Peeling back the layers

• The philosophy
• Building a relationship
• Asking the questions
• Continuing the conversation
• What next?

Meeting the student with academic difficulty

Important to:
• Assess what’s happening in the student’s life
• Take a more holistic approach
• Gain a fuller understanding of the person
The philosophy

Poor academic performance is ALWAYS a symptom of something else.

Maslow’s Hierarchy

An advising hierarchy
Students with academic difficulty may...

- feel ashamed
- have been reluctant to make the appt
- be nervous about talking with you
- be fearful about the reality of their academic situation
- have learned from their mistakes (and may have not)

Person-centered therapy

- Unconditional positive regard
- Rapport building
- Comfortable environment
- Non-judgmental approach
- Empathy
- Appropriate self-disclosure

The questions to ask

- Tell me about last semester.
- What happened?
- How do you feel about it?
- What are some of the primary factors that impacted your progress last semester?
- What was your biggest challenge last semester? What are some of the challenges you anticipate this semester?
- Outside of school, how are things going? How are you eating? Sleeping? How are your friends? Your family? What keeps you busy?
Tools for asking the right questions

- The hierarchy
- The personal assessment
- The Foundation for a Balanced Life

Then what?

- Make referrals
  - You mentioned [enter] is a concern. I wonder if you have ever considered ... [enter resource]?
- Set goals
  - What will it take for you to be successful this semester?
  - Reflecting on your areas of concern last semester, what are some goals you’d be willing to set now?
  - What are 5 or 6 goals to which you’d be willing to commit this semester in order to get back on track?

Motivational interviewing

Counseling approach designed to elicit change talk and behavior change.
Practitioner behavior that increases resistance

- Trying to convince clients that they have a problem
- Arguing for the benefits of change
- Telling clients how to change
- Warning them of the consequences of not changing

Principles of MI

- Resist the righting reflex
- Understand the client's motivation
- Listen to the client
- Empower the client

Microskills

- Open ended questions
- Affirmations
- Reflective listening
- Summarizing
Reflective listening
Are you concerned about your grades?
vs.
You’re concerned about your grades.
• So you feel...
• It sounds like you...
• You’re wondering if...
• You...

Open-ended questions
How often do you study?
vs.
Tell me about your study habits.
• What do you think you will do now?
• So, how will you proceed?
• What do you plan on doing tonight?

Affirmations
• You are really determined to get this under control, despite setbacks.
• You are a loyal friend.
• You are someone who makes up your own mind and doesn't cave for others.
• You are...
• You believe...
• You feel...
Examples of change talk in clients

- I wish things were different.
- I’m going to prove everyone wrong.
- My parents would be a lot happier if I did better.
- I’ve got to turn things around.

Setting boundaries

- Advisor: My role is to help you with the academic piece. In order for me to do that, I need you to use your resources for these other areas of your life. Does that make sense?

Recommended resource

*Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook, 2012*

David B. Rosengren
Other recommended resources

The Changing Face of MI, Presentation by Stephen Rollnick at the 1st Scottish Winter School of Motivational Interviewing, 2012
www.stephenrollnick.com

William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick