Ask students how they are doing and then really listen to their response

Don’t be afraid to ask students meaningful questions about their experience at NMU and be sure to follow-up with students when they share significant details about their life. Try to ask questions that won’t elicit just an “I’m doing fine” response such as, “Do you have any upcoming exams or projects?” “How are things going with your roommate?” These types of questions might serve as a great conversation starter and will give you the opportunity to learn more about your students. Be sure to listen carefully for common difficulties such as students not eating well, not getting enough sleep, or not having the chance to recreate. These are all pillars of a healthy lifestyle, especially as it relates to mental wellness. If necessary, be sure to make appropriate referrals to on-campus resources which deal specifically with these types of common issues.

Opportunities to Engage in Retention

Connected students are successful students—they have a higher retention rate and, therefore, a higher graduation rate.

How can you help students feel connected to NMU?

Refer students to services when you think they need help

Learn about campus resources. When you talk to students you may pick up on needs they have. They may not ask for help but they may very much need a referral to services on campus, services that are all free to them. Try to make them comfortable with the idea of going to an office, or a specific person if possible, to ask for help. Call the office with the student so the student can set up an appointment. Remind students that everyone here is very friendly and that we want to help them be successful. Check in with the student later to see if they followed through.

Academic and Career Advisement Center
3302.1 Hedgcock • 227-2971
acac@nmu.edu

Center for Student Enrichment
1205 & 1206 University Center • 227-2439
cse@nmu.edu

Counseling and Consultation Services
3405 Hedgcock • 227-2980

Dean of Students Office
2001 Hedgcock • 227-1700 • dso@nmu.edu

Disability Services
2101 Hedgcock • 227-1700
disserv@nmu.edu

Financial Aid Office
2107 Hedgcock • 227-2327 • fao@nmu.edu

First Generation Services
2001 Hedgcock • 227-1700
dso@nmu.edu

Global Campus
603 Cohodas • 227-1200 • online@nmu.edu

Graduate Studies Office
401 Cohodas • 227-2300
graduate@nmu.edu

Housing and Residence Life
3502 Hedgcock • 227-2620
housing@nmu.edu

International Education Services
2001 Hedgcock • 227-2510
ipo@nmu.edu

Multicultural Education and Resource Center
3001 Hedgcock • 227-1554
merc@nmu.edu

Student Service Center
2201 Hedgcock • 227-1221 • ssc@nmu.edu

Veterans Services
2101 Hedgcock • 227-1402
mrutledg@nmu.edu

Ask students how they are doing and then really listen to their response

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Use Starfish

Starfish is an incredibly powerful retention tool, but it doesn’t work if faculty/staff don’t participate. Before Starfish, academic advisers really had no way to track how their students were performing and instructors had no way to let staff know which of their students were struggling and need help. Starfish is designed to have faculty, staff and students work together and communicate directly to maximize success and identify students who need help, as a means to increase retention. (contact: acac@nmu.edu)
Opportunities to Engage in Retention

Provide early feedback to students

Starfish and Starfish Progress Surveys
In Starfish you have the ability to “flag” a student who is not attending, doing poorly, missing assignments, etc. You also have the ability to award a “kudo” to a student doing well, improving, etc. Each time you place a flag or kudo, the student’s assigned academic adviser is also notified and has the ability to help intervene. You will also have the opportunity to provide warning and congratulatory information on progress surveys through Starfish. (contact: acac@nmu.edu)

Quick Turn-Around on Grading
Students need to know if they are meeting the requirements of your class and need to know early so they have the time to seek help, change their study strategies, etc.

Appraise the Performance of Student Employees
Let your student employees know how they are doing. Just like in the academic area, students need warnings if they are performing poorly and a pat on the back when they are doing well.

Have out-of-class interactions with students

Advise a student organization
We have 354 student organizations on campus and many need advisers. Advisers are an integral part of every student club as they provide support, guidance, and wisdom to the students. (contact: cse@nmu.edu)

Be a mentor
Positively impact a student’s life by mentoring through the Student Leader Fellowship Program (contact: jbarch@nmu.edu) or the WIN program for international students. (contact: liisleib@nmu.edu)

Present a SkillBuilder or DARTS program
Consider being a presenter and sharing your knowledge, skills and expertise. The Center for Student Enrichment (contact: cse@nmu.edu) and the Housing and Residence Life Office (contact: housing@nmu.edu) would love to hear from you.

Connect with student workers
Student employees learn a myriad of skills outside the classroom by working with you and your department. Take the time to visit with them and listen to what they have to say. Most students rate their relationships at work as one of the top reasons they enjoy being here.

Attend campus events
Students notice your interest!

Encourage advisees to meet with you (even if not required to do so)

The act of advising is much more than just selecting courses for next semester. Some questions you may consider asking advisees are:

- How do the classes you are taking relate to your future career?
- What can I do to help you find an internship, job, or graduate school?
- Are you utilizing the resources offered on campus?
- What is the best thing about attending NMU?
- Are you planning to re-enroll next semester? Why or why not?

Donate to students in need

NMU food pantry
ASNMU and the University will be opening a food pantry in Gries Hall in October. (contact: dso@nmu.edu)

Student Flexible Aid Fund
The Fund is designed to be a financial resource for students in need who experience unexpected financial challenges (such as medical expenses, day care, car repairs and other expenses not covered by traditional sources of financial aid) that would make it difficult to focus on their education and graduate in a timely manner. (contact: fao@nmu.edu)

Warm clothes for international students and others (contact: ipo@nmu.edu or dso@nmu.edu)

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