Dear Advisors:

Our students are relying upon our academic and professional advisor community to provide them the one-to-one consultation and customized attention that they need to continue with their academic plans and processing the realities of COVID-19. UW-Superior has a strong culture of caring that encircles our students and their dreams.

YOU as advisors are one key pillar to that culture of care. During this time of disruption, our students need to be able to have experienced guides, mentors and advisors reach out to them and support them as they transition.

We know this is a lot to do all at the same time. We’d like to clarify WHY it is critical that advisement proceed right now and next week in an effective, committed and personal way:

- **Students and COVID-19 Disruption:** We are all experiencing the disruptive effects of the pandemic. Our students are also disrupted just like us. We are landing quickly on our feet and re-setting ourselves around a “new normal” and they need us to reach out and help them stabilize during this time and around their future plans. This is the most important reason is they need us----and we know you will answer that call. We are deeply committed to our students—that is our true culture of caring.

- **Retention:** We’ve all heard this word “retention” for many semesters now. Never has this concept been more critical to us than now. If we can improve our retention rates in Spring 2020 by reaching out assertively to show our students that we care, we can help and we are there for them, we will be helping to stabilize our future at UW-Superior. Enrollment management across the state is experiencing massive disruption so keeping our students and helping them continue in their program of study will be a win-win. Every student matters to us as individuals, to achieving our mission and to our institutional future.

What can you do as advisors?

- **Advising Appointments:** Continue to set up and hold advisement meetings as you normally would, albeit remotely. As indicated in the attached resource guide, there are several types of meeting options including phone, email, and several video conferencing tools including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and Collaborate Ultra. The Center for Academic Advising has a history of advising remotely and can provide further support. Student registration for Fall 2020 courses begins on April 6. We need to ensure that every student is ready to enroll in Summer and Fall 2020 courses and that every student can find the referrals to resources and supportive care that they need.

- **Office Phone:** while you are working remotely you can easily check your voicemail from off-campus as well as forward your calls to another phone. Please make sure you have
forwarded your phone and updated your email signature with any new contact information that will help our students find you.

- **Student Information:** as you can imagine, a lot of information is also being communicated to students. There is so much to share. Check the [COVID-19 campus website](https://campus.university.edu/covid-19) where all major student (and staff) announcements are archived. This way you can see the information also being shared with our students to better understand the full range of communication and happenings. Be prepared to answer their questions and even walk through campus communications so they understand what is happening.

Advising is a critical mission-centric responsibility during this time. We encourage advisors to reach out directly to every single one of your advisees---don’t wait for them to contact you.

Be assertive.
Check on them again even if you’ve already done it once.
Double check in E-Hive that they have completed registration. If not, check in on them.
Give them a call.
Send them a text.
Send them an email.
Let them see your face and hear your voice through a ZOOM or Microsoft Teams contact---they know you and need you now in a whole new way.
Be personal.
Be caring.
Help them re-orient their lives.
Be their Superior.

We are TOGETHER WITH THEM!

And remember the power of LISTENING:

*Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force...*

*When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.*

*Ideas actually begin to grow within us and come to life...*

*When we listen to people there is an alternating current, and this recharges us so that we never get tired of each other...*

*And it is this little creative fountain inside us that begins to spring and cast up new thoughts and unexpected laughter and wisdom...*

*Well, it is when people really listen to us, with quiet fascinated attention, that the little fountain begins to work again, to accelerate in the most surprising way.*

*Brenda Ueland*

Thank you!
Take care,

Maria and Nick

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