

Talking with Students about Academic Success | dennislearningcenter.osu.edu

The ways in which parents, advisors, and instructors talk about academic success impact students' motivation and choices! Read on for some common pitfalls and recommended alternatives.

DON'T

Praise ability.

- “You’re so smart!”

Use “should” statements or oversimplify the situation.

- “You really should be doing better than this.”
- “Just work harder.”

Talk about challenge as an indicator of poor fit.

- “I’m disappointed in you.”
- “It seems like _____ just isn’t for you.”

View campus resources as the easy way out.

- “Only _____ students _____.”

Expect similar results from methods that worked in high school.

- “You were at the top of your high school class. What happened?”
- “Maybe you shouldn’t be at OSU after all.”

DO

Acknowledge effort and persistence.

- “I admire how hard you’re working.”

Pose questions and encourage problem-solving.

- “What are some options you’ve considered?”
- “What have you heard about [resource]?”

Talk about challenge as a pathway to growth.

- “I can tell you’re disappointed. How might you approach next time differently?”

Identify the role of campus resources in student success.

- “I’ve heard _____ helps OSU students _____.”

Recognize college as a new context that requires a different quality and quantity of study time.

- “What differences are you seeing between college and high school? Talk to me about what is and isn’t working for you.”