping the student gain independence,
- knowing the student's major courses,
- providing practical information based on his/her own knowledge as a student and as a faculty member—each mentor's own experience is invaluable to the role of advisor,
- asking the right questions—often students will arrive at PMU with an undeclared major and a variety of questions; while some questions may be easy to answer, others will require a more in-depth knowledge of the student's intentions while attending PMU,
- helping the students form boundaries—a new full-time PMU student is advised

to take between 12-15 credits during his/her first semester which is usually 4-5 courses. A full-time student is defined as enrolled in more than 12 credits; a 12-15 credit schedule for a new student is advisable as he/she is adapting to the university environment,

- facilitating orientation into the academic environment—while the university will have orientation days, it is essential for the advisor to remind the students of the importance of attendance, deadlines, drop/add periods, planning for long-term assignments, and the overall demands of a university environment including personal responsibility,
- and smoothing the progress of the students' educational shift from a more passive, behaviorist perspective to a more active, constructivist approach; the following diagram (Figure 4) sets out the parameters of the aspired advisor at PMU.

A Model of a Successful Mentor: Descriptive Approach, Interpersonal Communication Skills, and Information

Figure 4



Academic Advising Procedures

New students will be assigned an advisor upon acceptance into the university. Current students will be assigned based on major and student status (Core or Prep). Initially, the student will be assigned an advisor from the Preparatory Program or Core Curriculum faculty.

As the student moves through his/her degree program and as the university programs develop, the students will be advised by a faculty member in their chosen major. According to PMU system design, faculty advisors are especially valuable for the final junior and senior years. They should possess expertise in the major subject areas and should come from the students' disciplines. One primary advantage to this is that the advisor is familiar with the student's academic program and can explain course work and help with deficiencies the student might face.

Academic Advising Guidelines:

Academic advisors keep an updated folder for each of his/her advisees. Student folder includes:

- Student's high school diploma
- Transcript of the previous semester
- Student's schedule of the current semester
- List of the courses that will be offered in the coming academic semester
- Both the student's high school diploma and previous semester's grades can be used as indicators that the student's academic abilities qualify him/her to pursue his/her chosen program of study. For example, Engineering candidates are expected to have achieved a grade of a "C" or better in each of the scientifically-oriented core subjects (Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and other related subjects).
- Also, it is highly recommended that advisors keep a precise and concise report on each advising session with a student. This report should be kept in student's file and periodically be updated.
- Advisors are expected to schedule the advising session during their office hours and post these hours on their office doors. If they have an administrative assistant, he/she will schedule the advising hours each week at times convenient for students. During pre-registration and

registration periods, advisors are expected to increase their advising hours

- It is recommended to post an appointment sign-up sheet on the office door of the academic advisor.
- Before registration periods, academic advisors are expected to be very familiar with the content of the offered courses in the freshman and sophomore years.
- Advising is time consuming, therefore, it is highly recommended to review your advisee's record before the appointment. You can use an electronic reminder or your administrative assistant to remind you ahead of time of your advisees' appointments. Spending 5 to 10 minutes in reviewing your advisee's record before the appointment would ultimately make the advising session more productive and rewarding to your advisee. This will also make you focus on addressing and assessing your advisees' academic questions and concerns. According to your review of your advisee's file and academic progress, you can outline a list of the pressing academic items that should be addressed during the advising session.
- During the first advising session, advisees need to be aware that pre-requisite courses must be taken first
- For advisees to be on the correct academic track, academic advisors need to inform their advisees that certain majors require particular

Mathematics and Science courses (See the enclosed Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies charts).

By the end of the first session, your advisee should be able to:

- Understand his/her degree plan
- Compose a balanced semester's schedule
- Know the basic core requirements for his/her chosen major
- Recognize the distinctive features of his/her chosen program of study
- Interpret the university catalog especially the part that is relevant to his/her chosen major of study
- Understand the inflexible structure of the university programs
- Comprehend the University Core Curriculum requirements which all PMU students must take regardless of their chosen major of study.

