

# Perceptions of Effectiveness and Job Satisfaction of Pre-law Advisors

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*Despite playing an important role, preprofessional advising has received little research attention. For this study, 313 U.S. preprofessional advisors were surveyed in 2015. Drawing on work adjustment and social cognitive career theories, we analyzed the job satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of pre-law advisors. The major findings reveal that advisors having a law degree, the ability to secure more resources, and a commitment to spending significant hours weekly in advising tend to be more satisfied and perceive themselves to be more effective in helping students gain admission to law school and preparing them for academic success than other pre-law advisors. Other factors related to participant self-perceptions on advising future law students are also discussed.*

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Students facing the decision to attend graduate, medical, or law school weigh many factors, including the amount of time necessary to earn an advanced degree, the cost of additional tuition and lost opportunities while out of the workforce, and the job prospects for graduates with advanced degrees. Academic advisors can play a vital role in helping students think about life after college and the decision to attend professional school. Munski (1983) noted, "A growing number of undergraduates are asking academic advisors this question: 'Which of these courses will help me get a job?'" (p. 17) More recently, research has shown that Millennial students feel pressure to select a certain major or pursue a particular career goal, and some express "overly optimistic visions of their future career options" (Montag, Campo, Weissman, Walmsley, & Snell, 2012, p. 31). Preprofessional advisors can help students temper expectations and navigate the range of choices they face.

Through this article, we consider a specific and timely type of preprofessional advising: pre-law. Applications to law schools are reaching 15-year lows (Kitroeff, 2015), and the job prospects for law school graduates remain gloomy (Harper, 2015); therefore, consultation with a pre-law advisor

becomes very important for students considering law school attendance. However, very little research has focused on undergraduate pre-law advising. Furthermore, we do not know of any study in which pre-law advising was examined from the perspective of the advisor. In this study, we used work adjustment theory (WAT) and social cognitive career theory (SCCT) to explore the importance of attending to pre-law advisors' own sense of job satisfaction and efficacy. Our research was designed to provide information for both advisors and institutional administrators on ways to improve pre-law advising programs.

## Literature Review

In his classic 1972 article, reprinted in 1994 and 2009, O'Banion explained that academic advising includes five components: exploration of life goals, exploration of vocational goals, program choice, course choice, and scheduling courses. O'Banion (2009) wrote about the importance of beginning with the first two steps, on exploration, noting that "many programs of academic advising flounder because they begin at step three 'program choice'" (p. 83). For O'Banion (2009), colleges should focus on student development and provide the resources to help students address a fundamental question: "How do I want to live my life?" (p. 83). Using similar rationale, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education outlined advising standards that include "preparation of students for their careers, citizenship, and lives" (2014, p. 5).

Although general agreement about the importance of a developmental perspective in academic advising remains elusive, Habley (2004) called for a dual-advising model through which students receive guidance from both faculty members and primary-role advisors (see also, Montag et al., 2012). In this approach, advisors employed primarily to advise can assist students in orienting to college, learning how to register for classes, and processing the majors on campus (Montag et al., 2012). In contrast, faculty advisors provide "individualized attention to students, guiding them through career options, and connecting them to resources relevant to their major" (Montag et al., 2012, p. 32). Although some rely solely on the

faculty to advise, the dual advising model has been extended to some pre-law advising programs.

The dual model has received criticism by some higher education observers. Benjamin Ginsberg, a political science professor at The Johns Hopkins University told *The New York Times* that “academic advising should be done by academics . . . professional advisers seldom have the qualifications in the field about which they are offering advice” (Selingo, 2014, p. ED8). Charlie Nutt, Executive Director of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising, countered: “When it comes to helping students be engaged, to give the advice about what they need to do outside the classroom, faculty are not always the best” (Selingo, 2014, p. ED8).

In terms of career advising, some faculty advisors have created innovative approaches to help students think about life after college. For example, some departments offer courses to help students with career-oriented advising in a range of disciplines, including geography (Munski, 1983) and political science (Collins, Knotts, & Schiff, 2012). Nevertheless, the practical steps necessary to apply to a professional school may involve issues not typically covered by a traditional faculty or primary-role advisor.

To fill the void for students seeking information on graduate-level academic opportunities, many college campuses employ a specific subset of academic advisors known as *preprofessional advisors*, who assist students planning to enter a professional graduate program, such as law, medicine, or health care. Preprofessional advisors help students with a range of concerns, including course planning, research opportunities, and applications to professional schools (see, e.g., University of Cincinnati, 2016; University of South Carolina, 2016). Graduate-level programs are typically quite competitive, and preprofessional advisors can assist students in navigating the process and “stimulate an advisee to consider [choices] in a way that he or she has not before” (Richardson, 2013).

Despite the prevalence of preprofessional advising and the potentially important role it can play on college campuses, little research has been devoted to this topic. Studies have focused on the experiences of “unsuccessful medical school applicants” (Corder, 1982), advising in graduate programs (see, e.g., Knox, Schlosser, Pruitt, & Hill, 2006; Schlosser, Lyons, Talleyrand, Kim, & Johnson, 2011), or discipline-specific undergraduate advising (see, e.g., Karr-Lilienthal, Lazarowicz,

McGill, & Menke, 2013; Rajecki & Lauer, 2007; Woolston, 2002). However, more study is needed to better understand preprofessional advising on college campuses. This study focuses on a specific subset of preprofessional advisors: pre-law advisors.

According to the Pre-Law Advisors National Council (2013), “The basic functions of the pre-law advisor include providing or identifying appropriate resources concerning legal education and the legal profession, and assisting advisees in the law school application process.” In this article, two key aspects of pre-law advising are examined: advisor job satisfaction and advisor effectiveness as perceived by advisors.

In analyzing the preprofessional advising situation, we drew upon both WAS and SCCT to frame the study. Originally articulated by Dawis, Lofquist, and Weiss (1968) and then updated by Dawis and Lofquist (1984), WAT is used to focus on the congruity of employees with their work environments. The closer the match between an employee’s skills, abilities, and values and the organizational environment, the better the employee adjusts within the workplace (Bretz & Judge, 1994).

WAT provides a way to assess and predict a variety of measures of vocational success, including job satisfaction (see, e.g., Dahling & Librizzi, 2015; Hackman & Oldman, 1980; Hesketh & Gardner, 1993; Locke, 1984; Lyons, Brenner, & Fassinger, 2005). According to WAT, job satisfaction is reached when the work environment meets the needs of the employee. The better the employer provides the reinforcers that align with the employee’s needs and values, the more job satisfaction the employee will experience (Hesketh & Gardner, 1993; Hesketh, McLachlan, & Gardner, 1992). In turn, the more satisfied the employees, the lower the rates of employee turnover and the higher the productivity expected in the organization (Wright & Davis, 2003).

Perhaps not surprisingly, the adequacy of resources and time to complete tasks has been identified as a key factor in predicting and enhancing job satisfaction among employees across a range of industries and workplace structures (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Kalleberg, 1977; Mottaz, 1984, 1987; Rynes, Gerhart, & Minette, 2004). Workers who have served in their positions for a relatively long time may be more satisfied with their jobs because the skills they have gained enable them to attain better job rewards and control their work environments (Hunt & Saul, 1975; Kalleberg, 1977; Mottaz, 1987). Although

we explored several other factors about the pre-law advisor and the institutions in which they work, we expected the factors of time in the job and access to resources to prove particularly helpful in understanding the job satisfaction levels of pre-law advisors.

SCCT also provides a theoretical approach to understanding a variety of aspects of career development, including reasons and ways individuals select certain career paths and their performance in their chosen occupations (Lent, 2005; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Regarding job performance in particular, like WAT, SCCT emphasizes the dynamic and interactive relationship that exists between an employee, employee behavior, and the work environment (Bandura, 1986).

Self-efficacy, the sense of an individual's own "capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p. 301), has been of particular interest to SCCT scholars. Self-efficacy arises from a complex interplay among personal attributes of the individual employee, the employee's overt behaviors, and the performance domain in which the individual operates (Lent et al., 1994; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2005). Self-efficacy is enhanced when an individual achieves success with a specific task and declines with repeated experiences of failure (Lent et al., 2005).

One's answer to "Can I do this?" (Lent et al., 2005) is directly connected to performance goals set by the individual, and thus, by the level of performance. When combined with high outcome expectations, a strong sense of self-efficacy augments performance behaviors across a range of institutional environments (Bandura, 1986; Lent et al., 2005; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

Scholars have also identified the various factors that shape self-efficacy. Along with an individual's personal traits (Bandura, 1986) and assessment of the requirements of a particular task, the extent to which the individual has performed on similar tasks in the past appears to be relevant (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). In addition, assessment of one's ability to complete a task successfully depends, in part, upon the availability of resources, such as funds and time (Bowen & Lawler, 1992; Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Spreitzer, 1996; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2009). As a result, we focused, in particular, upon resources, time spent on advising, and the length of service as a pre-law advisor as likely factors in pre-law advisors' sense of self-efficacy.

## Methods

We used the Fall 2014 Law School Admission Council (LSAC) Directory to compile the list of possible study participants. The LSAC Directory includes the names and contact information of two categories of advisors, *sole/coordinating* advisors and *supporting* advisors. Because we placed emphasis on the experiences of the primary-role advisors at each institution, only the sole/coordinating advisors were surveyed. The LSAC Directory also included some additional information about the potential participants. For the entire population of pre-law advisors, 89.5% work at 4-year institutions and 10.5% work at 2-year colleges. The LSAC Directory also listed the U.S. region where each pre-law advisor is employed: 10% in the Midwest, 28% in the Northeast, 11% on the Pacific Coast, 20% in the South, 14% in the Southwest, and 7% in the West. It included information on the status of pre-law advisor employers as minority-designated institutions: Five percent work at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and 7% advise at institutions that belong to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

The final list of potential research participants featured 1,396 valid e-mail addresses. The survey was administered online to the identified pre-law advisors in February 2015. The survey entered the field on February 4, and two follow-up e-mails were sent reminding pre-law advisors about the survey. We received 313 completed surveys for a response rate of 22%.

The respondents displayed a good mix of regional diversity: 21, 31, 10, 21, 12, and 6% in the Midwest, Northeast, Pacific Coast, South, Southwest, and West, respectively. Most respondents identified as faculty members (76%), with 24% classified as staff. In terms of education, the majority held either a JD or PhD (62%), 19% had earned both degrees, and 18% had neither. In addition, 60% of the respondents were male; 40% were female.

Results from the completed surveys were supplemented with a data set of college characteristics from *College Results Online* (The Education Trust, 2015). Among the respondents, 58% worked at a private, nonprofit institution, and 42% worked at a public college or university. The majority of respondents worked at 4-year institutions (96%), and 4% worked at 2-year colleges.

In terms of location, 75% of respondents reported working in cities or suburbs, and 25% were employed in rural areas or towns. In addition,

45% of the schools offered master's degrees, 30% awarded only bachelor's degrees, and 24% granted doctorates.

### Instrument

To develop the instrument, we drew on our own experiences as a department chair and as pre-law advisors. In addition, the inventory of questions was derived, in part, from existing research of political science department chairs and relevant literature. For this project, we selected three dependent variables associated with pre-law advisors: job satisfaction, sense of effectiveness in helping students gain admission to law school, and perception of their own effectiveness in helping students succeed in law school. We selected these variables for several reasons. We hoped to provide new information about the happiness of pre-law advisors with their own work and their self-perceptions on their success in guiding students interested in law school. Because job satisfaction is related to employee retention and productivity (Cooper, Knotts, McCord, & Johnson, 2013; Wright & Davis, 2003), we expected administrators to show interest in the satisfaction of pre-law advisors. We also asked about participants' feelings of self-efficacy because this factor has been tied to levels of job performance (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). In addition, we were interested in whether the same factors that explain job satisfaction and self-efficacy for other employees apply to pre-law advisors. Moreover, we wanted to generate insight into the precise ways in which pre-law advisors and others in institutions might better advance advising and student success.

In terms of the independent variables, we focused on the degree-earning background of the advisor (e.g., JD, PhD, or both) and whether he or she held a faculty or staff position. Because of debates over the value of the dual-advising model, we expected the responses to provide insight into the numbers of pre-law advisors on the faculty or on staff and whether this status shaped their reported levels of satisfaction or perceived effectiveness.

In addition, we were interested in the applicability of factors that might explain job satisfaction and self-efficacy, in general, of pre-law advisors, so we included a series of questions related to the budget, financial compensation for pre-law advising duties, the amount of time spent advising, and the adequacy of resources. Because of the relevance of past performance to self-efficacy, in

