Referring Students

Referrals should be used to bring attention to a specific area of concern to other faculty/staff that are connected to that student. Here are some tips to guide you through the referral process.

I. Referral Decision
   • This refers to the ability to determine if a referral should be made.
   • Consider the following points in the process of deciding if a referral should be made:
     1. Know your students
        a. Review student information (Survey results, previous Action Logs or Referral Comments, or any other information you can access prior to your appointment)
        b. Schedule sufficient time for the appointment (especially if it an initial appointment)
        c. Be prepared! The more you know before the meeting, the more you can focus on helping the student during the appointment
     2. Determining the problem(s) the student is facing
     3. Determining whether or not you can help and/or are qualified to offer the assistance needed
     4. Determining the possible offices or people to whom the student may be referred

II. Referral Process
   • Explain in a clear and open manner why you feel it is desirable or necessary to refer the student
   • Explain fully the services that can be obtained from the referral you are recommending
   • Reassure the student about the capability and qualifications of the resource to help meet the particular need expressed
   • Discuss with the student any need for the transfer of data and obtain consent and approval for transfer

III. Referral Follow-Up
   • Determine if the student kept the appointment
   • Discuss with the student his/her evaluation of the help they received
   • Determine whether you selected the appropriate resource for the student
   • Schedule time to go in to MAP-Works after meetings with students to record data

In any situation where the physical or mental well-being of the student is in jeopardy or in cases in which the campus community may be in danger, please follow university protocol to immediately address the crisis. Referrals are NOT intended to take the place of standard procedures in an emergency situation.
# Referral Talking Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Concern:</th>
<th>What This Means:</th>
<th>Talking Points:</th>
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</table>
| Ability to Pay Monthly Living Expenses| Your student is telling you that money is a barrier preventing their success at NIU. Whether it is an everyday expense or the daunting figure of next semester’s tuition, they are asking you for help. | - Reassure the student that all students deal with financial issues and there are many options available.  
- Ask students if they have applied for scholarships and aid in the past.  
- Remind students that it is important to look and apply for options as early as possible. |
| Ability to Pay Next Term’s Tuition/Fees| Your student is telling you that he/she is struggling with basic academic skills. These are important habits that often form in the first few weeks of the semester. Your student may not know it’s a problem, so it will be helpful to bring it up quickly to correct the concern. | - Discuss study skills and expectations of college courses.  
- Has the student considered going to ACCESS or a Student Success Specialist for academic resources?  
- Has the student sought out tutoring for a specific class where they are having difficulties? |
| Academic Behaviors: Basic             | Your student is telling you that he/she is struggling with behaviors such as class participation, study skills, self-discipline, and communication with the instructor. It is important to help students develop these crucial skills. | - Discuss study skills and expectations of college courses.  
- Has the student considered going to ACCESS or a Student Success Specialist for academic resources?  
- Has the student sought out tutoring for a specific class where they are having difficulties? |
| Academic Behaviors: Advanced          | Your student is telling you that he/she is struggling with behaviors such as class participation, study skills, self-discipline, and communication with the instructor. It is important to help students develop these crucial skills. | - Discuss study skills and expectations of college courses.  
- Has the student considered going to ACCESS or a Student Success Specialist for academic resources?  
- Has the student sought out tutoring for a specific class where they are having difficulties? |
| Analytical Skills                     | Your student is telling you that he/she is struggling with Math and/or problem-solving skills.                                                                                                                                                              | - Has the student met with their professor or a tutor to discuss study habits and specific strategies for classes?                                                                                 |
| Class Attendance                      | Your student isn’t going to class very often! This could be for many reasons. Remember that this is often a symptom of a distraction or bad habit that is going on in their life. Try starting with the class absences and see if you can go any deeper. | - Make sure the student has a clear understanding of why it is important to regularly attend class.  
- Are there particular reasons why the student is missing class?  
- Has the student met with a Student Success Specialist about their struggles in class and other issues that might be going on? |
| Commitment to a Major                 | Your student is not sure about their career path or academic major. Your role here could be to help process their thoughts. However, remember that academic advising and career resources are great resources available. | - Assure the student that changing majors or being undecided is a process many students go through.  
- Ask the student about the specific concerns they have regarding their current major.  
- What interests does the student have? |
| Commitment to the Institution         | Your student is not committed to staying at NIU. This could be for a variety of reasons- academic, financial, or personal.                                                                                                                                 | - What challenge is the student facing at NIU?  
- Has the student met with a Student Success Specialist to discuss these concerns? |
| Communication Skills                  | Your student is telling you that he/she does not feel able to effectively communicate concerns about academics, residential living, and/or family or social concerns. This could include academic group work or actual speech communication classes. | - Reassure the student that learning to communicate in a college environment may take some time and practice, and a little nervousness is natural.  
- Has the student talked with their Student Success Specialist about interpersonal resources? |