PART THREE

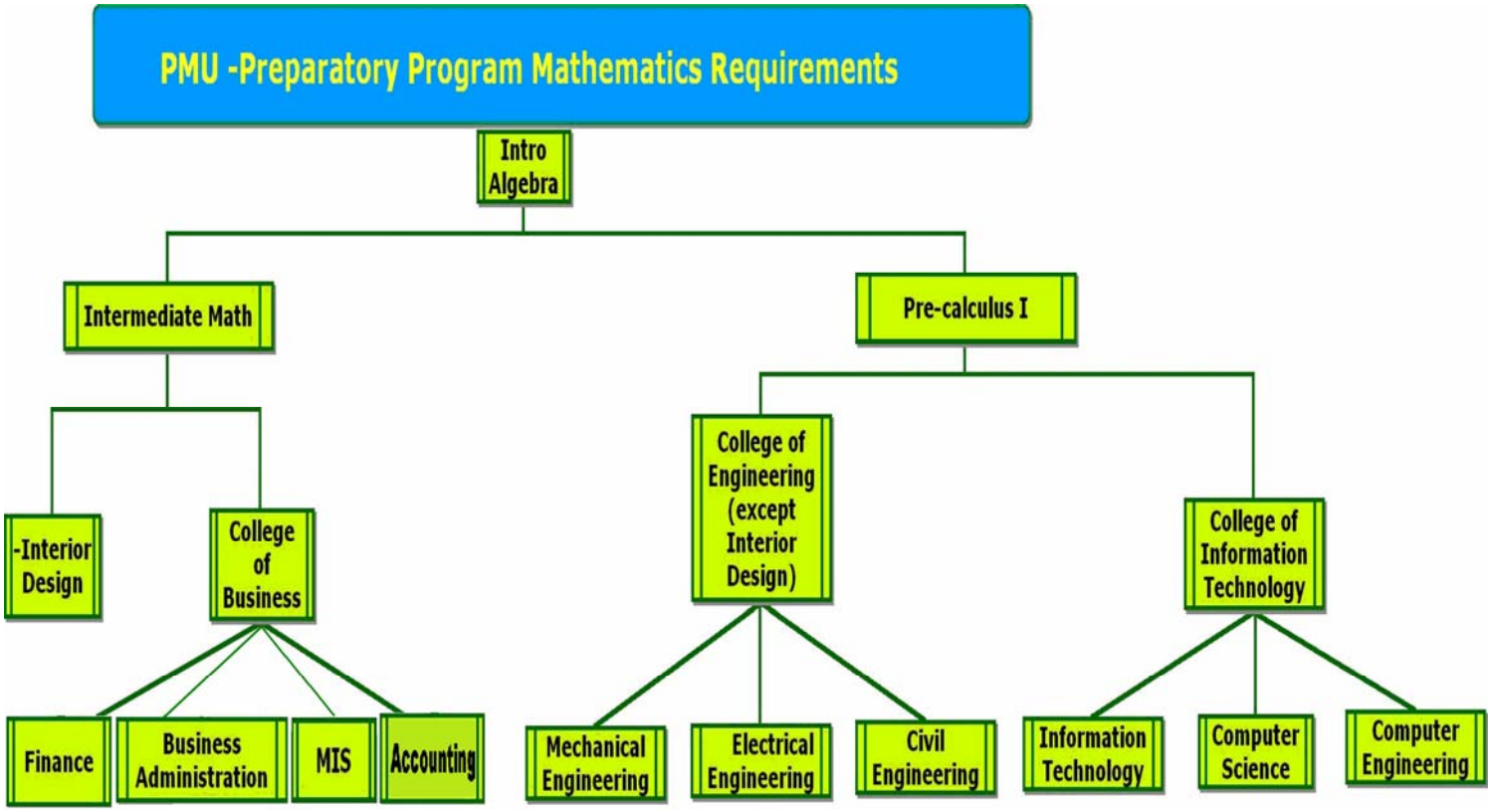
ADVISING FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

The PMU graduate will ideally study for five years before graduation. The non-credit preparation program consists of two semesters (may vary according to student's proficiency in English and mathematics). A student who enters the university with an intermediate level English proficiency will study one semester at the intermediate level and the second semester at the advanced level.

Preparation Program Advising

Preparatory Program students do need advising especially by the end of the first semester where they have to select the Mathematics course for the second semester. According to the University's system design, during the second semester of Mathematics and after they finish Introductory Algebra, students have a choice of two tracks (Pre-calculus I or Intermediate Algebra) depending on their chosen major of study at the University. Students seeking entrance to majors in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical Engineering, Information Technology, Computer Science, and Computer Engineering take PREPM 0022: Pre-calculus I during the second semester of the Preparation Program; whereas students seeking entrance to majors in Interior Design and any of the college of Business majors are required to take PREPM 0012 Intermediate Algebra during the second semester of the preparation program **(See Figure5).**

Figure 5



Apart from course selection and semester scheduling, preparatory program students have the right to receive quality academic advising services regarding their academic progress and future major selection. Preparatory program students do want to know what is expected of them at the college level. During the preparatory program, students also have expectations of their mentors. They need to co-explore with the academic advisors their academic weaknesses and strengths. They also need guidance. Research on academic advising indicates that there is a strong relationship between effective advising and student retention and success. The literature also considers

effective student advising to have a positive impact on students' learning outcomes and their willingness to complete their degree on time.

Core Curriculum Advising

The preparation year is the gateway to the core curriculum. This begins the 4-year credited journey to a bachelor's degree. Here, the student takes courses in the university core curriculum (English, Arabic, and physical education) and the college core curriculum (mathematics, natural and physical sciences, and social and behavioral sciences) before and while taking courses in their respective colleges: information technology, engineering (interior design for females), and business. During this academic journey, the students will take a three-course assessment capstone series (one course each year starting in the sophomore year) to gauge and demonstrate the progress of the student.

