

## Working with Students in Emotional Distress

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### Abstract

Advisors typically provide academic guidance, but they can sometimes find themselves in a therapeutic session with students. This can be a difficult situation for advisors, especially if they have not received formal training in counseling. What is one to do? Allow students to go on about issues not directly related to their academics? Refer students to the counseling center and move on to academic topics? Regardless of the advisor's educational background or current field, all advisors should learn some basic helping skills to better work with students who are in emotional distress and know when and where to refer students for further help. Basic helping skills can help build rapport that will make for more fruitful advising sessions. This topical session will focus on providing new and seasoned advisors with the necessary helping skills in the art of communication to building better relationships with students, and help advisors in working with emotionally distressed students to know when and where to refer them. It will include lecture, discussion, and role playing (audience participation is expected!).

### Overview

- Advising v. Counseling
- Building Helping Skills: The Art of Communication
  - Active Listening
  - Reflection of Meaning/Feeling
  - Supportive Confrontation
- Practicing the Skills
- Knowing When and Where to Refer

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