

The MC Advising Foundations Badge

Accessible web publication version

Badge overview

This badge recognizes an advisor's ability to apply Montgomery College's holistic advising philosophy, accurately interpret institutional policies and academic requirements, use advising technologies responsibly, and develop educational plans that connect students' academic, career, and transfer goals. The earner must receive a rating of Competent or Accomplished in every rubric competency. If any competency is rated Developing, the badge is Not Yet Awarded, and the advisor receives targeted revision guidance and an opportunity to resubmit the affected evidence.

Best advising fit

New advisor onboarding, faculty and professional advisors, counseling and advising personnel, program advisors, and employees whose work requires them to interpret academic pathways, use advising systems, or coordinate student support.

Competencies demonstrated

1. Applies Montgomery College's holistic advising philosophy and understands coordinated advising roles.
2. Interprets institutional policies, academic requirements, and ethical responsibilities accurately.
3. Develops educational plans that support academic, career, and transfer goals.
4. Uses advising technologies and student information responsibly and accurately.
5. Communicates pathways, choices, requirements, and next steps in student-centered language.

Badge-level career readiness alignment

Primary alignment includes Critical Thinking, Communication, Technology, Professionalism, and Career and Self-Development. Supporting alignment includes Teamwork. These competencies translate demonstrated learning into observable workplace behaviors such as evaluating information, communicating clearly, using technology ethically, acting professionally, collaborating effectively, and pursuing continued development.

Badge scope and institutional alignment

Badge 1 is based on Topics 1 through 3 of the MC Advising Excellence sequence, including holistic advising, coordinated roles, SAP, appeals, financial aid, FERPA, Starfish, Degree Works, Degree Planner, and educational planning. The proposal defines the badge around navigating MC systems, policies, technologies, and academic pathways and identifies degree-planning simulations, policy cases, technology demonstrations, and knowledge assessments as evidence.

The MC alignment statements below incorporate Strategic Plan Goal 2 priorities related to milestone advising, equitable support, professional growth, and badging; Goal 3 priorities related to advising technology and data-informed support; and Goal 4 priorities related to career readiness. They also reflect the College values of Equity and Inclusion, Excellence, Integrity, Respect, Innovation, and Adaptability. The Academic Master Plan alignment is grounded primarily in Goal 1, including Advising Forward, milestone-based advising, a common advising platform, advisor professional development, career and transfer advising, and coordination between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. It also incorporates Goal 2 priorities related to program maps and transparent pathways from entry through completion, transfer, employment, and further learning.

Competency 1: MC holistic advising philosophy, scope of practice, role clarity, and coordinated care

Competency statement

Applies Montgomery College's holistic advising philosophy and understands coordinated advising roles.

Framework alignment and evidence

Framework Alignment	Evidence Examples
NACE: Professionalism; Teamwork. NACADA: Conceptual; Relational. Conditions of Excellence: Learning; Student Purpose and Pathways; Collaboration and Communication; Advisor Selection and Development. ACPA/NASPA: Advising and Supporting; Personal and Ethical Foundations; Student Learning and Development. CAEL: Learner-centered navigation; recognition of varied learner pathways; support for persistence and completion. AAC&U: Integrative learning; intentional and meaningful educational pathways. MC Strategic Plan: Goal 2, belonging, equitable student support, milestone advising, and employee professional growth; Goal 3, organizational effectiveness. Values: Excellence, Integrity, Respect, and Adaptability. Academic Master Plan: Goal 1, Advising Forward; alignment between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs advising; advisor professional development; coordinated and integrated student support.	Philosophy-to-practice memo, role map, case analysis, advising response

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Describes holistic advising generally but applies it inconsistently. Confuses institutional roles or treats advising primarily as course selection. Handoffs or responsibilities are unclear.	Applies MC's holistic advising philosophy to the situation. Distinguishes relevant roles and responsibilities, identifies appropriate handoffs, and explains how coordinated care supports the student's stated goals.	Integrates holistic advising throughout a complex case. Anticipates coordination needs, prevents service gaps or duplication, and explains how the approach advances student agency, belonging, persistence, and completion.

Competency 2: Ethical advising practice, policies, and legal responsibilities

Competency statement

Interprets institutional policies, academic requirements, and ethical responsibilities accurately.

Framework alignment and evidence

Framework Alignment	Evidence Examples
NACE: Critical Thinking; Professionalism. NACADA: Informational; Conceptual. Conditions of Excellence: Learning; Collaboration and Communication. ACPA/NASPA: Law, Policy, and Governance; Personal and Ethical Foundations; Advising and Supporting. CAEL: Accurate, learner-centered navigation; support for enrollment, persistence, and completion. AAC&U: Critical thinking; evidence-based judgment; authentic artifact assessment. MC Strategic Plan: Goal 3, educational and organizational effectiveness and consistent student support. Values: Integrity, Excellence, Respect, and Equity and Inclusion. Academic Master Plan: Goal 1, accurate and current advising information; professional development in resource navigation; coordinated advising infrastructure; clear communication of policies, requirements, and available supports.	Policy case, FERPA scenario, SAP response, appeal analysis, documentation sample

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Identifies a policy issue but makes material errors, omits important requirements, or provides unsupported guidance. Privacy, documentation, or role boundaries are unclear.	Interprets the applicable policy or requirement accurately, identifies available options, protects privacy, and selects an appropriate referral, documentation, or escalation response.	Addresses ambiguity or interacting policies with sound judgment. Distinguishes policy from professional discretion, anticipates consequences, and translates the decision into accurate, accessible guidance for the student.

