# Icon Description automatically generated with low confidence Meetings with Students Tip Sheet Icon Description automatically generated with low confidence

## Coordinators commonly meet with students to address a range of needs including, but not limited to:*student rights and responsibilities, career or education pathway planning, academic supports, services for International and Indigenous students, physical and mental health supports, and accommodations assessment, planning, and review.  Here are some suggestions on how to efficiently organize, facilitate, and document meetings to address student needs.*

## Pre-Meeting Preparation

Ensure that an official meeting request either by you or the student is made using Fleming email accounts and includes **the purpose, and days and times available** to meet so that there is a record of the initial contact. Be flexible about meeting options such as meeting in person, by phone, or by Webex or Teams.

Obtain electronic confirmation of the meeting date, day, time, and location if the issue is unable to be resolved through an email exchange with the student. If using Webex or Teams, it is helpful to set up a meeting and invitation to the meeting link using everyone’s Fleming College email addresses so there is documentation of it and potentially calendar reminders.

Locate and read over previous and current information about the student such as email communication, information provided by faculty/service areas, Education Plans, accommodation letters, grades/transcripts, and so forth prior to the meeting.

Address gaps in your knowledge by researching best practices for communicating and working with students when you’re aware they identify as Indigenous, or English is not their first language, or have shared that they manage learning, mental health, and/or physical health conditions, etc.

Access, begin and/or complete any forms required prior to the student meeting when possible (ie. Education Plans).

Anticipate and review the College policies, procedures, and processes, as well as links you’ll need to follow and/or advise the student to use. (ie. Student Rights and Responsibilities, Counselling Services, Academic Integrity, Accessible Education Services, Indigenous Student Services, International Student Services, etc.)

Check that you have the supplies you and the student may need to access during the meeting. These could include a computer with internet and D2L access, a desk and chairs, private space to meet, a large enough space to accommodate mobility devices, writing utensils, paper, tissues, and information about resources.

Be mindful of students feeling intimidated by you due to your power and authority and consider the benefits and costs to the student if they request to bring a supportive person (2-person maximum) to the meeting.

Ensure other colleagues, your Chair and/or Dean are aware and close by during the meeting if you anticipate there could be an escalation of behaviour. You could also organize prior that a colleague checks in with you by telephone or in-person during the meeting.

Make sure that permission and consent forms are signed by the student prior to any release of information to other parties even if the student indicates they are a supportive person.

[*Authorization for Release of Personal Information - Counselling Services*](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/counselling/confidentiality/)

[*Student Authorization for the Release of Information to a Third Party - Registrar's Office*](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/ro/forms-2/)

## Meeting with the Student(s) o-Face Meeting with the Student

Welcome the student in a friendly manner and thank them for meeting with you. If meeting by telephone or electronically, make sure audiovisual functions are working and clear.

Inform them that your duty as Coordinator is to advise on processes versus make or reverse decisions already in place. It is particularly important to be clear about the type of support you can offer when the student may be wanting to make a complaint about a colleague (faculty, support staff, manager, etc.) or is looking for you to provide counselling.

[***HRA-001-Coordinators Program and Subject/Discipline***](../START%20HERE%20TAB/HRA-001-Coordinators-Program-and-Subject_Discipline-Revision-5.pdf)(Pages 5-9 describe the duties)

If the student requests the meeting, ask them to share their reasons. If you request the meeting, ask the student what they believe is the purpose of the meeting. This allows for transparency from all involved.

Clarify with the student any discrepancies in the purpose of the meeting between both of you. Use a manner that’s direct yet kind, if the nature of meeting is to address student behaviour. This allows for you and student to check the accuracy of each of your own perceptions and understanding.

Share minimally two strengths you’ve observed about the student to encourage engagement and to use for any goal planning. Strengths can include behaviour in and outside the classroom, characteristics, or choices like attending the meeting with you.

Use active listening skills to facilitate the discussion with the student. Awareness of your verbal communication and non-verbal communication, as well as biases is important as they influence your responses and decisions regarding students. Here is a quick reminder of the following:

* **Verbal Skills**
* Communicate clearly and directly using simple words. Avoid using colloquialisms (expressions or clichés) to communicate your points as they can be misinterpreted or not understood at all.
* Use a mix of open/closed questions and reflection skills. Closed questions beget short answers and typically start with “If, Do, Is, Where, How, Are” whereas open questions beget more details from the majority of students and commonly start with “What, Could/Can, Why”. Reflection skills such as paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, reflection of meaning, and summarization communicate to the student that you are listening and you understand the situation from their perspective versus your own.
* Pause to wait for the student to respond. Some require more time to reflect and articulate their thoughts, feelings, and decisions.
* Be transparent and honest about your errors or in some cases, apologize on behalf of the School or College when a student believes they have been mistreated and/or there have been barriers that prevented their needs from being met.
* Be kind, yet direct in your communication when you anticipate the students may have a negative reaction to academic consequences for breaches of integrity, limited attendance, missing assignments, etc.
* Be aware of your own cultural biases and assumptions. These could include but aren’t limited to your beliefs about students based on age, ethnicity, race, requests for accommodations, their choices in and outside the classroom, etc. and how they might help and hinder **what** you say to students and influence decision-making.
* **Non-Verbal Skills**
* **Due to cultural variances**, use a moderate amount of eye contact with the students and modify as needed.
* Use head nodding, gestures, and facial expressions to encourage students to talk and modify as required.
* Adjust your voice volume, **tone**, pitch, pauses, pace, and cadence to better connect with the student.
* For the same reasons, modify your facial expressions, posture, and gestures.

Be aware of your own cultural biases and assumptions (see above examples) and think about **how** they might impact the communication style you use and therefore the level of rapport you achieve with the student.

Observe the student’s verbal and non-verbal communication during the meeting to help gauge how best your communication can promote understanding and collaboration.

Advise and provide links and contact information to encourage the student to use the College policies, procedures and processes that relate. In particular, you may wish to review with them the [Academic Issue Resolution](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/asa/ar/) steps and [*Policy #5-506 Student Rights and Responsibilities*](5-506-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities%20(1).pdf)within the [Student Rights and Responsibilities](https://department.flemingcollege.ca/srr/) website.

Advise and provide links and contact information to encourage the student to use College services as well as outside resources that address needs. These could include, but aren’t limited to: Student Rights and Responsibilities, Counselling Services, Academic Integrity, Accessible Education Services, Indigenous Student Services, International Student Services, etc.

Ensure that any goals or overall plans made are meaningful in that the student chooses what they are prepared to do to address their needs and that anything you are to follow-up with is within your Coordinator duties.

Follow-up Taskss

Contact additional supports you have agreed with the student to connect with after the meeting, make sure this is within your official duties as a Coordinator. Also, ensure any required permission and consent forms are signed by the student prior. See links above under Pre-Meeting heading.

Document the summary of the meeting using Fleming email accounts and send it to the student so there is record of it. This documentation is helpful for refreshing the student’s and your memory about discussions and decisions made as well as commitment to any goals or plans.

Use a simple format for the documented summary such as the following headings: **strengths**, **concerns**, and **plan** that resulted from meeting.

Ensure the retention and disposal of any electronic and paper records and information about the student follows College [***OP #6-604A Information Security Classification Procedure***](OP%20#6-604A Information Security Classification Procedure.pdf)

If you anticipate faculty, support staff, management, etc. may be negatively impacted by the outcome of the student meeting, use College policies, procedures, and processes combined with discretion and sensitivity to inform you of your ongoing duties as a Coordinator in the situation.

