

Pitzer College

Advising Report Fall 2014

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Faculty voiced concern over an uneven distribution of student advising load amongst all tenure/tenure-track faculty at Pitzer College. In the Fall 2013 semester faculty participated in the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey. In this report, one of the highlighted areas of concern based on faculty responses was the number of student advisees. This report represents a more in-depth look at the advising load at Pitzer College, both from the student and faculty perspective. COACHE results indicated Pitzer faculty members were less satisfied with advising load than the overall population of schools participating in the survey and our peer group. This was especially true for Associate faculty, female faculty, and faculty of color.

The first part of this report examines the student perspective of advising load, specifically looking at how students ability to add advisors freely and major declaration impact advising load. As it currently stands, students are assigned a primary advisor upon admission to Pitzer based on their stated areas of interest in either a major or Freshman Seminar, if possible. The Registrar's Office is able to track up to 7 total advisors for each student. Students have the ability to add advisors as they meet faculty who could eventually become their major advisor. It is important to note that students must declare their major by the second semester of Junior year; this means from Freshman through mid-Junior year, undeclared students can add potential major advisors but still hold on to previously assigned advisors. This is actually possible because until a student officially declares a major with an advisor, the system is not set up to automatically remove previous advisors by default. The student data shows that 9% of undeclared majors and 36% of students with only one declared major are carrying multiple advisors unnecessarily. The only students who should

technically carry multiple advisors are students with multiple majors, combined majors, Special majors, and/or minors.

From the faculty perspective, the average number of student advisees per faculty member is just over 17. However, some faculty members carry well over 30 total advisees. This is a very important issue for 3 reasons:

1. Release for registration
2. Declaration of major
3. Certification of degree

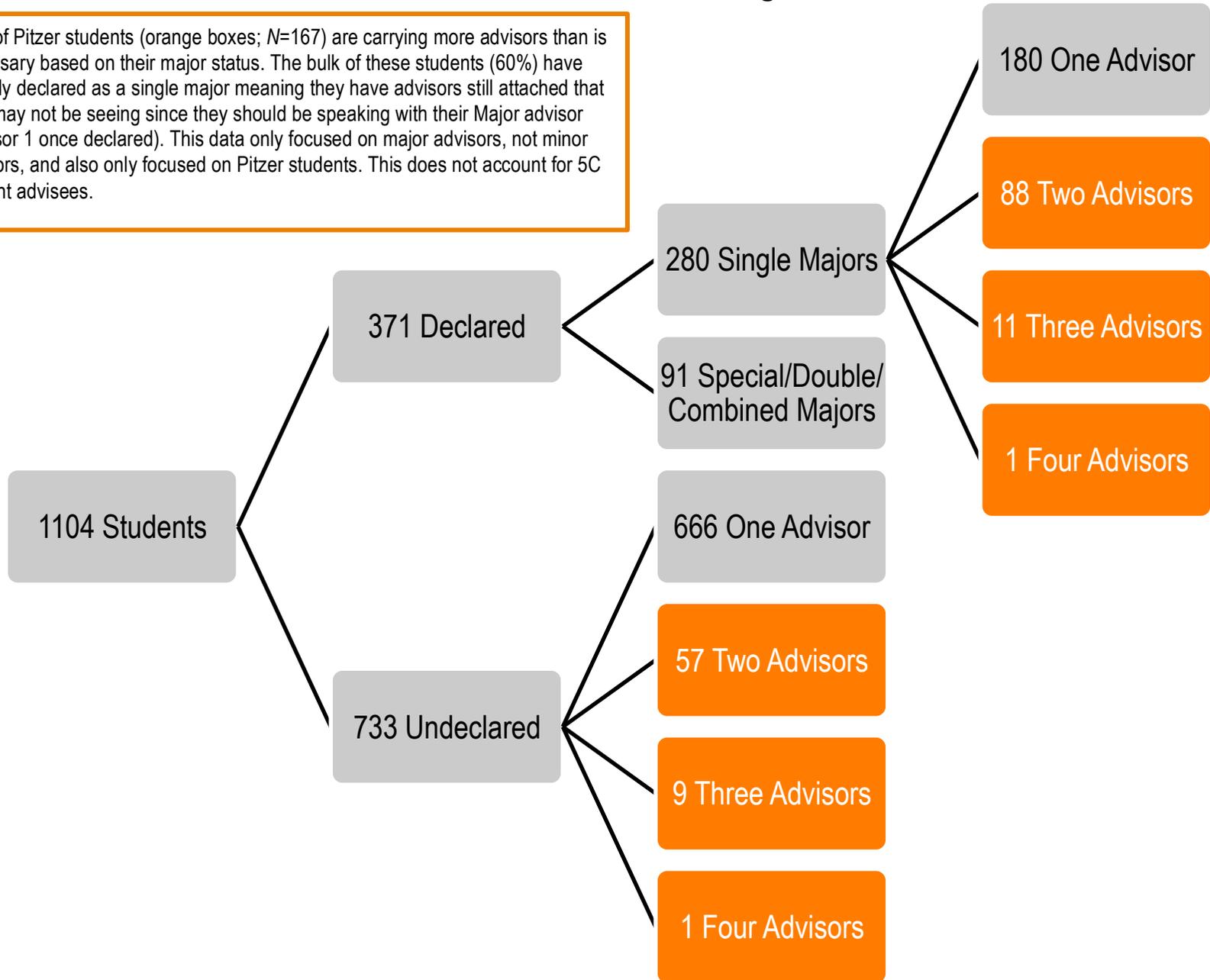
Technically, students are free to register as soon as ANY faculty member listed as an advisor, major or minor, releases the student to register. Students are released to register by one advisor without having to discuss things via email/in-person with other advisors. Students may not have full information about courses needed, especially if trying to double major, Special major, or minor in something that is not the area of expertise for a particular advisor/faculty member. Further, faculty also must sign off and review courses for major declaration and certification of degree for graduation. For faculty with higher than average advisee loads, this creates a less manageable situation for being able to accurately and thoroughly review the full plan of courses (major declaration) or full transcript of courses actually taken (degree certification).