According to PMU system design, the Core Curriculum contains three components:

- The University Core Curriculum requirements
- The College Core Curriculum requirements
- The Degree-specific requirements

The University Core Curriculum requirements [34 hours] contain courses required of all PMU students regardless of their majors. These requirements consist of three groups:

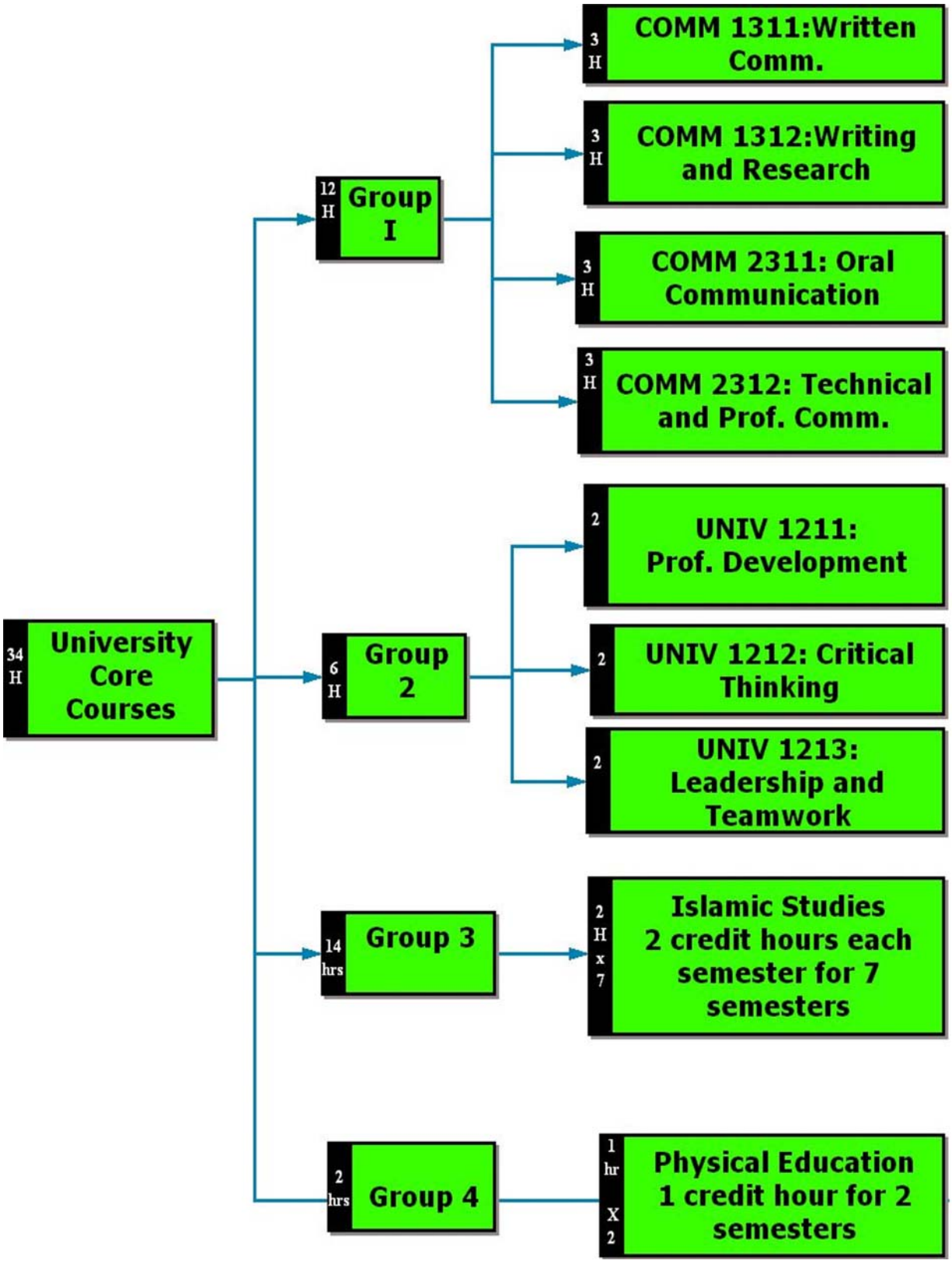
Group 1 contains **12** hours of communication courses [Written Communication, Oral Communication, Research Writing, and Technical Communication] and **6** hours of competency courses [Professional Development, Critical Thinking, and Teamwork and Leadership] which, according to PMU system design, support the key competencies that students needed in the global market: **Communication, Technological Competence, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Professional Competence, Teamwork and Leadership.**

Group 2 contains **6** hours of professional Competencies

Group 3 consists of **14** hours of Arabic and Islamic Studies

Group 4 contains **2** hours of Physical Education. The total number of credit hours for the University Core Requirements is **34 (See figure 6).**

Figure 6


34 H
University Core Courses
12 H
Group I
3 H
COMM 1311:Written Comm.
3 H
COMM 1312:Writing and Research
3 H
COMM 2311: Oral Communication
3 H
COMM 2312: Technical and Prof. Comm.
6 H
Group 2
2
UNIV 1211: Prof. Development
2
UNIV 1212: Critical Thinking
2
UNIV 1213: Leadership and Teamwork
14 hrs
Group 3
2 H x 7
Islamic Studies 2 credit hours each semester for 7 semesters
2 hrs
Group 4
1 hr X 2
Physical Education 1 credit hour for 2 semesters

