

Dear faculty colleagues,

As you begin teaching again, please remember that Academic Advising and Student Assistance seek to partner with you on your students' success. **We have several new items to share with you.** Thank you for taking the time to read this.

1. **If a student exhibits academic difficulty**, enter your concern as an Academic Progress Report (APR) in the online system at <https://itwebapps.grinnell.edu/DotNet/StuAffairs>. Instructions are in the attached document, and tips appear below. (Please note that Chrome is the only supported browser for this application.)
2. **If you have a concern about a student's wellbeing**, including if the student has talked about leaving the college, please submit an [online student concern form](#) or contact Megan Baldree, assistant dean of student success, at baldreem@grinnell.edu. Megan or another staff member will follow up promptly.
3. **April 10 is the new deadline for both S/D/F grading and course withdrawal.** (See the [email of 3/25 from the Office of the Registrar](#) and this [guidance document to students](#) about weighing their course enrollment options.) **Please provide specific feedback to your students about how they are doing in your class prior to that date so students can make good decisions** about S/D/F and course withdrawal. Emergency course withdrawals are possible after April 10, through the last day of class ([application here](#)), but only due to exceptional circumstances that significantly impact the student's ability (1) to meet the requirements of a specific course and/or (2) to maintain their current course load.
4. In an APR, please **use the comment box to provide context** because class formats and expectations are changing dramatically. This will help us understand what your e-classroom environment and expectations look like to contextualize your concern. In addition to stating what your concerns are, please also give any recommendations for the student to rectify their situation.
5. **Signs of academic difficulty may look different now.** Normally we are used to three big indicators of a problem: absences from class, lack of communication, and not turning in assignments. Now, you will need to look for electronic breadcrumbs like not signing in, not posting, not attending synchronous group meetings, or not replying to email. **Just as we have asked you to notify us of any student who misses a week or more of class, please submit an APR if a student is disengaged for a week or more.** Absenteeism is often a manifestation of underlying health or mental health issues that significantly interfere with academic performance – and now, with the pandemic, it could be a symptom of myriad other challenges (e.g., technical issues with their computer or internet, lack of financial resources, caring for an ill family member, a household situation that is overwhelming, government restrictions), so follow up by staff is critical.

6. **Your role in student success is more important than ever.** Because of the distance, staff will no longer have the daily face time with students that we are accustomed to – to be able to learn about difficulties and coach them towards success. Students are most likely to be paying attention to messages coming from you. Please be the conduit of [academic success information](#) more than you would normally do in the context of your class and [refer students to resources](#).

Thank you for your participation in our efforts to help students be academically successful and persist at Grinnell. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact us at advising@grinnell.edu.

Joyce Stern, Dean for Student Success and Academic Advising
Megan Baldree, Assistant Dean of Student Success
(on behalf of the rest of the staff in Academic Advising and Student Affairs)

Additional Details (unchanged):

- **Submit APRs as soon as you note difficulty** even if you are in regular contact with the student. As the semester progresses, students' options become fewer and our interventions become less productive. An issue that might seem 'small' in the context of your class, when combined with challenges in other classes, can reveal a larger concern we need to follow up on.
- **Confidentiality.** Written correspondence about a student, including comments made in this online system and messages sent via email, can be considered part of a student's education record according to [FERPA](#), thus a student has the right to request to see them. We recommend you only include aspects of a student's performance or behavior that (1) the student already knows and (2) is fact-based. Unless you uncheck a box so that the student does not see the APR, remember that comments are viewable by the student and the student's adviser(s). Always demonstrate professionalism in your language. For sensitive matters, please contact Joyce (sternjm@grinnell.edu) or Megan (baldreem@grinnell.edu) to arrange a time to talk.
- **Tell the student first.** When you submit an APR, we trust that you will have already communicated to the student that there is a problem (e.g., by returning an exam with a "D" grade and a "Let's chat during virtual office hours" note). We do not want this system to be the way that your student learns difficult news.
- **Call if the concern seems life threatening.** Contact Campus Safety 641-269-4600 and request to talk to a staff member on call.
- **Closing the Loop:** The system notifies students by email of new APRs pertaining to them (when allowed by you). Academic Advising staff review every APR before 'releasing' it. Staff do additional outreach to many of these students by inviting a conversation about their difficulties. You can track that outreach in the APR system, see if a staff member is 'assigned' to your student, and whether in-person conversation happened regarding your concern. You may then contact the staff member directly – by phone or by email – to have further conversation if you want to collaborate.

- **Advisers:** In your role as an adviser you receive email alerts about new APRs for your advisees. To find out what the specific concern is, look up the student's APR [online](#). You can filter by your advisees. Feel free to partner with Academic Advising staff in responding to concerns about your advisees.