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<td>Office of the Bursar</td>
<td>Scholarship Office</td>
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<td>Counseling &amp; Student Development Center</td>
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| Course Difficulties | Your student is telling you that his/her classes are difficult and is currently having a hard time learning to succeed in them. Ask more about which classes are difficult and why they are struggling in them. This information can help you refer. | - What aspect of the class is the student struggling with?  
- Has the student discussed their concerns with their Academic Advisor or a Student Success Specialist?  
- Encourage the student to speak with the instructor about the concerns in that particular class as well. | ACCESS  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| Expected Grades This Term | Your student is predicting to do poorly in classes. Remember that just because they think they will do poorly does not mean that necessarily want to or know how to fix it. Other, deeper issues could be at play here. | - Has the student considered talking to ACCESS about academic resources and tutoring?  
- Ask the student why they think they will perform poorly? It could be an issue with performance, or it may just be expectations.  
- Has the student considering sharing these concerns with the instructor of the course(s) they expect to do poorly in? | ACCESS  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| High School GPA | Your student is telling you that he/she did not do well academically in high school. This does not mean that they are not doing well in college or that they will do poorly. | - Ask the student how their study habits and expectations for performance have changed since high school?  
- Does the student have a clear understanding of what is expected in college?  
- Does the student know where to seek out resources on good study habits? | ACCESS  
Academic Advising  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| Homesickness: Distressed | Your student misses home a lot. Depending on the time of year, this could be a phase or a more concerning issue of depression. Follow up but remember your limits as a helper, not a counselor. | - Emphasize that many students feel homesick at one point or another; it is a natural part of transitioning  
- Has the student found ways to get involved socially and in student organizations on campus? | Office of Student Academic Success  
Counseling & Student Development Center |
| Interference with Coursework | Your student is telling you that he/she is having trouble focusing on their academics due to other distracting concerns. This interference can come for many different areas of the student’s life, so it is particularly important to talk with the student and get at what specifically is the concern. | - Try to talk with the student about the things that are keeping them from their school work. This could be a variety of factors.  
- Remind the student that there are numerous resources on campus available to help them be successful.  
- Has the student spoken with a Student Success Specialist about their concerns? | Office of Student Academic Success  
Counseling & Student Development Center |
| Living Environment: Off-Campus | Your student is not satisfied with their living situation. Off-campus students could be struggling with roommates or family, not have adequate study space, may struggle to pay bills at their home or apartment, or a variety of other issues. | - Inquire as to what specifically is challenging about the living environment.  
- Living issues are best dealt with head on, so encourage the student to handle the issue directly instead of allowing it to continue. | Off-Campus and Non-Traditional Student Services |
| Living Environment: On-Campus | Your student is struggling with living in the residence halls. This could be because of the community, their roommate, or other factors. Try to get to the bottom of the concern and refer accordingly. | - Inquire as to what specifically is challenging about the living environment.  
- Has the student tried talking to their Community Advisory about the issue?  
- Assure them that transitioning in to a residence hall may take some time. | Housing & Dining-Community Advisor/Hall Director |
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| Number of Study Hours per Week          | Your student is telling you that he/she is not studying the appropriate amount of hours outside of class. However, this does not mean that he/she knows it is not enough. You can help by drawing attention to this. | - Discuss expectations for studying and working outside of class.  
- Has the student met with ACCESS or a Student Success Specialist to talk about study habits and time management? | ACCESS  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| On-Campus Living: Roommates            | You student specifically says that their roommate situation is inhibiting them from succeeding academically. It is important to get to the bottom of this issue, help mediate any conflict, and ensure both roommates are in an environment that will allow them both to be successful. | - Emphasize that conflicts can occur when new roommates move in for the first time and that it is important to resolve the issue.  
- Inquire as to what specific challenges the student faces with the roommate.  
- Ask if the student has tried speaking to the roommate or their Community Advisor about the problem. | Housing & Dining-Community Advisor/Hall Director |
| Social Integration                     | Your student does not feel connected to NIU. Is there something that is stopping them from getting involved more or meeting new people? Try to find out what the main concern is. They may not know where they can get involved. | - Ask the student about what sorts of things they have been doing outside of the classroom, whether they are organized events or social activity.  