Core Students are expected to take the **34 hours** of the University Core Requirements during the freshman and Sophomore Years; therefore, pre-major students (unsure of their majors when they enrolled in the university) should be advised to defer the selection of their major within their college until the end of Freshman Year. However, the advisor must make the student aware of the necessity of choosing his/her major because the Freshman Year in some degree programs includes content courses. For example, during the first semester of the freshman year, all engineering students will be taking Introduction to Engineering, all Information Technology students will be taking Computer Science I, and all Interior Design students will be taking Introduction to Interior Design and Interior Design I. As such, changing to another major outside of the college would result in additional coursework.

The advisor should also make his/her advisees aware that the curriculum for each major is rigidly structured and that there are certain courses in mathematics, natural science, and social sciences required for specific degrees and are expected to be taken during the freshman year. Therefore, it is crucial that students get timely and accurate information from their advisors.

The College Core Curriculum requirements

According to PMU system design, each college of the university (college of Engineering, the College of Information Technology, and the College of Business) determines specific core courses in mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences).

Advising for Mathematics

- All Engineering students with the exception of Interior Design are required to take 14 hours of Mathematics (Calculus I, Calculus II, Calculus III, and Differential Equations).
- Interior Design students are required to take 6 hours of mathematics (Finite Mathematics and Calculus for Business).
- All business students are required to take 9 hours of mathematics (Finite Mathematics, Calculus for Business, and Statistical Methods).
- All students majoring in Information Technology are required to take 12 hours of mathematics (Finite Mathematics, Pre-calculus Mathematics, Calculus for Business and Statistical Methods).
- All students majoring in Computer Science are required to take 14 hours of mathematics (Calculus I, Calculus II, Statistical Methods, and Linear Algebra).
- Students majoring in Computer Engineering are required to take 17 hours of mathematics (Calculus 1, Calculus II, Calculus II , Linear Algebra, and Differential Equations)

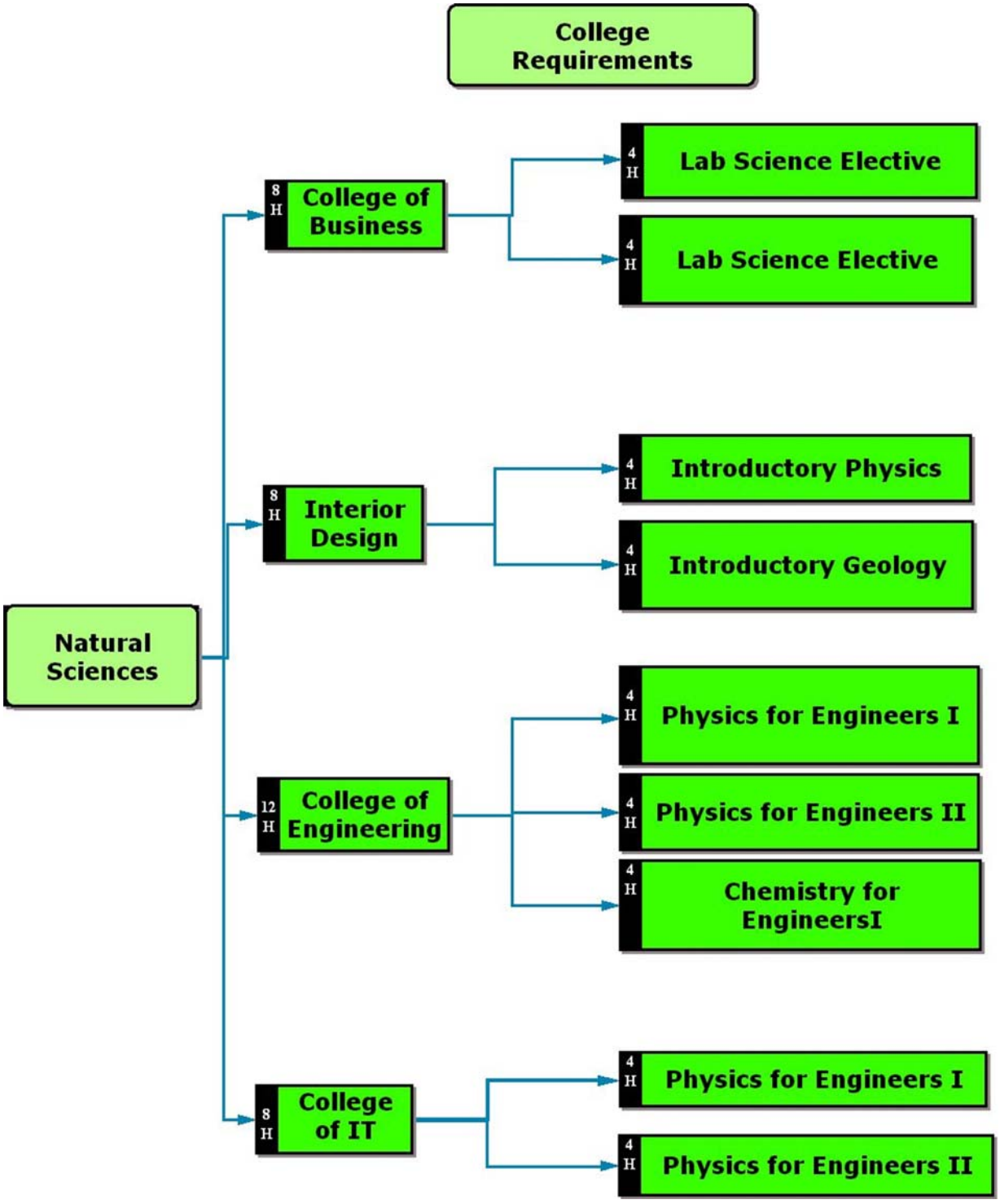
Important to note, according to the PMU system design of mathematics, the mathematics courses are taken during the freshman and sophomore years. Therefore, changing from a business program to any engineering program or to computer science or computer engineering would ultimately result in an extra year of coursework as the mathematics requirements of the business college are different form the courses required for engineering (with the exception of Interior Design). As such, students who started their coursework in their chosen majors should be aware of the consequences of changing their majors as far as mathematics requirements are concerned.