Advising load at Pitzer has been identified as an issue by faculty. Some of these issues can be easily fixed if old advisors are automatically dropped for new advisors. However, this does not fully address the issue since students seek out certain faculty members more so than others. This goes beyond faculty from popular majors having higher advising loads because the data does not support this correlation.

Student Data

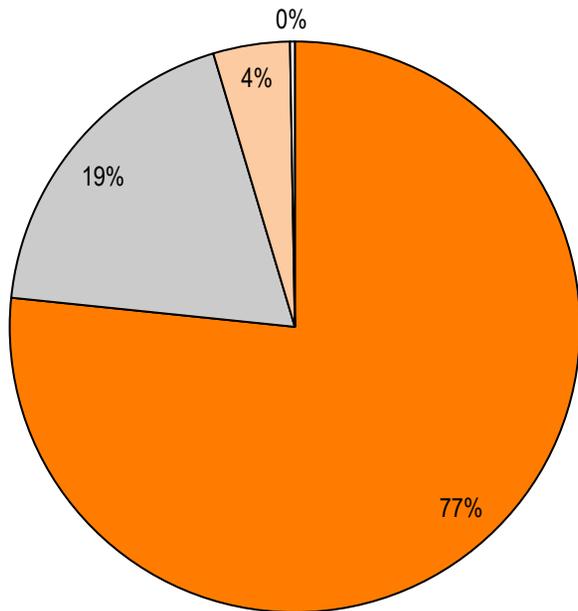
Overall Pitzer Student Advising Picture

15% of Pitzer students (orange boxes; N=167) are carrying more advisors than is necessary based on their major status. The bulk of these students (60%) have already declared as a single major meaning they have advisors still attached that they may not be seeing since they should be speaking with their Major advisor (Advisor 1 once declared). This data only focused on major advisors, not minor advisors, and also only focused on Pitzer students. This does not account for 5C student advisees.



Pitzer Students and Their Advisors

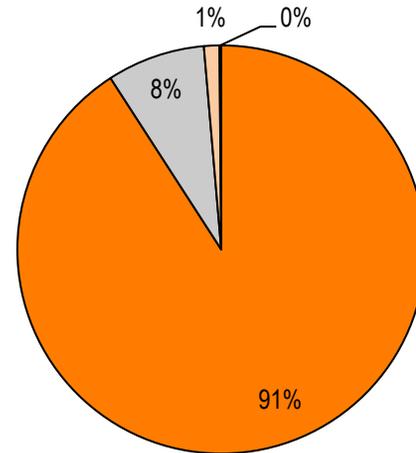
Overall Pitzer Student Population



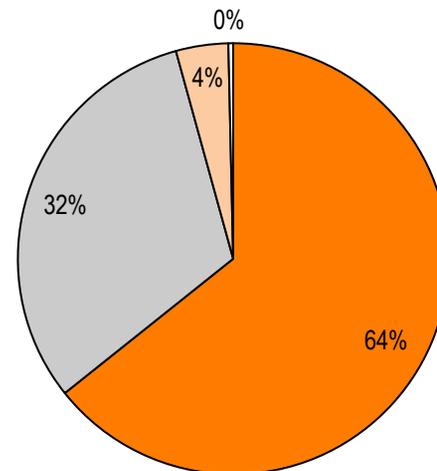
1 advisor 2 advisors 3 advisors 4 advisors

