

Dealing with a High Utilizing Student

Typically even the utmost time and energy given to these students is not enough. They often seek to control your time and unconsciously believe the amount of time received is a reflection of their worth. You may find yourself increasingly drained and, feeling responsible for this student in a way that is beyond your normal involvement. It is important that this student be connected with many sources of support on-campus and in the community in general.

High Utilizing/Demanding students can be difficult to interact with because they can be intrusive and persistent. High Utilizing/Demanding traits can be associated with anxiety, agitated depression and/or personality disorders. Some characteristics of demanding students are a sense of entitlement, an inability to empathize, a need to control, difficulty dealing with ambiguity, a strong drive for perfection, difficulty respecting structure, limits, and rules, persistence after hearing “no”, dependency on others to take care of them, and a fear of dealing with the realities of life.

When dealing with a demanding student:

Do:

- Let them make their own decisions.
- Set firm and clear limits on your personal time and involvement.
- Offer referrals to other resources on and off campus.
- Set and enforce limits to prevent the disruptions of a class.
- Remember that your ability to be able to teach or serve other students and the other students' needs for an environment conducive to learning also must be met.

Don't:

- Get trapped into giving advice, special conditions, changing your schedule, etc.
- Feel obligated to take care of him/her or feel guilty about not doing more.
- Get trapped into giving advice or special conditions.
- Avoid the student as an alternative to setting and enforcing limits. Allow the student to intimidate you.
- Ignore the problem and the impact that it has on you and the other students.