

Academic Advising Tip Sheet

The Advising Appointment

Though the variety of topics covered in an advising appointment depends upon the purpose of the appointment, a certain structure or process is common to all. Following is an overview of some techniques that can be used in an advising session.

- 1. Opening -- Greet the student by name and in a relaxed manner. The student may be nervous so a warm welcome and a low-key question such as "What can I help you with today?" can be reassuring while it gets the session started.
- 2. Talking with the Student -- The student may find it difficult to express their feelings. Resist the temptation to "help" by putting words in the student's mouth, finishing the sentence yourself or otherwise taking over the conversation. Careful phrasing of your questions and indicating that you are receptive to the responses should facilitate good communication.
- **3.** Slences in the Conversation -- Slences do not necessarily mean a breakdown in communication or a lack of activity. The student (or the advisor) may be searching for words or reflecting upon something that has already been said.
- **4.** Admitting your Ignorance -- If the student asks a question regarding factual information to which you do not know the answer, admit it. Get the information immediately, if possible, or email/call the student back. While one person cannot be expected to know everything, it is reasonable to expect the advisor to get the information in question. Students have greater respect for the advisor who does not hesitate to admit their ignorance.

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