Troubleshooting VI. When giving your all is not enough: Resources for Students

I think a student is in crisis

If you suspect your student is having significant difficulty, contact your professor immediately. Discuss the situation, respecting the student’s confidentiality when it is appropriate, and decide on a suitable approach. If you cannot reach your professor, speak to your Department Chair, the Director of Undergraduate Studies for your student’s major (if that is known) and/or the Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled.

If you think the student has a personal crisis that needs immediate attention, and in case of emergencies, call NYU Protection Services at 998.2222.

I think a student will fail the course

Invite your student to your office hours. Talk to him or her and see if you can identify and address the problem. Perhaps the student would benefit from some of the academic resources on campus, such as the College Learning Center or the College Writing Center. You might advise getting additional help or tutoring in the course. Also, alert the professor to the problem. He or she may have a specific policy regarding students who are doing poorly, or suggestions to help them improve their academic performance.

A student has a significant number of absences

As there is no official school or University policy regarding class attendance, it is best to consult with your professor to ask what his or her preference is in dealing with these situations. If the student is someone you know, you may offer to write a short e-mail simply stating you noticed the absence and suggesting that the student come to see you in office hours. If you do not know student well enough or do not feel comfortable approaching students this way, alerting the professor about the situation should be enough.

A student suddenly wants special treatment for a disability or learning disorder

Students are not guaranteed special accommodation and/or privileges for disabilities or learning disorders without being registered with the Moses Center. Typically, the Moses Center has students take exams on site. If a student believes a condition has developed recently, you should refer him or her to the Moses Center, who can further refer the student for appropriate assessment. Lack of proper documentation does not prohibit special arrangements from being made for any particular student; ultimately these decisions should be made jointly between the graduate student teacher and the professor.
**A student wants me to be a tutor**

While it is up to you to decide how much time you wish to dedicate to any individual student, you are not obligated to be a personal tutor to any student who is having difficulty in a course. In fact, being a student’s personal tutor in a course for which you are a teacher—especially a paid one—can interfere with your objectivity in grading and giving equal time to all students. If a student asks you to be a tutor, you can thank the student for appreciating your teaching efforts and refer the student to the College Learning Center. You may also consider helping the student find a personal tutor (i.e., a student in your department). If you do wish to work more with this student, it is best to serve as a tutor for other courses he or she is taking that semester, or to offer to serve as a tutor during another semester.

**A student cannot seem to manage the workload**

As with all student problems, you may initially want to invite your student to discuss the problem with you. It is possible that the student has poor study habits that are preventing him or her from getting through the assignments in a timely manner, or needs to re-think his or her time commitments outside of academics that are interfering with academic performance. There are several places you can lead the student for further assistance, including his or her academic advisor, the College Advising Center, and/or the College Learning Center. For conflict between academics and extracurricular athletic activities, a student may be referred to the Coles Sports Center Academic Advisor. At the very least, your primary responsibility is to contact the professor and let him or her know there is a problem. At that point, he or she will decide on the most appropriate course of action.

**A student has a concern about a choice of major**

Students who have not yet chosen a major can speak to the advisor they were initially assigned at NYU to discuss their options. You may also suggest to these students that they could make an appointment to speak to professors whose classes they enjoyed, to get more information about possibly interesting fields. Once a student has declared a major, he or she will be assigned a new advisor, typically the Director of Undergraduate Studies of that department, with whom the student can consult about their concerns. Students can also be referred to the College Advising Center for individual advisement about academic programs.

**A student is worried about parental expectations**

University Counseling Service (and CAS Counseling Service) has counselors who are trained to work with students in helping them formulate responses to parental concerns and disagreement about their fields of study.
Students may also speak with the Student Affairs Dean of their school. Some students may also be interested in visiting the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs (CMEP) for one-on-one counseling and advising.

**A student does not know how to begin doing appropriate research for an assignment**

The best place to refer students is Bobst. Librarians are available to help students learn the basics of academic research, from finding materials in the stacks to doing on-line database searches in their respective fields. Have students stop by Bobst or call the Instructional Services Librarian, at 998.2513. Students may also benefit from reading discipline-specific books, such as the MLA Guide or the APA Publication Manual.

**A student is worried about finances**

Students may first wish to speak to the Student Affairs Dean in the students’ individual school to discuss financial aid options and financial plans. Students may also visit the Financial Aid Office to speak to a representative about payment schedules and the like. Some students may wish to visit Career Services or the Student Employment and Internship Center for help finding part-time employment on and off campus. The Center for Multicultural Education and Programs (CMEP) offers emergency loans to African American, Latino, and Asian American students.

**A student of color seeks additional support at NYU**

Students can be referred to the Student Affairs Dean in his or her individual school, as each school has its own liaison for the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs (CMEP). You can also refer the student to CMEP directly to make an initial appointment necessary to receive services. The Office of Student Activities has information on ethnic and cultural clubs and organizations.

**A student was sexually harassed or assaulted**

If you are the first person the student has come to after a sexual assault, call Protection Services immediately at 998.2222. At your request, the dispatcher will contact the University Health Center and a trained NYU rape crisis counselor. Tell the student not to wash, change clothes, or douche, and send the student immediately for medical treatment for possible injuries, STDs, or unwanted pregnancy. The University Health Center offers 24-hour medical and counseling services. A student can also seek assistance by calling the 24/7 Wellness Exchange Hotline (443.9999). If you can, walk the student over to the appropriate office to ensure the student receives proper medical and psychological assistance.