Advising for the Natural Sciences

- According to PMU system design, all engineering students with the exception of Interior Design students are required to take 12 hours of natural sciences (Physics for Engineers 1, Physics for Engineers II, Chemistry for Engineers I).
- Interior Design students are required to take 8 hours (Introduction to Physics and Introductory Geology).
- All business students are required to take 8 hours of natural sciences
- Students in the college of Information Technology are required to take 8 hours (Physics for Engineers I and Physics for Engineers II). Since each major has its specific science requirements, students changing their majors from business to engineering or vice versa

should be warned that they will have to take the science requirements of their new chosen major **(see figure 8).**

Figure 8



As such, since each major has its own specific mathematics and science courses, there is little scope if any in changing majors even within the college. It is very difficult

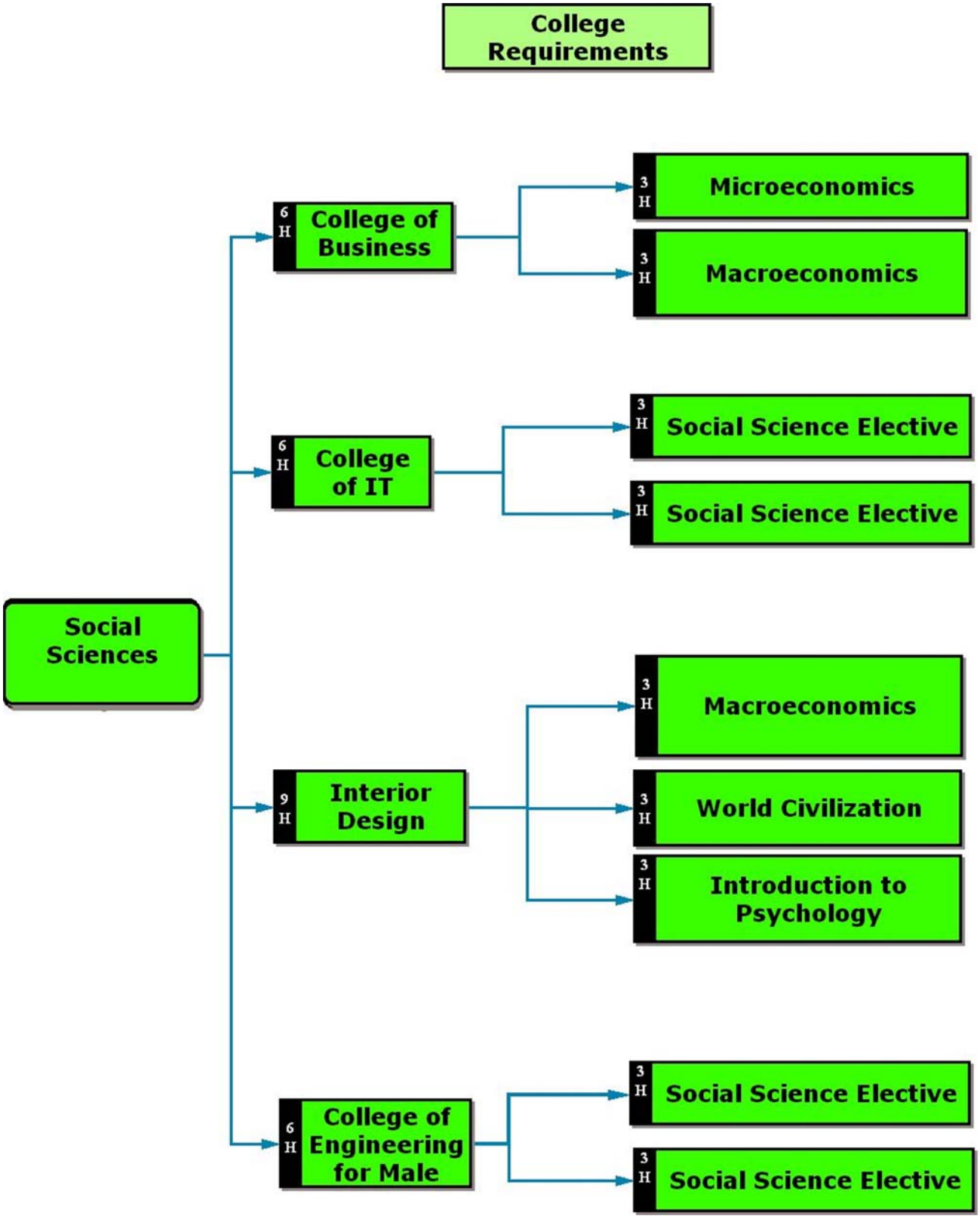
for students to change their majors because of the inflexible and structured curricula requirements of each major.