All students are assigned their first advisor (Advisor 1) based on interests upon admission. Students do not declare majors until 2nd semester Junior year. Some of the students with multiple advisors could be students who have already decided on a major advisor but have not officially declared yet so they have added another advisor (Advisor 2, which will become Advisor 1 upon major declaration). This data only focused on advisors listed as Advisor 1-4 because these slots are meant for major advisors. Minor advisors (Advisor 5 slot) were not counted.

Undeclared Majors (N=733)



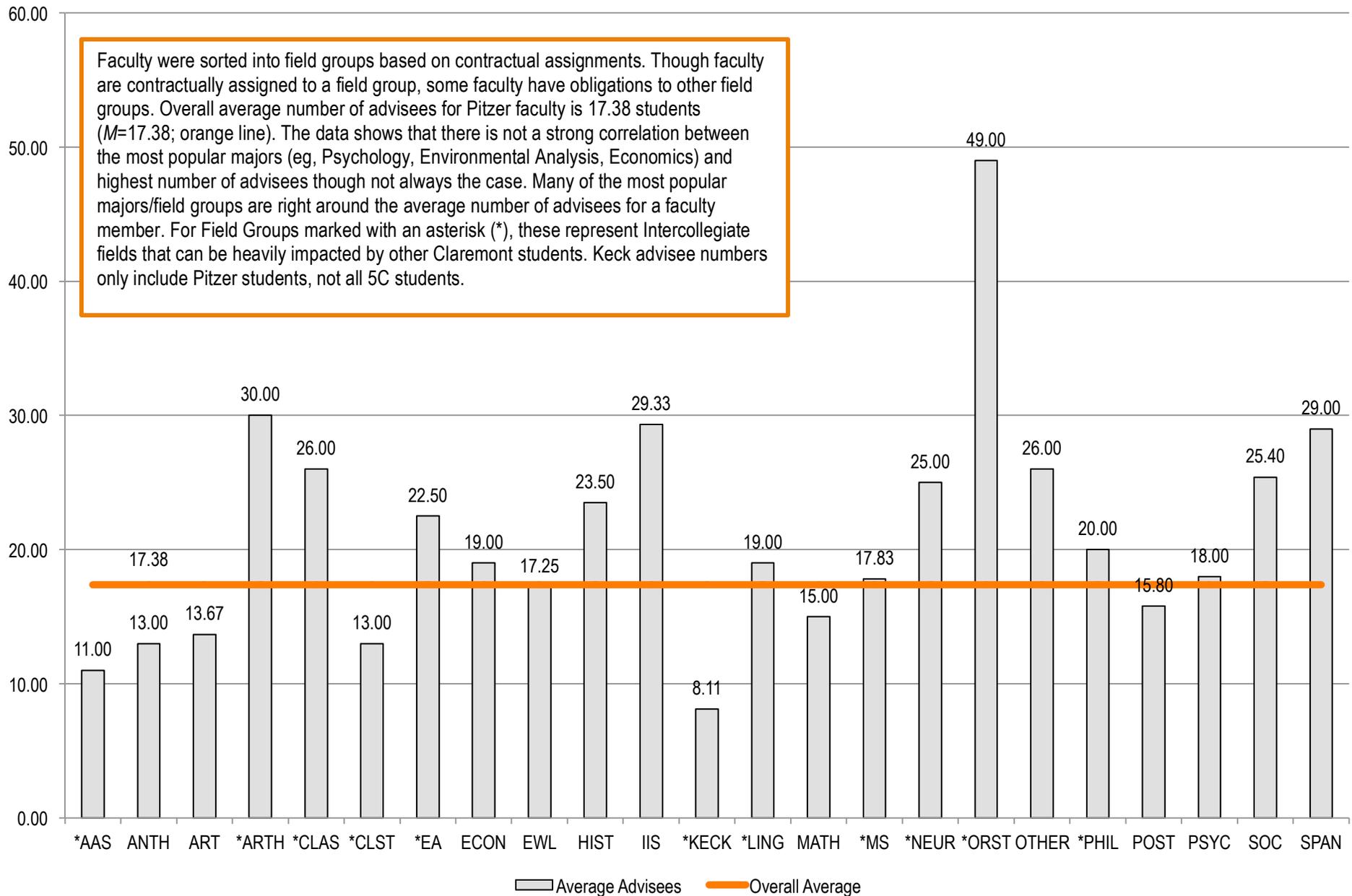
Single Majors (N=280)