- Is the student aware of the opportunities that exist for involvement on campus? | Housing & Dining-Community Advisor/Hall Director  
Student Involvement & Leadership Development  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| Student-Athlete                        | Your student is also a student-athlete and is struggling to balance the time commitment between classes and athletics. This can lead to a significant amount of stress for a student-athlete. | - Ask the student about how they work to balance their time between classes and their sport.  
- Has the student met with their coach or advisor about balancing academics and their sport? | Student-Athlete Academic Support Services |
| Student Organization Involvement       | Your student is not involved on campus and, furthermore, does not necessarily see the value in getting involved. Research shows that students who are meaningfully involved on campus are more likely to persist to graduation. | - Try discussing the student’s interests and how opportunities on campus exist to get involved and advance career goals and/or other social hobbies.  
- Has the student explored involvement opportunities on campus before?  
- Are there academic or time concerns keeping the student from getting involved? | Student Involvement & Leadership Development |
| Test Anxiety                           | Your student is having anxiety prior to and during exams. This is a common concern among first-year students; however, resources are available to help students alleviate this stress. | - Assure the student that test anxiety is normal and that there are many things that can be done to reduce it.  
- Has the student met with ACCESS about academic resources and tutoring?  
- Has the student considering talking to a counselor about ways to manage anxiety? | ACCESS  
Counseling & Student Development Center  
Office of Student Academic Success |
| Time Management                        | Your student is having a hard time managing their time. Issues with time management can quickly spill over into various aspects of the student’s life. Good time management skills are essential for a student to be successful. | - Ask if the student uses a planner or any other tools to manage their time?  
- Has the student met with ACCESS, a Student Success Specialist, or an Academic Advisor to discuss time management skills?  
- Has the student found other involvement opportunities to structure some of the free time in his/her schedule? | ACCESS  
Office of Student Academic Success |
### Referral Offices in MAP-Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising Center</td>
<td>Academic Advising Center 107</td>
<td>(815) 753-2573</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aac@niu.edu">aac@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>Williston Hall 100</td>
<td>(815) 753-0203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:access@niu.edu">access@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the Bursar</td>
<td>Swen Parson Hall 235</td>
<td>(815) 753-1885</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bursar@niu.edu">bursar@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Services</td>
<td>Campus Life Building 220</td>
<td>(815) 753-1631</td>
<td><a href="mailto:careerservices@niu.edu">careerservices@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling &amp; Student Development Center</td>
<td>Campus Life Building 200</td>
<td>(815) 753-1206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Resource Center</td>
<td>Health Services Building 4th Floor</td>
<td>(815) 753-1303</td>
<td><a href="mailto:drc@niu.edu">drc@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Enhancement</td>
<td>Evans Field House 139</td>
<td>(815) 753-9755</td>
<td><a href="mailto:healthenhancement@niu.edu">healthenhancement@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Program</td>
<td>Campus Life 110</td>
<td>(815) 753-0694</td>
<td><a href="mailto:honors@niu.edu">honors@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Dining</td>
<td>Neptune West 101</td>
<td>(815) 753-1525</td>
<td><a href="mailto:housingdining@niu.edu">housingdining@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student &amp; Faculty Office</td>
<td>Williston Hall 406</td>
<td>(815) 753-1346</td>
<td><a href="mailto:isfo@niu.edu">isfo@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Student Services</td>
<td>Adams Hall 409</td>
<td>(815) 753-0691</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mss@niu.edu">mss@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-Campus and Non-Traditional Student Services</td>
<td>Holmes Student Center 023J</td>
<td>(815) 753-9999</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ocntss@niu.edu">ocntss@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Student Academic Success</td>
<td>Academic Advising Center 113</td>
<td>(815) 753-5721</td>
<td><a href="mailto:osas@niu.edu">osas@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship Office</td>
<td>Swen Parson Hall 245K</td>
<td>(815) 753-4829</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scholarships@niu.edu">scholarships@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Athlete Academic Support Services</td>
<td>Yordon Center 110</td>
<td>(815) 753-1342</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Financial Aid Office</td>
<td>Swen Parson Hall 245</td>
<td>(815) 753-1395</td>
<td><a href="mailto:finaid@niu.edu">finaid@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Involvement &amp; Leadership Development</td>
<td>Campus Life Building 150</td>
<td>(815) 753-1421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:studentinvolvement@niu.edu">studentinvolvement@niu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' Legal Assistance</td>
<td>Campus Life Building 120</td>
<td>(815) 753-1701</td>
<td><a href="mailto:studentslegal@niu.edu">studentslegal@niu.edu</a></td>
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