Advising for the Social Sciences

Degrees in both the college of Business and Interior Design require specific social science courses.

- The Business degree requires 6 hours of Macroeconomics and Microeconomics.
- Interior Design major requires 9 hours of social studies: Macroeconomics, World Civilization, and Introduction to Psychology.
- All students majoring in programs in the college of IT and Engineering have to take 6 hours of any of the Social Sciences courses. Female students majoring in Business and IT should be warned about changing their majors to Interior Design which has specific social studies requirements (See Figure 9).

Figure 9



Selecting Majors and Changing Majors [PMU System Design]

Many students will have already chosen their majors when they enroll in the PMU. However, it is likely that some of them will change their minds for a variety of reasons. Students need to be aware of the consequences of changing their majors as far as degree specific requirements are concerned.

Many times students are unsure of their majors when they enroll in a university. Since the curriculum for all majors at the PMU are strictly structured, students will need to decide by at least the end of their freshman year what their majors will be. Since only a few courses are taken for specific majors during the freshman year, there is opportunity for substitutions within the core for students who are undecided. Advisors will be needed to determine the best course of action for these students and warn them about getting too far behind with math and science requirements unique to certain majors.

The Need to Choose Core Courses Carefully

All students at the PMU are required to take eight hours of physical sciences. The choices are Introductory Biology, Introductory Chemistry, Chemistry for Engineers I, Chemistry for Engineers II, Introduction to Physical Geology, Introductory Physics, Physics for Engineers I, and Physics for Engineers II. It is obvious that students going into any of the engineering majors should take the chemistry and physics courses designated for engineers; other majors choose introductory courses. However, if a student who initially intended to major in Business Administration decides he wants to switch to Civil Engineering and has not taken the proper core science courses, he will

have to take those courses before progressing to courses for which those courses are prerequisites.

Entering students who decide to major in business administration should be warned about changing their majors while completing the core curriculum. This warning should also be given to majors in the engineering, because there are specific mathematics requirement for engineering majors as there are for business majors, as well as the two economics courses in the behavioral sciences.

Advising Majors in the Three Colleges

1. College of Business Administration

Students majoring in any of the four departments in the College of Business Administration begin the specific courses for their major in the second year. However, as is true with all majors, specific mathematics courses are taken during the freshman year. See figures 10, 11, 12, and 13 for the degree plans of each major in the college of Business Administration.

2. College of Information Technology

Students majoring in the three departments in the College of Information Technology begin much of their basic work in the freshman year and have unique classes in mathematics and the natural sciences. There is little leeway if any, in changing majors, even within the college. See figure 14, 15, and 16 for the degree plans of the majors within the college of Information Technology.

3. College Of Engineering

a. Engineering

Advisors must alert all students desiring to major in any of the three departments in the College of Engineering that changing their majors will be extremely difficult because of the rigid requirements. Although engineering students take a few common courses during the freshman and sophomore years, there is some variation among majors. Students must decide by the end of their third semester which engineering major they want.

Students majoring in one of the engineering areas take up to sixteen hours in their major during the freshman and sophomore years. They must take Chemistry for Engineers and Physics for Engineers as well as Calculus I, II, and III and Differential Equations. The junior and senior years for each of the three departments are quite distinct and leave no opportunity for changing majors. Advisors must be ready to tell students about the possibility of lost time if the student decides to alter his major to an area in engineering. See figures 17, 18, and 19 for the degree plans of the majors within the college of Engineering for male.

b. Interior Design

Advising students majoring in the Department of Interior Design should be relatively easy because the students will progress through the curriculum together. Scheduling of classes should also cause little trouble. The student / teacher ratio of 18/1 is reasonable and also should offer no problems. Perhaps the primary concern of advisors would be the specificity of the curriculum and the sequential courses. However, the motivation of students should be high so the possibility of failure is minimal. See figure 20 for the degree plan of Interior Design.

PART FOUR

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

[From PMU Academic Catalog]

Attendance

Attendance and participation in all class, studio, workshop, and laboratory sessions are essential to the process of education at PMU. Students benefit from the lectures and discussions with their instructors and fellow students. Lateness or absence hinders progress for the individual and the class and affects the student's grade.

