

Conversation Starters

Possible questions for first student contact

- What were your favorite classes in high school?
- What are your academic strengths? What brings out the best in you?
- What are your goals for your first term?
- What field of interest is of interest to you? What attracts you to this field?
- What do you intend to accomplish in your undergraduate education?
- What is your greatest academic concern?
- What academic skills do you intend to work the hardest to improve? Why are these skills important to you? Examples to cover:
 - Math skills
 - Study skills
 - Writing skills
 - Reading skills
 - Oral communication skills
 - Time management skills
 - Other skills _____
- What activities outside of the classroom do you think you might pursue?
- What do you most look forward to in college?
- What other information would you like me to know about you?

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Possible questions at mid-term contact

- What things are going well for you?
- What issues have emerged?
- How are you reaching the goals you set for the term?
- Do you have concerns about any of your classes? What are they?
- What about the rest of your life—meeting new people, keeping things in balance, making time to sleep, exercise?
- What is your favorite class this term, Why?
- What have you learned about yourself this term that surprised you? Confirmed your ideas about your gifts and abilities? Upset you?
- What advice would you give yourself right now? Why?
- How are you doing on improving your academic skills you targeted at the beginning of the term?
- What else would it be good for me to know?

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Possible questions for students on academic probation or not doing well in courses

- What are the most important reasons for your academic difficulties? Why are these important?
- When you have faced other kinds of difficulties in the past, how have you handled them?
- If you could rewind life and return to the beginning of the term, what would you have changed about it?
- What are your goals for the upcoming term?
- What kinds of support will you need to reach your goals?
- What academic resources do you intend to use to help you reach your goals?
- How will you hold yourself accountable for the decisions you are making now?
- How will you know if you're making progress in meeting your goals?
- What are your long-term goals? Where do you imagine yourself in five years?
- How can I help you reach your goals?

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Possible questions for working with transfer students

- What courses have you enjoyed?
- What have you learned so far?
- What classes are you looking forward to taking and why?
- Have you decided on a major? If not, how will you choose your major?
- What do you think is your next step?
- What is your plan to get where you want to go?
- What preparation is needed to achieve your academic goal?
- What are some other options to achieving your goals?
- What roadblocks have you encountered and how have you dealt with them?
- Who do you know in a field of interest with whom you can connect, job shadow, or intern?

Possible questions for students who have never met with an advisor

- What system have you used to select your courses?
- What are your expectations about our advising meeting?
- What prevented you from seeing an advisor previously?
- What is your plan to get where you want to go?
- What challenges do you expect to face?
- What will you do if you encounter roadblocks?
- What are your strengths that you can build upon?
- What classes are you looking forward to taking and why?
- After this meeting, what concrete steps will you take to meet your goals?
- What is the time line for your plan?