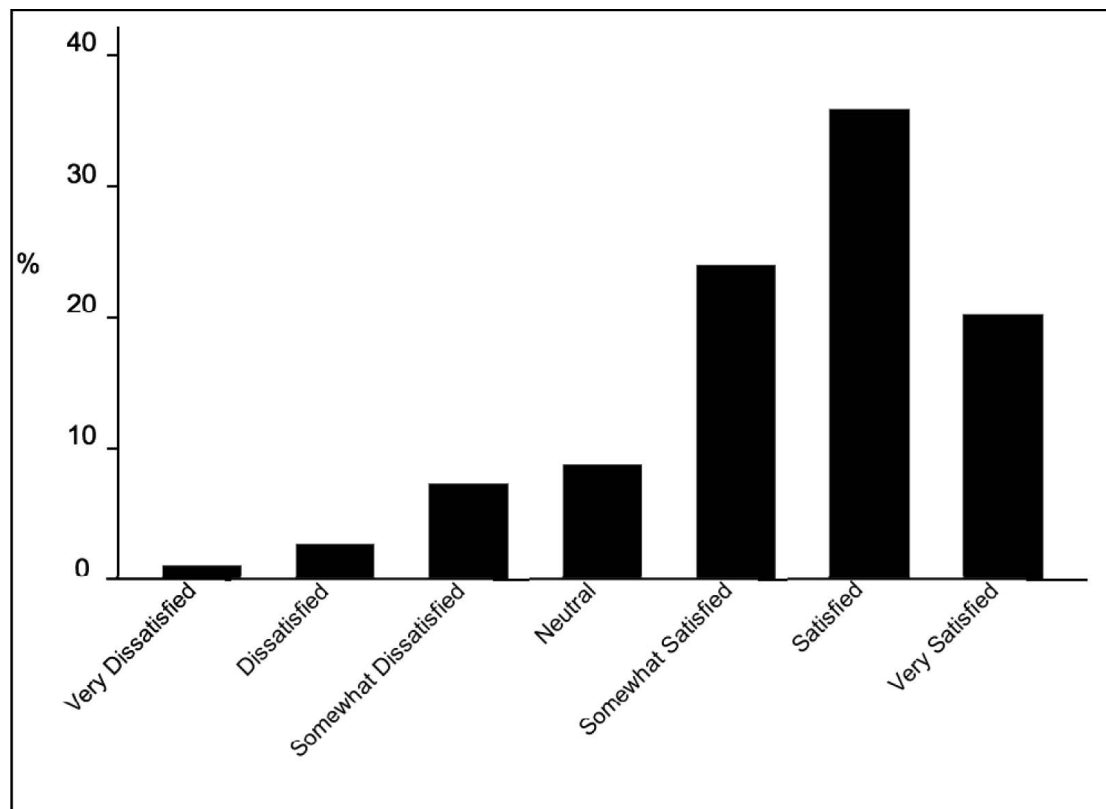
particular, we also asked respondents how long they had worked as a pre-law advisor.

To assess job satisfaction, we asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction on a standard 7-point Likert-type scale. Response options were *very satisfied*, *somewhat satisfied*, *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*, *satisfied*, *somewhat dissatisfied*, and *very dissatisfied*. To examine the effectiveness variable, we asked respondents to rate their own effectiveness in helping students gain admission to law and school and the extent to which they believed that they had prepared students to succeed in law school. We included the item on helping students succeed in law school because we think that, despite eventually losing contact with most undergraduate advisees who graduate, advisors can help prepare students entering law school for the academic challenges they will face. In particular, pre-law advisors can assist students in improving study skills, time management, and networking abilities with classmates and faculty members, and they can help with work-life balance, the mastery of which contributes to successful academic performance in a graduate program.

Both items on effectiveness were presented as 7-factor Likert-type scales: *very effective*, *somewhat effective*, *effective*, *neither effective nor ineffective*, *somewhat ineffective*, *ineffective*, *very ineffective*. As a reliability test for the dependent variables, we computed two Cronbach's alpha statistics. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the two effectiveness measures was .718, and the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  across all three dependent variables was .696. In both cases, these results indicate a high degree of internal consistency across the measures of dependent variables.

Contributing to assured content validity after the initial construction of the pre-law instrument, survey research experts and pre-law advisors at several institutions inspected the drafted questionnaire. Their comments on the reliability and validity of the measures and feedback on ways to improve wording were received and incorporated. For example, we adopted several suggestions for items on the institutional characteristics of respondents' workplaces, and we improved the survey response options for the dependent variables. The measure of job satisfaction, although a single item, demonstrated good construct validity. As Bozeman and Gaughan (2011) reported, employing a Likert scale to answer questions on job satisfaction likely produces both reliable and valid results (pp. 168, 171). The measure of job effectiveness was worded in a straightforward manner and was based on the Likert scale often seen in the relevant literature

**Figure 1.** Job satisfaction among pre-law advisors



(see, e.g., Bandura, 1986). More details about the survey, including question wording and coding, are featured in the Appendix.

### Results

The findings on the first objective, to determine the level of job satisfaction among pre-law advisors, are shown in Figure 1. Of the respondents to this survey, 20% reported being very satisfied and nearly 36% reported being satisfied, representing the modal category. In addition, 24% of respondents reported being somewhat satisfied.

