Difficult Conversations:  
A Coaching Guide

If a student is not making good progress, talk with - and listen to - the student. "I sense there is a problem and wanted your thoughts."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Happy in Program</th>
<th>Conflicts with Adviser</th>
<th>Lacks Necessary Skills</th>
<th>Lacks Motivation</th>
<th>Interpersonal Conflicts</th>
<th>Personal Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wrong field for the student?</td>
<td>Wrong project or adviser?</td>
<td>Struggling because of gap in skills e.g. math, writing, language?</td>
<td>What is keeping them from the work?</td>
<td>Interpersonal issues with other students, faculty, or staff?</td>
<td>Health/mental health/life balance/disability?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Support student’s efforts to identify new field or career path.
- Help resolve issues or work with student to identify new project and/or adviser.
- Refer for skill building/training. (Student Counseling Services (SCS))
- Time management, personal, or family problems?
- Solve “in house” or seek counseling (SCS) or conflict resolution (SCRC)
- Refer students to appropriate U of M services (SCS, Disability Resource Center (DRC)).
- Informational interviews in other fields of interest. Career counseling.
- Help the student transition to new project/adviser.
- Reevaluate timeline.
- Connect with SCS. Consider leave of absence.
- Reevaluate timeline.
- Reevaluate timeline.

**Resources**

*Student Counseling Services*
www.counseling.umn.edu
612.626.0150, Contact: Matt Hanson

*Student Conflict Resolution Center*
www.sos.umn.edu
612.626.0689, Contact: Jan Morse

*Disability Resource Center*
www.diversity.umn.edu
612.626.1333, 180 McNamara Alumni Ctr

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