

# Addressing Challenging Advising Scenarios: The Advising Case Conference



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# Disclosure Statement

Drs. Levine, Frosch and Shochet have no financial relationships to disclose.



# Learning Objectives

- Recognize the benefits of using an advising case conference format for addressing faculty development around managing challenging advising scenarios.
- Describe the key process features of an effective advising case conference.
- Demonstrate educational strategies and skills for promoting active learning in a advising case conference setting.



# Why the “Case Conference”

- The “parable” as a learning tool
  - Confucius, Lao Tse, ancient Hebrew scholars, Socratic method from ancient Greece
- Memorable cases are ubiquitous in clinical teaching
  - Stimulus for discovery and advances in clinical medicine



# Why the “Case Conference”

- Learning Communities faculty experience “*memorable cases*” all the time
- Think for a moment about a student interaction that might serve as a learning opportunity to enhance your wisdom and skills around advising
- Begin to formulate a question about that experience
- Consider the expertise and resources available to you that would help you to address your question



# Adapting the Case Presentation

- Bring together LC faculty with diverse areas of expertise
- Identify common and uncommon challenges in advising
- Deliver content and model teaching strategies
- Supports adult learning principles
  - relevant, experiential, self-directed, collaborative, facilitative, reflective
  - Attributes and skills for LC faculty
- Opportunity for scholarship



# JHUSOM Colleges Advisory Program

- Started 2005, 4 colleges, 6 faculty per college
- Advising molecule, 1 faculty with 5 students per medical school class
- *One on one and group advising, in longitudinal relationships with many opportunities and contexts for interaction*
  - *Clinical skills preceptor and coach*
  - *Academic/career advisor*
  - *Remediation/support*
  - *Social interactions*
  - *Structured reflective practice/group advising*



# JHUSOM Colleges Advisory Program

- CAP Culture
  - Building and maintaining relationships between students and faculty
  - Advocating for students
  - Learner-centered
  - Facilitating growth and success among students
  - Impacting the learning environment positively
  - Using principles of adult learning
  - Co-creating knowledge about best practices
  - Participating in a learning community





# JHUSOM Colleges Advisory Program

- CAP Advising Case Conference (2006)
  - Quarterly, 60 min, initially organized by one faculty person, now faculty within each college responsible for one case conference each year based on established guidelines
  - Variety of formats/strategies: small group breakouts, role play, medical theater, fishbowl discussion
  - Periodically invite outside experts-deans, students, SAP
  - Document lessons learned and create a repository of cases and supporting resources online



# Case Conference: Program Learning Objectives

- provide faculty with an opportunity to discuss challenging advising/teaching cases and develop strategies for addressing these cases.
- encourage faculty to reflect on their own advising experiences for strengths and challenges.
- provide faculty with an opportunity to “learn together” and build new skills using active, collaborative, and experiential learning activities.
- help keep our learning community up to date by presenting (or making available) any current literature on advising or teaching CFM related content.
- create a resource for advising through documentation of presented cases and supporting literature.



# JHUSOM Colleges Advisory Program

- Topics:
  - career indecision/nontraditional careers in medicine\*
  - mental health, medical student distress,
  - learning/physical disabilities,
  - academic performance, remediation,
  - MD/PhD experience,
  - gender issues/sexual harassment,
  - implicit and explicit racial bias,
  - clinical skills teaching,
  - career counseling,
  - counseling students with interpersonal/communication challenges, personality traits
  - The year off: advising students around taking a year off

\*Levine RB, Cayea D, Shochet RB, Wright SM. *Case Study: A Mid-Clerkship Crisis-Lessons Learned from Advising a Medical Student with Career Indecision.* Acad Med 2010;85:654-659.



# JHUSOM Colleges Advisory Program

- CAP Case Conference lessons learned
  - Designate responsible parties, develop guidelines
  - Discuss *challenging* advising scenarios, learning edges
  - Experiential, active learning
  - Skills building opportunities
  - Confidentiality
  - Opportunity for faculty reflection
  - Build shared wisdom around advising



# Advising Case Conference

- Presentation of learning objectives and case -5 min
- Small group breakouts: discussion and skills practice - 40 min
- Large group debrief - 20 min



# Advising Case Conference

- Learning objectives:
  - Develop a framework for exploring professionalism issues with students in the context of an ongoing advising relationship
  - Practice setting expectations for professional behavior with students that are learner-centered
  - Reflect on our own challenges addressing professionalism issues with students



# The Case

- You are the LC faculty advisor and clinical skills preceptor working with a 1<sup>st</sup> year student. About 3 weeks into the course you notice a pattern developing in the student's performance.
  - Assignments have been late on several occasions and the student does not seem to have responded to your specific feedback.
  - The student has also made comments about not seeing the need to dress a certain way when working with patients and feels that she/he should be able to wear whatever she/he thinks lets her/him express themselves.



# The Case

- You recognize a “red flag” and ask the student to meet with you to discuss how they are doing.
- Break into groups of 5-6
  - Use prompts to reflect on the case-20 min
  - Set up role plays-20 min
  - Be prepared to share in the large group 2 lessons learned





# Discussion Prompts

- What do you think could be going on with this student?
- How would you go about exploring these issues?
- What specific questions would you ask?
- How might you frame the issues you hope to discuss?
- What specific expectations will you set for this student's behavior moving forward?
- How will you follow up on these?
- Did you notice any personal emotional reactions to this case? How might these influence your advising interaction with this student?



# Skills Practice

- Role play a conversation with this student
  - Explore what is going on with student
  - Discuss professional norms and expectations
  - Summarize next steps and establish next steps



# Lessons Learned-Advising Case

- Breakthrough moments between the 2: advisor sharing a personal anecdote or validating student difficulty holding on to parts of self creating connection
- Advisor showed caring: validating struggle
- Balancing time /staying on task in context of relationship—framing it but being flexible
- More powerful if student expresses expectations than if faculty does: staying learned centered
- Remembering what it is like to be a student and what you are missing from prior life
- Creating space for student frustration/experience and not judging
- Allow personhood and process to stay on the table—not only “the problem”
- Pacing, tone, non-threatening manner (how create that?)
- Parallel experiences/prior experiences
- Ensure adequate time/space/place/environment
- Readiness for change? Relational context for readiness for change



# Reflections

- What was it like to hear about a challenging advising situation in this setting?
- How did your thinking about the case evolve and what was the impact of hearing other's perspectives, determining the key points for yourself, and working collaboratively?
- What insight did you gain from the role play? What was it like to play the advisor? The student?
- What content knowledge was new for you? What process components of the model resonated with you?
- In what ways could you adopt this method in your own advising/LC setting?



# Summary-Advising Case Conference

- Opportunity to build faculty skills in addressing challenging advising scenarios
- Delivers content and models adult learning principles and processes
- Space for faculty to process/reflect on sometimes difficult work
- Promotes community building of faculty
- Builds body of wisdom around advising