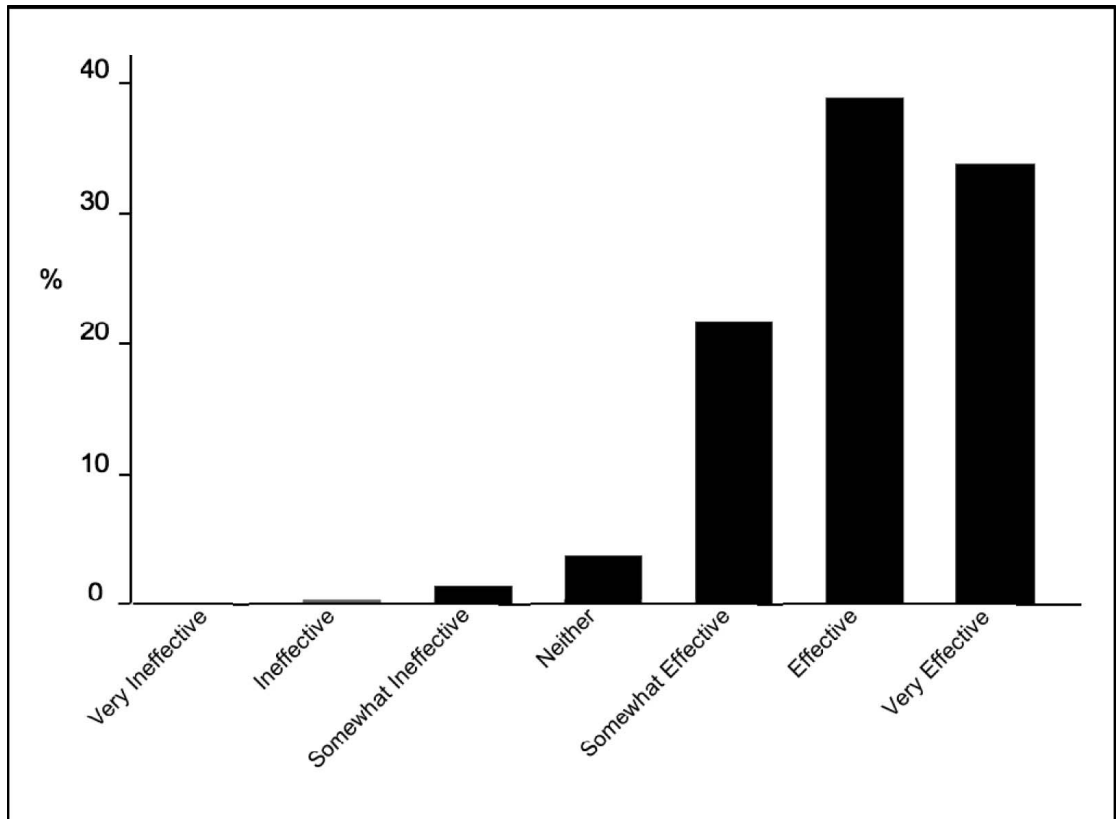
We also studied the perceived effectiveness of pre-law advisors. Perceived effectiveness was examined via two different questions on helping students gain admittance to law school and finding academic success in law school.

Figure 2 shows the responses to the question about respondents' perceptions of effectiveness in helping students gain admittance to law school. Slightly more than one third of respondents reported being very effective, and nearly 39% indicated that they are effective (the modal

response category) for this question. For the other category, 22% of respondents indicated that they are somewhat effective in helping students gain admission to law school. Approximately 5% of pre-law advisors selected the neutral response category or indicated some level of ineffectiveness.

We also examined pre-law advisors' perceptions about their ability to help students prepare for academic success in law school. The responses to this question are presented in Figure 3. Approximately 22% of respondents indicated that they are very effective and 36% reported that they are effective. In addition, 22% of respondents suggested that they are somewhat effective, and 18% chose a neutral response. Very few respondents indicated that they are ineffective in helping students prepare for academic success in law school.

We also investigated the factors that might make pre-law advisors feel more or less satisfied with, and effective at, their jobs. We computed three regression models to predict individual advisors' job satisfaction and the self-assessments of their

**Figure 2.** Effectiveness self-rating of helping students gain admission to law school

effectiveness in advising students for admission to and success in law school.

Because of the ordinal nature of the dependent variables, we used an ordered logit model. Because of the skewed distribution of the dependent variables, we re-coded them as dichotomous (0 = *neither/somewhat effective*, 1 = *effective/very effective*; 0 = *neutral/somewhat satisfied*, 1 = *satisfied/very satisfied*), and then, as a precaution, we included them in a scobit model to account for the skewness. The results did not change in any meaningful way from those reported herein.

