

## **Academic advising – the online experience**

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### **Introduction**

As the university moves away from in-person instruction and services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, students may be wondering how they'll receive Academic Advising. Don't worry just yet, I interviewed Naomi Ben-Yehuda, the Arts Degree Advisor at KPU and she explains the transition to online Academic Advising.

### **Academic Advising will be moving to remote appointments. How will that look like or what tools will be used?**

Academic Advising can be done remotely, using either phone or video capabilities. All advising units have already made these adjustments to their availability and updated our appointment booking website, Advisor Connect, accordingly. Many advisors are calling out from their personal phones, using number blocking to protect their own privacy. Students need to be able to answer blocked calls, and we are letting students know that at the time they book the appointment. Some advisors are using Microsoft Teams or Skype to conduct video advising; they send their appointments a link to follow to be able to use this tool.

### **What are the major differences in having contact with a student online as opposed to face-to-face?**

The major differences in advising remotely versus face-to-face is that a student needs to be able to navigate KPU's website to view information with us. We can talk to a student through which websites we are using, but they need to be able to use their computer to find the information we are sharing with them.

### **In these times of unexpected crisis, what are expectations or goals in offering online Academic Advising?**

I don't think the goals of academic advising have changed. Academic advisors answer questions about course planning and selection, program choices, course pre-requisites, program/graduation requirements, academic regulations & policies and educational planning for career goals. All of this is still what we do. I hope we are all also referring students back to KPU's COVID-19 response page for word on all the changes to various aspects of KPU's overall functioning during this time.

### **Why is it important to have degree advising available at this time?**

This is normally a high-traffic time for students to seek advising, and we need to be able to meet that completely normal need. Also, given the change in format of classes, students might be changing their planning on how they will take the next semester. This could impact some students' graduation timelines. They might want to discuss this with an academic advisor. Similarly, some students might just want to talk through how to manage their time or expectations of classwork in an online environment. Academic Advisors can try to help students look at the big picture of their degree and make informed decisions about what courses can wait for Fall, when hopefully we'll be able to return to campuses (no official word yet, obviously, but we can hope!).