Faculty Data

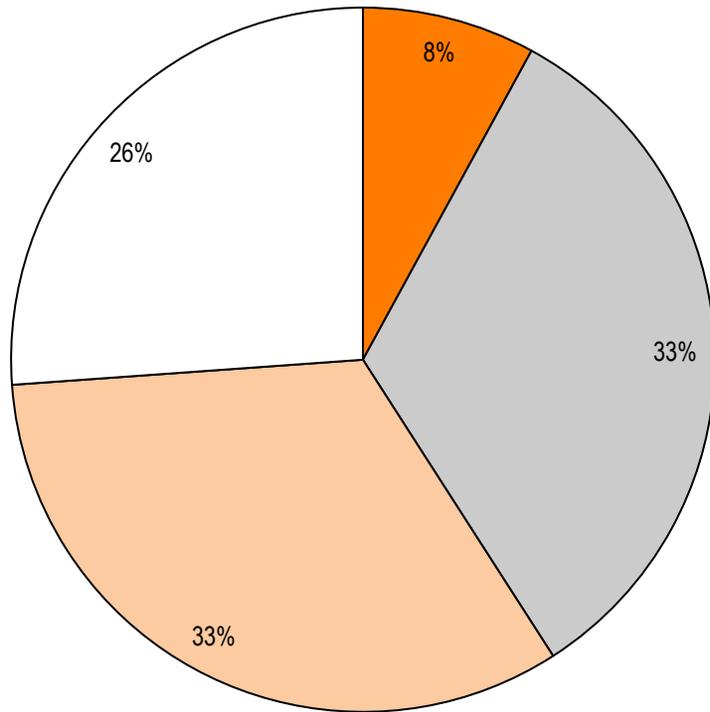
Advising Load

Average Advisees per Field Group



Advising Load

Number of Advisees for PZ Faculty (Includes 5C Students)

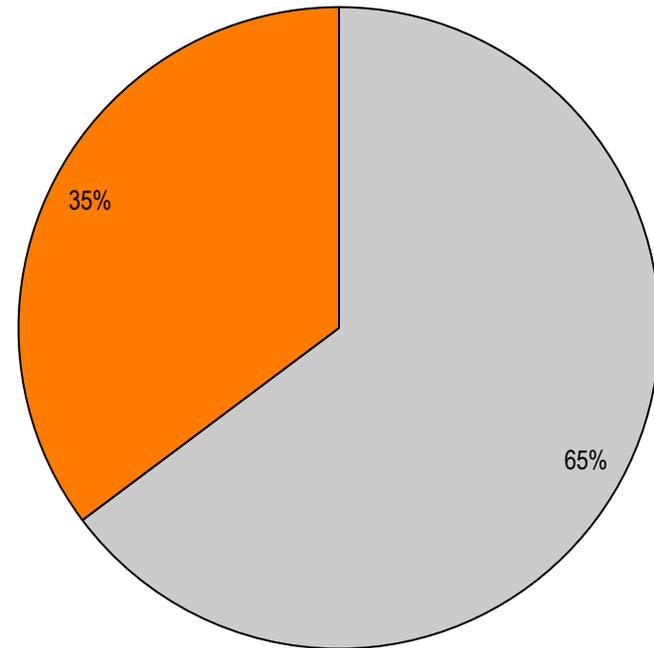


■ 30+
 ■ 20-29
 ■ 10-19
 ■ 1-9

A small number of faculty ($N=7$) have taken on a heavy load of 30+ advisees even though the average number of advisees rests at about 17 ($M=17.38$) for all Pitzer faculty. It is uncertain the contact hours faculty members have with all listed advisees, especially considering that 15% of students have more than one advisor listed. Students can meet with only one advisor to get registration clearance even if other advisors are listed.

35% of Pitzer faculty ($N=31$) advise students with Special majors. This is an important group of students to monitor as they all require two advisors. Special majors represent one of the largest groups of student majors but only about 1/3 of the faculty are working with students on Special majors, which increases advising load for these faculty members.

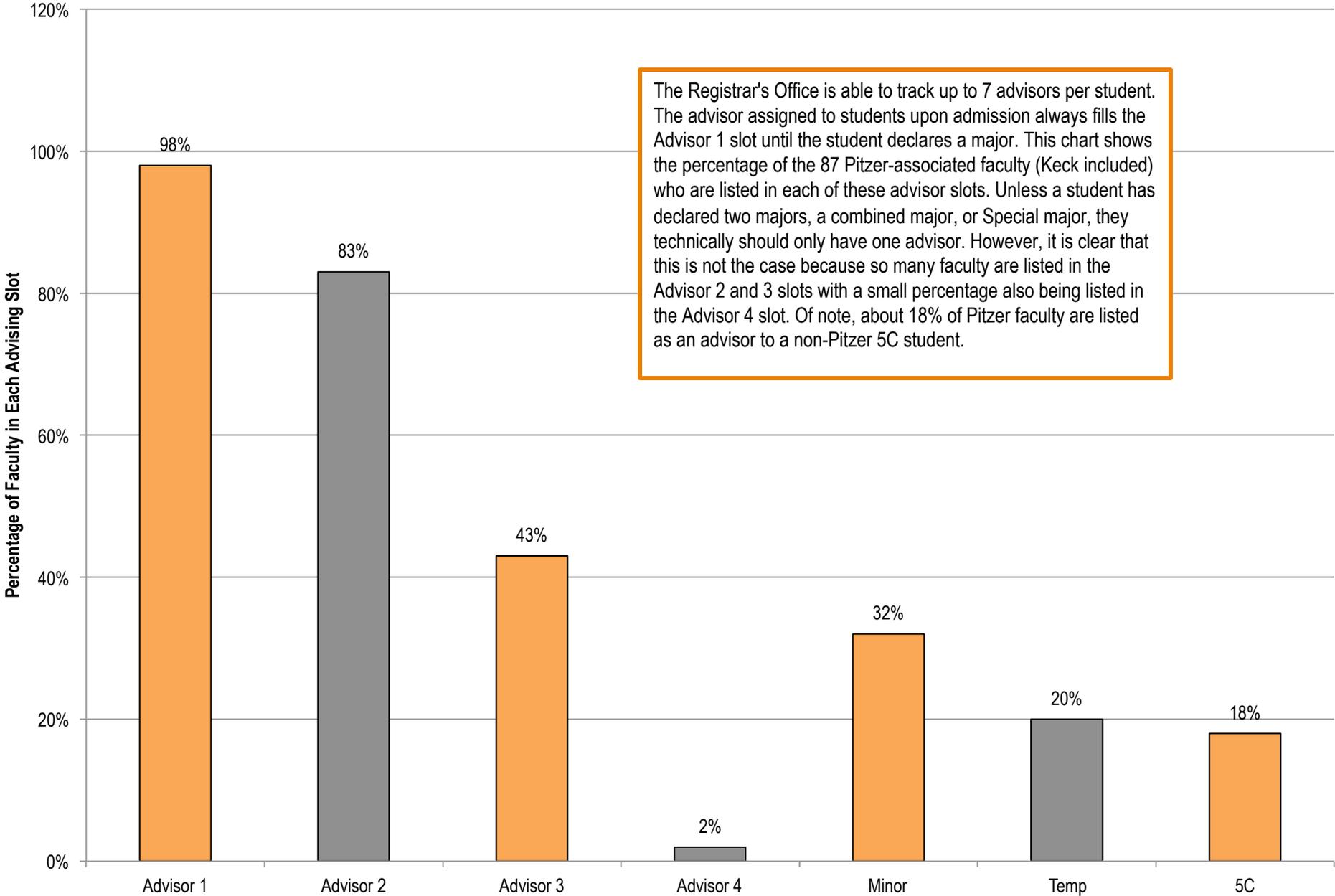
Special Major Advising



■ Not Advising Special
 ■ Advising Special

Advising Load

Distribution of Pitzer Faculty (N=87) in Advisor Slots



The Registrar's Office is able to track up to 7 advisors per student. The advisor assigned to students upon admission always fills the Advisor 1 slot until the student declares a major. This chart shows the percentage of the 87 Pitzer-associated faculty (Keck included) who are listed in each of these advisor slots. Unless a student has declared two majors, a combined major, or Special major, they technically should only have one advisor. However, it is clear that this is not the case because so many faculty are listed in the Advisor 2 and 3 slots with a small percentage also being listed in the Advisor 4 slot. Of note, about 18% of Pitzer faculty are listed as an advisor to a non-Pitzer 5C student.