A regular student should attend all classes and laboratory sessions. A student may be discontinued from a course and denied entrance to the final examination if his or her attendance is less than 85% of classes and lab sessions assigned to each course during the semester. A student who is denied entrance to an examination due to excessive absences will be considered as having failed that course.

University guidelines for lateness and attendance are as follows:

- The specific application of the attendance guidelines is at the instructor's discretion. In general, however, the following guidelines apply:
- In the event a student misses 15% of the sessions in a class for any reason, the instructor may initiate withdrawal of the student from the course. If approved by the dean of the student's major, the withdrawal is implemented.

- If the withdrawal is initiated before the end of the tenth week of class, a grade of W is entered on the student's record. This grade is not calculated in the GPA.
- If the withdrawal is initiated after the tenth week of class, a grade of WF is entered on the student's record and is be calculated in the GPA.
- In order to encourage student attendance and to minimize withdrawals, instructors are to keep attendance records and to draw students' attention to attendance requirements.
- Instructors need not give substitute assignments or examinations to students who miss classes
- Three occasions of lateness count as one absence. Lateness is defined by the individual instructor.

Examinations

Final and common examination schedules are published by the Office of the Registrar in advance of examination week. If a student is scheduled for more than two examinations in one day or has a time conflict with common examinations, then the student must report to the Office of the Registrar by an announced deadline to make the necessary adjustments.

Academic Integrity

Statement of Principle

PMU expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner than is above

reproach and to maintain complete academic honesty and integrity in their academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. The university may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and/or the abuse of resource materials.

Definitions

"**Cheating**" includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, a laboratory report, other report, computer files, data listings, and/or programs.
2. Using, during an examination, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
3. Using, during an examination and without authorization, a calculator programmed with formulas or course information that the student is expected to know.
4. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person or persons during an examination or in preparing academic work.
5. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.
6. Substituting for another student, permitting any other student, or otherwise

assisting any other person to substitute for oneself of for another student in the taking of an examination or in the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.

7. Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.

8. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work, any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. (This section does not apply to the typing of the rough and/or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist.)

9. Changing an answer on a test that has already been graded and then requesting a instructor.

10. Participating in any activity or action that affords an unfair academic advantage to the student.

11. Using all or part of any work developed or produced for credit in one course and submitting it for credit in another course without the instructor's approval.

12. Participating in acts which limit the ability of another student to perform to the best of the student's ability in a course.

13. Assisting another student to be academically dishonest.

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea into one's own work offered for academic credit.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limit to:

1. Failing to properly acknowledge a statement, idea, or statistic made by another individual in the body of the work,
2. Taking a whole section of someone else's work and placing it in the body of your own work without properly acknowledging the contributor,
3. Representing someone else's entire work as that of his or her own.

"Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for academic credit.

"Abuse of resource materials" means the deliberate mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials (including library materials) provided to assist students in the mastery of course content.

"Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement for a grade.

Academic Dishonesty

All academic dishonesty cases must first be considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she shall assign the penalty. The faculty member shall also notify the student of their right to appeal the decision to the department dean and, if needed, to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to

respond to the charges, and the right to an impartial disposition as to the merits of the case. After the completion of the academic process, the academic officer making the final disposition of the case may refer the matter to the Vice Rector for Student Affairs for any additional disciplinary action that may be appropriate, as in the case of flagrant or repeated violations.

In the case of flagrant or repeated violations, the Vice Rector for Student Affairs may take additional disciplinary action. The procedures for handling cases of academic dishonesty by the Vice Rector for Student Affairs shall be the same as those established for handling other campus disciplinary cases.

Academic Probation

Placement on Probation

Students will be placed on academic probation at the end of any semester in which their cumulative GPA is below 2.0. Students on probation have one semester in which to achieve a non-cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher. If they do so in their subsequent semester, they are removed from academic probation. Failure to do so results in dismissal from the university

Removal of Probation and Dismissal

Probation will be removed at the end of any semester in which the student attains a cumulative GPA of 2.0. A student may be dismissed if he or she fails to remove his/her probation by the end of the second semester on probation. Actions involving academic probation and dismissal are entered on the student's permanent record.

Reinstatement

Students who left the PMU not in good standing and have been out of the university for no more than two semesters may submit a written request for reinstatement to the Office of the Registrar. The request should outline activities since leaving PMU that contribute to the student's academic another institution during this interim period are not transferable.

Students who have been out of the university for more than two semesters must submit a new application for admission to the Office of Admissions. Dismissed students may also be considered for reinstatement.

