

Appreciative Advising



Disarm

Make a positive first impression with students to build rapport and create a safe and welcoming environment



Discover

Ask generative, open-ended questions that help advisors learn about students' strengths, interests, skills, and abilities



Dream

Inquire about students' hopes and dreams for their futures



Design

Students and advisors co-create a plan for making students' dreams a reality



Deliver

Students deliver on the plan and advisors provide encouragement and support



Don't Settle

Students and advisors set their own internal bars of expectations high

Disarm



Definition

Make a positive first impression with students to build rapport and create a safe and welcoming environment

Key Features

1. Warm Welcome
2. Safe and Comfortable Environment
3. Appropriate Self-Disclosure
4. Appropriate Non-Verbal Behavior

Practices

- Check your website to ensure you have a photo and a bio for students to learn about you before they arrive
- Sit in the chair your advisees sit in to get an idea of what they experience when they are in your office
- Decorate your physical and/or virtual office in an intentional way with objects that share something about you
- Meet students at the door and/or write a welcome message for your virtual waiting room
- Ask students how to pronounce their name
- Monitor body language (smile, open and relaxed posture, face the student)
- Model storytelling that encourages students to share their own stories
- Ask low-pressure, open-ended, questions to ease into the conversation

Example Disarm Questions

- What has been a highlight of your week so far?
- I'm thinking of going for a walk on campus this afternoon. What is your favorite spot on campus?
- My family is coming into town this weekend and I cannot decide where to take them to eat. What's your favorite place to eat around campus?
- What was the highlight of your weekend?

Discover



Definition

Ask generative, open-ended questions that help students identify their strengths, interests, and skills

Key Features

1. Effective Open-Ended Questioning
2. Attending Behavior and Active Listening
3. Strength-Based Story Reconstruction

Practices

- Be fully present
- Ask generative, open-ended questions
- Listen for students' strengths, interests, and skills
- Treat students as if they are full of potential
- Get comfortable with silence; give students time to answer questions
- Affirm what students are saying
- Paraphrase what students share to ensure accurate understanding
- Be curious instead of judgmental; ask "why" questions
- Encourage students to share stories of peak experiences and past successes
- Model the way by being authentic; share personal stories when appropriate, but remember that the session is about the student

Example Discover Questions

- Describe a peak experience when you felt really good about yourself or what you accomplished.
- Tell me a story about a time you positively impacted another person's life.
- What were you doing the last time you lost track of time? When time just flew by and you looked up at the clock and thought it must be wrong?
- Tell me about your favorite class. What do you enjoy most about that class?
- What college experience has been most impactful for you so far? Why/How?
- Tell me about a time when you faced a challenge that you weren't sure you could overcome, but in the end you did. How did you overcome the challenge?

Dream



Definition

Inquire about students' hope and dreams for their futures

Key Features

1. Creating Powerful Images
2. Prospective Framework for Dreaming
3. Make Purposeful Connections between the Dream and Discover Phases

Practices

- Encourage students to be open to possibilities; dreaming is not about choosing the most realistic path or the path of least resistance, it is about putting into words what they want in life
- Make connections between strengths, interests, and skills identified during the Discover phase and what they are sharing as dreams for their future; take note of congruencies or incongruencies
- Use guided imagery techniques, imaginative scenarios, art, or photos to help students visualize their dreams
- Listen purposefully; dreams are personal and important, and they deserve our full attention
- Remind students that there is more than one right answer or pathway

Example Dream Questions

- When you were 8 years old and someone asked you, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" What was your answer? What is your answer now?
- What would your ideal workday look like?
- Envision yourself at our institution's graduation ceremony a few semesters from now. What do you hope your fondest memories of this place will be?
- Imagine that you are on the front cover of a magazine 10 years from now. The article details your latest and most impressive list of accomplishments. What is the magazine? Why have you been selected to appear on the cover? What accomplishments are highlighted in the article?

Design



Definition

Students and advisors co-create a plan for making students' dreams a reality

Key Features

1. Teach Students How to Make Decisions
2. Provide Positive Feedback
3. Be Aware of the "Curse of Knowledge"
4. Making Effective Referrals

Practices

- Help students brainstorm with tools and frameworks to inform decision-making
- Support students in thoroughly researching their options
- Let students ultimately be the decision-makers; they will be the ones that live with the outcome of the decisions that are made
- Explain technical terms and information in easy-to-understand language
- Avoid confusing acronyms
- Make effective referrals as appropriate. You do not have to know everything
- Express your confidence in students' abilities to make decisions
- Use graphic organizers or other interactive tools to empower student ownership and participation in the creation of their plan
- Help students breakdown large goals into concrete, achievable steps

Example Design Questions

- What is one thing you can do in the next week to get one step closer to making your dream/goal a reality?
- What are some strengths, skills, or resources you already have that you can utilize to achieve your goals? What strengths, skills, or resources might you still need to acquire to overcome obstacles?
- What kind of experiences can you pursue now to help you reach your goals?
- Who can help you reach your goal?
- How can I help you achieve your goals?

Deliver



Definition

Students deliver on the plan and advisors provide encouragement and support

Key Features

1. Energize Students to be their Best
2. Engender Academic Hope
3. End the Conversation Well
4. Follow-up

Practices

- Review what you accomplished together during the meeting
- Review the student's and advisor's responsibilities and co-established deadlines
- Ensure that students leave with a written version of the next steps in the plan; student takes notes or advisor prints copies of notes and resources for student
- Establish a communication plan; encourage students to reach out to share their progress toward goals
- Brainstorm possible roadblocks and strategies to overcome them
- Invite students to contact you with any problems, questions, or concerns
- Reiterate your confidence that the student can accomplish their goals
- Schedule a follow-up meeting or a communication plan for celebrating successes

Example Deliver Questions

- What additional questions do you have for me?
- Is there anything else that I should have asked you?
- How and when will you keep me updated on your progress?
- What can you do to re-energize and motivate yourself if you get off track?
- How will you celebrate when you accomplish your goals?
- Which of the things we discussed today are you most looking forward to doing?
- What will you do if you think your goals may be changing?
- What strategies can you utilize if you run into roadblocks?

Don't Settle



Definition

Students and advisors set their own internal bars of expectations high

Key Features

1. Challenge and Support
2. Raising the Bar
3. Virtuous Cycle
4. Positive Restlessness
5. Pocket of Greatness

Practices

- Review students' accomplishments and celebrate what they have achieved
- Draw on the rapport you already have established to let them know that you believe in them and that you support them
- Challenge them to set and achieve new goals and support them in next steps
- Help students raise their internal bar of expectations
- Align the student's previous accomplishments and strengths with their capability to meet the higher goal
- Encourage students to reflect on their learning and growth

Example Don't Settle Questions

- What have you done particularly well during this semester?
- Tell me about a goal you met that you initially thought you would not be able to accomplish. What helped you achieve it? How can you apply those strategies in the future?
- What would happen if I challenged you to be the best *you* that you could possibly be? What would you need to do differently?
- You have done great so far! What is one thing you could do even better?
- What is the next chapter of your success story?

Appreciative Mindset

Care about
and believe in
the potential
of others

Possess an
attitude of
gratefulness

Continually
hone your
craft

Remember
your power

Be insatiably
curious about
others'
stories

Recognize we
are all
perfectly
imperfect