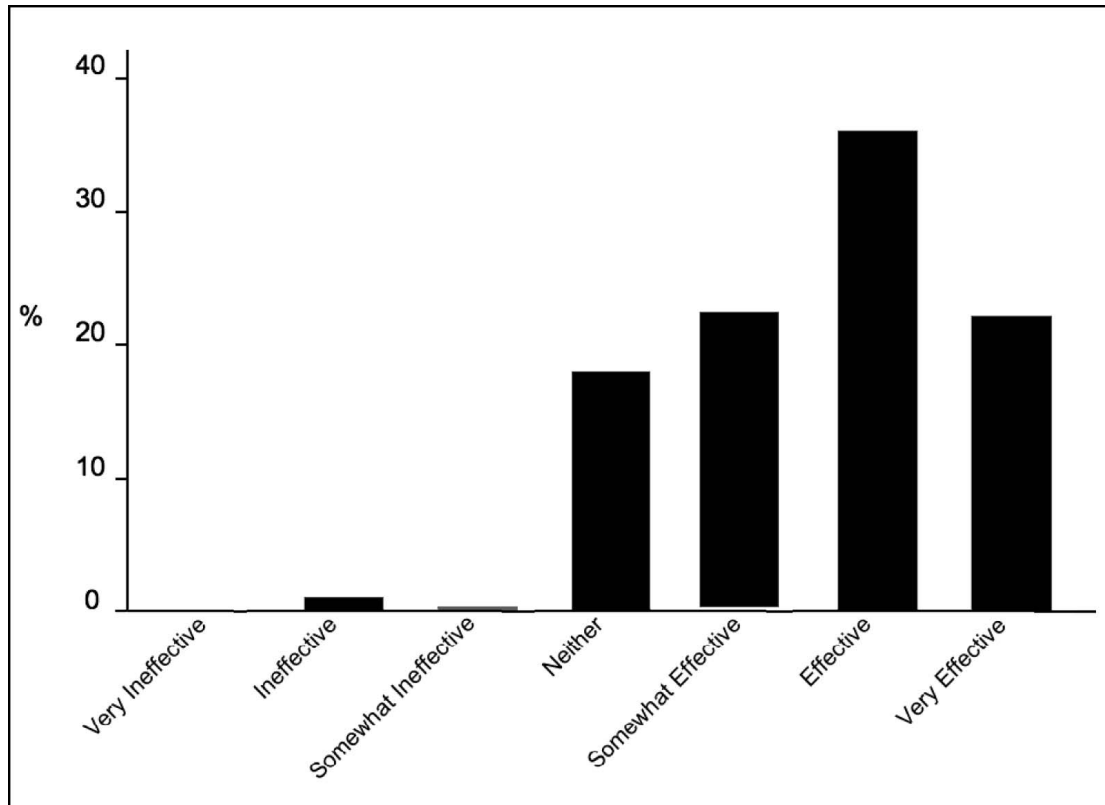
The independent variables included the pre-law advisor status as faculty or staff, number of years advising pre-law students, the (self-reported) adequacy of the advisor's resources, the degree earned (i.e., a JD or not), the Carnegie classification (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2017) of the institution, status as public or private, number of students enrolled, and the average SAT score at the respondents' institutions. To ease interpretation of results, predicted probabilities were calculated to deter-

mine the degree to which a particular variable affected respondents' levels of job satisfaction and perceptions of effectiveness.

We modeled advisors' reported levels of job satisfaction. The results from the two-tailed tests are listed in Table 1. As shown in the table, four of the independent variables were significant. In particular, advisors who served longer as a pre-law advisor ( $p < .10$ ), spent more hours on advising ( $p < .05$ ), possessed more adequate resources ( $p < .01$ ), and held a JD ( $p < .10$ ) reported higher levels of job satisfaction than their peers who rated these areas with lower scores or did not have a JD. The enrollment, SAT scores, Carnegie classification (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2017), and the institution as public or private appeared to exert no effect on advisor satisfaction.

The predicted probabilities indicated that adequacy of resources exerts the largest substantive influence on pre-law advisor job satisfaction. As the amount of resources rose from the minimum to the maximum, the probability of advisors rating

**Figure 3.** Effectiveness self-rating of helping students achieve academic success in law school



themselves as very satisfied rose from 0 to 48%, an increase of almost 50 percentage points. The impact of the number of hours spent advising was also relatively large, with the probability of

**Table 1.** Advisors’ self-reported job satisfaction by ordinal logit regression ( $N = 224$ )

Factor	Coefficient (SE)
Years Served	.020* (.013)
Hours Advising	.043** (.020)
Resources	.808*** (.094)
Faculty	-.006 (.346)
JD	.459* (.266)
Carnegie	.145 (.222)
Enrollment	.000 (.000)
Public	.930 (.378)
City/Suburb	.455 (.342)
SAT Score	.000 (.000)

Note. \* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$  (two-tailed test). Carnegie classification comes from The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2017).

being very satisfied rising from 10 to 40% as the number of hours rose from the minimum to the maximum. Advisors serving the longest and those with a JD were more likely to rate themselves, by as many as 6 percentage points, as very satisfied.