Grading System

The grade point average (GPA) is computed on a four-point scale. The following grading system is used at PMU:

A+	4.00 grade points
A	3.75 grade points
B+	3.50 grade points
B	3.00 grade points
C+	2.50 grade points
C	2.00 grade points
D+	1.50 grade points
D	1.00 grade points
F	0 grade points

WF* 0 grade points

*Administrative Withdrawal Fail

Possible Classroom Grading System (PMU)

96-100=A+

90-95= A

86-89=B+

80-85=B

76-79=C+

70-75=C

66-69=D+

60-65=D

Below 60=F

Grades not calculated in the grade point average are

I Incomplete

IP In Progress

AU Audit

EX Exempt; no credit

TR Transfer; credit counted

W Withdrawal

N No grade

P Pass; credit counted

AW Administrative Withdrawal

The student's GPA is calculated in the following manner:

The numerical value of each letter grade earned is multiplied by the number of credit hours the course is worth. This yields a figure known as "quality points." The sum of the student's quality points is divided by the total number of credit hours. The final figure is the GPA.

Important Note: In the preparatory program, a student needs to earn a cumulative 70% (C) to pass. In the core curriculum and all major courses, a 66% (D+) is considered a passing grade. Grades, not percentages, are entered on the student's transcript.

Appeal of a Grade

Students are entitled to objective, professional evaluation of their academic work and to fair, equitable treatment in the course of their academic relationships with members of the faculty. These criteria are observed by the members of PMU faculty as a part of their professional responsibilities. Misunderstandings have traditionally been resolved, informally, in discussion between students and faculty members, and this manner of resolving problems is deemed appropriate in this academic community.

Should students believe they have a legitimate grievance that has not been

reconciled by such private conversation, they may pursue the matter by consulting with the department chair or associate chair and/or dean of the college in which the course is offered. Each college may have its own internal method of dealing with these matters.

After having exhausted all these means to resolve the matter informally and having found the grievance still unreconciled and still believing the grievance to be legitimate, the student may file a petition with the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, setting forth a full, fair account of the incident or circumstances giving rise to the grievance.

Alternately, if, in the judgment of the dean of the college and the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, the grievance is of such gravity or its resolution would have such impact on the welfare of students generally, or on the conduct of professional responsibilities in the university as to require even more formal safeguards for the aggrieved student and faculty member involved, the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs shall prescribe an appropriate procedure consonant with the university's mission.

Grade Grievance

1. The assignment of a grade in a course is the responsibility of the faculty member and is based on the professional judgment of the faculty member. Except for issues of computation or discrimination, the faculty member's grade determination is final.

2. Students having a grievance concerning a grade in a course should make every effort to resolve the issue with the faculty member who assigned the grade.

Faculty members should attend to the concerns of the student and explain the basis for the grade assigned.

3. Should a student be unable to resolve the grievance with the faculty member, the student may appeal to the dean of the appropriate academic college. If the faculty member in question is the dean of the college, the student should present the grievance to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs. The student must present a written statement and provide compelling evidence (examinations, papers, etc.) that demonstrate why the grade should be changed. The written grievance must be submitted no later than (30) days from the conclusion of the semester in which the incident occurred.

STUDENT FAQS

Q: When will I graduate?

A: PMU opened the core curriculum and preparatory programs in fall 2006. Each of the three colleges opened in the fall of 2007 with majors in Interior Design, Business Administration, and Information Technology. Like any university in the world, each student will study at his/her own pace. PMU will offer as many courses as possible in all offered majors once the university is fully-staffed and the facilities are completed. The timeline for the opening of each degree program is available online and is subject to change.

Q: What is the purpose of the core curriculum?

A: The purpose of the core curriculum is to provide a seamless education for the PMU graduate so he/she can meet the competencies of leadership, teamwork, strong technological skills, excellent communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, and professional competence. All students, whether native speakers or not, need to fulfill the core requirements in the areas of English, mathematics, social and physical sciences, professional development (UNIV courses), and Arabic and Islamic studies. These courses along with the capstone assessment series form the foundation for a well-rounded PMU graduate.

Q: Can I transfer credits from another university?

A: Yes, any student can transfer credits from another accredited university based upon the recommendation of the PMU transcript analyst. It is recommended that each student gets a valid, stamped copy of their transcript in the English language with a full description of each course the student wishes to transfer.

Q: Can a student be withdrawn from a course by the instructor?

A: Yes, according to the PMU attendance policy (see Student Handbook online), an instructor can withdraw a student who has been absent for more than 15% of the course. The university registrar will send a "warning letter" to the student when he/she has missed 8% of the total class.

Q: Can I skip my core communication courses?

A: No, at this time, there are no tests accepted at PMU that allow students to "skip" any core curriculum courses. Only transfer students' transcripts will be considered as a possible substitute to courses offered at PMU. These courses mirror general education requirements at any North American University.

Q: Why is there a drop/add deadline and then a withdrawal deadline?

A: The drop/add deadline is early in the semester to signal that no more courses can be dropped or added as the student may fall behind in her/his work if a course is added late. After that date, a student may drop a course with a W on their transcript which

does not affect his/her GPA. After the withdrawal deadline, however, which is late in the semester, he/she will receive a WF (Withdraw fail) if he/she is failing the course or W (withdraw pass) on the transcript which will be calculated in the GPA.

Q: Do I have to attend classes during the drop/add period?

A: Yes, all students are expected to attend once the first day of classes begins.

References

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List of Figures