Competency 3: Academic pathways, educational planning, and resource navigation

Competency statement

Develops educational plans that support academic, career, and transfer goals.

Framework alignment and evidence

Framework Alignment	Evidence Examples
NACE: Critical Thinking; Career and Self-Development. NACADA: Informational; Relational. Conditions of Excellence: Student Purpose and Pathways; Learning. ACPA/NASPA: Advising and Supporting; Student Learning and Development. CAEL: Adult learner-centered navigation; career advising; recognition of varied learner pathways; support for enrollment, persistence, and completion. AAC&U: Intentional educational pathways; integrative learning; critical thinking. MC Strategic Plan: Goal 2, milestone-based academic and career advising; Goal 4, career readiness, post-completion preparation, and economic impact. Academic Master Plan: Goal 1, Advising Forward, milestone advising, and integration of academic, career, and transfer goals; Goal 2, program maps that clarify progression from entry through completion, transfer, employment, and further learning.	Degree plan, Degree Works audit, Degree Planner output, transfer map, planning rationale

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Creates a plan that is incomplete, inaccurate, or weakly sequenced. Prerequisites, milestones, academic standing, or connections to career and transfer goals may be missing.	Creates an accurate term-by-term plan that accounts for requirements, prerequisites, milestones, student goals, and foreseeable contingencies. Explains the rationale for the proposed sequence.	Develops and compares multiple viable pathways. Evaluates time, cost, credit applicability, transfer, career implications, and changing circumstances while preserving meaningful student choice.

Competency 4: Effective use of MC advising technologies, coordinated care workflows, and professional documentation

Competency statement

Uses advising technologies and student information responsibly and accurately.

Framework alignment and evidence

Framework Alignment	Evidence Examples
NACE: Technology; Professionalism. NACADA: Informational. Conditions of Excellence: Technology Enabled Advising; Collaboration and Communication. ACPA/NASPA: Technology; Law, Policy, and Governance; Personal and Ethical Foundations. CAEL: Technology-supported learner services and navigation. AAC&U: Authentic artifact assessment; integrative application of knowledge and tools. MC Strategic Plan: Goal 3, implementation of common advising technology, data-informed monitoring of student progress, and consistent support services. Values: Innovation, Integrity, and Adaptability. Academic Master Plan: Goal 1, common advising platform; cross-divisional transparency; responsible access to student information; data analytics; coordinated technology adoption and use.	Starfish demonstration, Degree Works review, Degree Planner demonstration, advising note

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Completes basic system actions but makes errors, overlooks discrepancies, or produces vague, subjective, incomplete, or nonactionable documentation.	Uses the appropriate systems accurately and ethically, verifies information, records objective and actionable notes, and protects student information.	Integrates multiple systems efficiently, identifies and resolves data discrepancies, adapts workflow to the case, and produces documentation that models effective practice for others.

Competency 5: Student-centered explanations and informed choices

Competency statement

Communicates pathways, choices, requirements, and next steps in student-centered language.

Framework alignment and evidence

Framework Alignment	Evidence Examples
NACE: Communication; Critical Thinking. NACADA: Relational; Conceptual. Conditions of Excellence: Learning; Student Purpose and Pathways. ACPA/NASPA: Advising and Supporting; Student Learning and Development. CAEL: Learner-centered navigation; career advising; recognition of varied learner experiences and pathways. AAC&U: Integrative learning; critical thinking; intentional and meaningful educational pathways. MC Strategic Plan: Goal 2, belonging, equitable student support, and academic and career advising at key milestones; Goal 4, career advising and readiness. Values: Respect, Equity and Inclusion, and Excellence. Academic Master Plan: Goal 1, Advising Forward, pathway transparency, student understanding, and broader awareness of academic and student services; Goal 2, student-facing program maps and clearly communicated pathways.	Follow-up email, advising summary, pathway explanation, recorded simulation

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Provides information that is jargon-heavy, prescriptive, incomplete, or difficult to follow. The student's understanding, preferences, or decision authority are not sufficiently addressed.	Explains requirements and options accurately in clear language, checks understanding, identifies next steps, and supports the student in making an informed choice.	Tailors the explanation to the student's goals, experience, access needs, and level of familiarity. Uses purposeful questions or teach-back, explains tradeoffs, and helps the student articulate the reasoning behind the chosen pathway.