Table 2 displays the results for the two models of perceived job effectiveness. As shown in the table, the number of hours spent advising ( $p < .01$ ) and the adequacy of the budget for advisors ( $p < .01$ ) were significant predictors of advisors’ self-assessment for both effectiveness measures. The length of time spent as advisor ( $p < .05$ ) was also a significant predictor of the advisors’ perceived effectiveness in helping students gain admission to law school; longer-serving advisors rated themselves as more effective than did peers with less advising experience. However, this factor was not a significant predictor of the perceived effectiveness of helping students succeed in law school.

In terms of the advisor’s background, status as faculty or staff proved a nonsignificant predictor of pre-law advisors’ self-perceived effectiveness in helping students gain admission to law school.

**Table 2.** Advisors' self-assessment of effectiveness in helping students gain admission to and achieve academic success in law school

Factor	Admission to Law School	Academic Success in Law School
Years Served	.027** (.013)	.018 (.013)
Number of Hours	.123*** (.025)	.081*** (.020)
Resources	.457*** (.083)	.328*** (.078)
Faculty	.297 (.370)	1.67*** (.378)
JD	1.01*** (.283)	.558** (.259)
Carnegie	-.570** (.236)	-.551** (.218)
Enrollment	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
Public	.268 (.365)	.563* (.360)
City/Suburb	.332 (.345)	-.651* (.336)
SAT	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
<i>N</i>	225	224

*Note.* Entries are ordinal logit regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Carnegie classification comes from The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2017). \* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$ . (two-tailed test)

However, it was significant and positive ( $p < .01$ ) for advisor ratings of themselves as helpful in students' success in law school. Advisors with a JD were more likely to rate themselves as more effective in helping students gain admittance to law school ( $p < .01$ ) and succeeding in law school ( $p < .05$ ) than advisors without a JD.

The negative and significant coefficient for the Carnegie variable (The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2017) indicates that advisors at undergraduate-only programs rated themselves as more effective at assisting students with both admission to and success in law school than those at institutions that offer master's degree or doctoral programs. Pre-law advisors who worked at public institutions rated themselves as more effective in helping students succeed in law school (but not in gaining admission) than advisors at private institutions. The average SAT score and enrollment numbers were not significant predictors.

The predicted probabilities show that the number of hours spent advising created the largest effect on ratings of participants' own effectiveness. As the variable capturing the number of hours

spent advising rose from the minimum to the maximum possible, the probability that advisors rated themselves as very effective at helping students gain admission to law school rose from 16 to 95%, an increase of nearly 80 percentage points. The percentage of advisors who reported helping students succeed in law school increased less than it did for reports of assisting students gaining law school admittance, from 11 to 74%, or 63 percentage points, according to the change from the minimum to the maximum number of hours devoted to advising.

The amount of resources available for pre-law advising also exerted significant influence. For assisting students with law school admission, advisors who rated themselves as very effective rose from 8 to 55% as the resources variable value rose from the minimum to the maximum. For helping students succeed in law school, the effect was almost as large, rising from 6 to 31% as the resources increased from the minimum to maximum possible.

The data indicate that earning a law degree also affects advisor perceived effectiveness. Advisors with a JD reported that they are very effective at helping students access law school, by 22 percentage points, and they indicated being very effective at helping students succeed in law school, by 9 percentage points, over those without the JD. Advisors who work at doctoral-granting institutions rated themselves as very effective at assisting students with law school admission, by 20 percentage points over those at bachelor's degree-granting schools; for helpings students succeed in law school, the difference was approximately 15 percentage points. Finally, advisors who work at public institutions were more likely to rate themselves as very effective at helping students perform well academically in law school, by 10 percentage points over advisors who work at private institutions.

## Conclusion

Preprofessional advisors play a key role on many college and university campuses. Therefore, the various ways these advisors carry out their duties and the ways institutions can better support their efforts remain important. This study provided new information about one subset of preprofessional advisors, pre-law advisors, their levels of job satisfaction, and their self-perceptions of helpfulness in advising students interested in law school.



Results show that most of the pre-law advisors in this study reported being quite satisfied with their positions. The level of satisfaction seems to depend primarily on the amount of resources the advisor can access, and to a lesser extent, the amount of time the respondent spends advising. More advisors with a JD or who have served a relatively long time reported being more satisfied than their less tenured peers and those without a JD. In an interesting finding, despite differences in perceptions between both groups, faculty members did not express more or less satisfaction than staff advisors, nor did advisors at undergraduate, public, and large institutions report satisfaction levels meaningfully different than their counterparts at other institutions. These findings suggest that, regardless of whether faculty or staff are hired as pre-law advisors, higher education administrators can enhance the job satisfaction of pre-law advisors by providing enough resources and giving them sufficient time to fulfill advising responsibilities.

