

# CAL STATE EAST BAY

## Guidelines for Appointment Summaries and Notes in Bay Advisor

### What is Bay Advisor?

The Bay Advisor, a product by EAB, is a tool for advisors to identify, track, and share advising appointment summaries and notes that document interactions and other relevant information of students, among other things, to assist with our campus advising goals. The benefits of a single, accessible repository for appointment summaries and notes include improved communication, coordination, efficiency, transparency, and a more personalized student experience in advising.

### What's the difference between an Appointment Summary and a Note?

- Advising Appointment **Summaries** document important information about advising appointments, such as dates, times, reasons, locations and action items. An appointment summary should always be tied to a specific advising encounter (appointment) between you and a student or group of students. Summaries will become student facing soon.
- **Notes** describe information about the student that you gained outside of an appointment. They are often more transactional in nature.
- Both **notes** and appointment **summaries** should summarize a meeting, a phone call, or other student communication and provide clear, concise information or action items to benefit other advisors or staff who may see the student in a future interaction.

### Why should you create an Appointment Summary when meeting with a student?

- Transparency of the advice given during meetings with students (in person, by email, phone or Zoom).
- Help advisors, the student, and other support staff communicate and provide consistent, informed service to benefit the student.
- Create an “institutional memory” of contacts, advice and actions.
- Record valuable data on student use of support services and associated outcomes.

### The content of an Appointment Summary includes three parts:

- The Summary
  - Why was the student seeking help
  - What steps were taken to address the student's needs
  - What advice and recommendations were made
  - Summary of what you discussed as it relates to student's success and graduation
- Student Actions
  - What are the agreed upon follow-up actions the student needs to accomplish
- Advisor Actions
  - What are the agreed upon follow-up actions you the advisor will do

### Why should you create a Note?

- Record important information that you learned outside of an advising appointment (e.g. changes in registration, course substitutions, etc.)
- Record outcomes of your efforts to resolve issues for the student.

## FERPA Considerations for Appointment Summaries and Notes

Please review the Student Privacy/FERPA Guidelines for Faculty and Staff at <https://www.csueastbay.edu/registrar/records/ferpa-privacy-policy.html>.

Individuals who have access to Bay Advisor must never share information learned from Bay Advisor with anyone who does not have Bay Advisor access. This includes not sharing information with parents/guardians or family members. Also, data should not be shared with faculty members, staff, or administrators who are not FERPA trained and/or do not have a legitimate educational interest. This expectation is to comply with FERPA and prevent sharing private information with others who do not have the right or permission to view a student's educational record.

### Guidelines for writing appointment summaries and notes:

- Write (and advise) within your scope of practice.
- Details are based on facts and do not represent observations, perspectives, guesses, bias, predictions, etc.
- Describe don't evaluate.
- When it doubt, leave it out.

### Additional Best Practices for summaries and notes:

- Sensitive information should only be included when academically relevant and handled with discretion, given that all advisors with Bay Advisor access may view the student's advising history. It is best to note sensitive information under general headings of family, financial, academic, personal, or health.
- Use a professional, non-judgmental tone when writing notes. Record facts and observations, and NOT inferences or assumptions. For example, instead of writing, "Student seems depressed" or "Student appears anxious," state "Student talked about personal issues and current stressors."
- Keep advising records brief and relevant and use only the most commonly understood abbreviations (e.g. SCAA).
- Record information that the student communicates to you in their words. For example, "Student reports that she will be withdrawing for health reasons."
- Document information discussed regarding University and department policies and deadlines. For example, "Student inquired about withdrawing from a class. Explained procedure and informed student of the upcoming withdrawal deadline."

## Advising Appointment Summaries & Notes Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
<p>Briefly summarize what was discussed as it relates to student success for future reference by the student, other support staff, and future advisors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Recommendations: "Recommended student take Math 110 with Math 10 to assist with mathematical foundation."</li><li>● Advice: "Cautioned against taking 18 units this semester due to work/life/school balance."</li><li>● Action Plans: "Student plans to follow up with SCAA and schedule an appointment with me after Math midterm exam."</li></ul>	<p>Summarize everything that was discussed. Notes are intended to be a brief record of advising contacts highlighting recommendations, referrals, and follow-up action plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Include personal/sensitive information: "Student disclosed they have been visiting Student Health and Counseling Services."</li><li>● Include unnecessary details: "Said she is having a terrible week and can't wait to move out of her apartment."</li></ul>

<p>Summarize specific course recommendations in the appropriate text box:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Advised student to take HIST 110 for needed GE and Code.”</li> <li>● “Recommended SOC 1 at Chabot College this summer to finish GE area D.”</li> </ul>	<p>Report problems with specific courses or instructors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student reports his Math class is unorganized and he is lost.”</li> <li>● “Student said CRJ professor is unfair in grading.”</li> </ul>
<p>Spell things out for a general audience</p>	<p>Use acronyms/slang that others may not understand.</p>
<p>Write fact-based academic related notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student is concerned about grades in two courses.”</li> <li>● “Student needs to follow prerequisite courses and roadmap”</li> </ul>	<p>Include speculation, subjective opinions, or judgements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student lacks motivation.”</li> <li>● “Her personality isn’t a good fit for STEM majors.”</li> <li>● “He is avoiding Chem 111 because he struggled in CHEM 110.”</li> </ul>
<p>Use general or coded language concerning sensitive material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student is dealing with a <i>personal event</i> and will need to make up class work.”</li> <li>● “Student reported <i>extenuating circumstances</i> related to their academic success this semester.”</li> <li>● “She discussed a <i>difficult situation</i> and has requested help from a campus support service.”</li> </ul>	<p>Include sensitive information, personal concerns, and private matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student is pregnant, due date is in late March and will miss school.”</li> <li>● “Student’s parents are getting divorced.”</li> <li>● “Student reported she was assaulted by her boyfriend earlier this semester.”</li> <li>● “He disclosed he was diagnosed with dyslexia.”</li> </ul>
<p>Record referrals made, and resources shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Shared information about Student Health and Counseling Services.”</li> <li>● “Referred to Financial Aid Office.”</li> <li>● “Referred to Accessibility Services.”</li> </ul>	<p>Report details surrounding sensitive referrals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “He said he can’t concentrate because of relationship problems with his girlfriend. I referred him to SHCS.”</li> <li>● “Little to no financial support at home and a first gen student. Student debt is piling up and needs to see financial aid.”</li> <li>● “Student was in a car accident, broke their leg, and can’t make it to classes.”</li> </ul>
<p>Include notes about positive student behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student came prepared for session with major roadmap filled out.”</li> </ul>	<p>Include negative judgements on student behaviors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “Student blows off advising appointments. I can’t get her to be serious or plan ahead.”</li> </ul>

Building a campus community that supports and cares for our students takes the efforts of us all. Communication is key to the coordinated care advising culture we strive to create, and with your help in creating these summaries and notes, we each support our students in our own way to meet their goals and graduate. If you have any questions or comments about The Bay Advisor, please contact [bayadvisor@csueastbay.edu](mailto:bayadvisor@csueastbay.edu).