After asking students the question of how could NIU ensure that every student knows and is known by an academic advisor who is tracking their success to a small focus group of students, some ideas that could be easily implemented have been gathered. Two common ideas were brought up by more than one student that represent a larger amount of students.

The first idea is that every student should be required to see an academic advisor every semester. We realize this is already a recommendation, but it is not enforced as well as it could be. In order to ensure that each student at this university is seeing their academic advisor each semester, students should have a hold on their account until they have seen their academic advisor and only the advisor can lift the hold. This practice was done in the College of Business a few years ago with a program called Career Compass. If the student did not attend the Career Compass they are required to attend, they would have to meet with their academic advisor to get the freeze lifted. This got the student sitting in front of the advisor and if they were not doing well, the advisor would be able to ask them what was going on.

The other idea is just a requirement to take the UNIV 101 or 201 that already exists. Freshmen and transfer students are told about these courses in orientation, but they are not told that they are required to take them, because they are not. If UNIV 101 and 201 was a requirement, this would mean that more students are sitting in front of academic advisors, faculty and staff that are trained to advise, and more experienced students that will be able to answer questions that these first year students would have. One of the problems that students that are struggling with school have is making appointments with an advisor. With the requirement to take these courses, there will be a set of eyes that cares if they are not showing up to class and can ask them what is going on without the student having to go to them first.