Results on pre-law advisors' perceptions of effectiveness showed great similarity to job satisfaction results and fit well with existing research on self-efficacy. In this study, resources and the time spent advising proved the most significant factors affecting self-perceptions of efficacy. However, the most important predictor of perceived effectiveness was not resources (as with job satisfaction), but the amount of time devoted to advising. The more hours per week the participants spent on pre-law advising, the more effective they rated themselves as effective. Advisors with a law degree and those at undergraduate institutions also considered themselves more effective than their counterparts at other institutions and without the JD. In contrast to the findings on job satisfaction, we found differences between faculty and staff self-ratings: Faculty members gave themselves higher effectiveness ratings for helping students succeed in law school than staff did. However, faculty members did not rate themselves more effective in helping students gain admission to law school than staff did. Perhaps advisors with a JD rely on their personal experience with a legal or graduate-level education such that they express confidence in their abilities to advise students about academic success; they also may feel that they understand the skills necessary to succeed in high-level degree programs.

Future research could expand on this work by measuring student perceptions of effectiveness.

Although beyond the scope of this study, the factors identified may prove important as predictors of student perceptions of advisor effectiveness. In future studies, researchers might include investigations of other types of pre-professional advising, such as that related to pre-medical and pre-dental student admissions and success.

Like all research, our study was limited by specific aspects of the chosen approach. Although we sought to ensure that the responses were representative of the larger population of pre-law advisors, a higher response rate would have given us more confidence in the results. In addition, some of the questions we asked were relatively blunt or contained concepts that might be better understood through alternative measurement strategies. In future work, scholars might explore the term *resources* in more detail; moreover, unpacking the concepts of job satisfaction and self-efficacy might provide interesting results in future studies. As others noted, employees can be satisfied with and feel effective in certain aspects of their jobs and not others (Bandura, 2006; Kalleberg, 1977). More nuanced measures of these two concepts might enhance the validity of the results presented herein.

Although we included only pre-law advisors in this study, the findings speak to advising more generally. This study highlights the importance of two important, albeit limited, resources: time and money. The findings provide empirical evidence that these resources affect both job satisfaction and the perceived effectiveness of pre-law advisors. Theory suggests that the correspondence between the needs of employees and the organization affect job satisfaction. Previous research also identifies an individual's sense of self-efficacy as important for career development and professional success. Practitioners should, when possible, attempt to obtain more time and greater resources. Our findings demonstrate that the presence of time and resources can increase the levels of reward felt by pre-law advisors in their positions and the quality of guidance they feel they can provide students. In an era of downsizing and consolidation, higher education leaders need to consider the ways decisions about workload and resource allocation affect advisors and advisees. If they want to improve the level of job satisfaction and effectiveness among pre-law advisors, administrators might consider course releases for faculty pre-law advisors, additional funding for pre-law advising programs, and

increasing the number of formally designated pre-law advisors on campus.

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**Appendix.** Question wording and coding

*Job Satisfaction:* How would you rate your level of job satisfaction as pre-law advisor? 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat dissatisfied, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat satisfied, 6 = satisfied, 7 = very satisfied.

*Admission to Law School:* How effective do you feel you have been in terms of helping students gain admission to law school? 1 = very ineffective, 2 = ineffective, 3 = somewhat ineffective, 4 = neither effective nor ineffective, 5 = somewhat effective, 6 = effective, 7 = very effective.

*Academic Success in Law School:* How effective do you feel you have been in terms of helping students achieve academic success in law school? 1 = very ineffective, 2 = ineffective, 3 = somewhat ineffective, 4 = neither effective nor ineffective, 5 = somewhat effective, 6 = effective, 7 = very effective.

*Years Served:* How many years have you served as pre-law advisor at your current school?

*Number of Hours:* On average, how many hours per week do you spend on pre-law advising duties?

*Resources:* How would you rate the adequacy of your resources as pre-law advisor? 1 = very inadequate, 2 = inadequate, 3 = somewhat inadequate, 4 = neither adequate nor inadequate, 5 = somewhat adequate, 6 = adequate, 7 = very adequate.

*Faculty:* Are you classified as faculty or staff at your school? 1 = faculty, 0 = staff

*J.D.:* Do you have a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree? 1 = JD, 0 = non JD

*Carnegie:* 1 = bachelors, 2 = masters, 3 = doctoral

*Enrollment:* number of undergraduates

*Public:* 1 = public college, 0 = private college

*City/Suburb:* 1 = city/suburb, 0 = rural/town

*SAT:* sum of median SAT verbal and median SAT math