



Comments and Notes in MavConnect: Best Practices and Examples

Adapted from Community College of Philadelphia: <https://www.myccp.online/starfish-connect/making-effective-comments>

Remember that comments and notes are reviewable

- Students see all comments when flags and referrals are made.
- Other faculty and staff that the student is connected to can also see comments.
- When the student discloses specific information regarding disabilities or health related matters focus on necessary steps that need to be taken to accommodate the situation. Do not diagnose, but report the facts: “Student reported that she has a hard time getting up in the winter. We talked about this and encouraged her not to take early morning classes in the spring semester.”

Direct comments to students

- Comments should be directed **TO** a student and not be about the student; don't write comments in third person
- Provide comments that explain the problems the student is having. Feel free to be specific (i.e. test grades, assignments missing)
- Word your comments so that both your student and student support staff can understand the problem

Things to keep in mind

- You can refer to a student's status working with or being referred to Accessibility Resources, Student Health Services, or the Counseling Center in a comment; however, **do not list ANY diagnosis** (even if a they share that they are okay with you putting it into their record).
- Avoid sarcasm -it can easily be misunderstood
- Focus on observation and reaction rather than accusation. For example, “The student spoke in an angry tone that made me very uncomfortable” vs. “She was a bully and rude in the meeting.”
- Any comments you make should be something you would feel comfortable telling a student face-to-face

Examples of effective FLAG comments

John, I want to make you aware that you are not attending this class regularly (this can mean that you are not putting in enough time preparing each week) and in the near future, you may be in the position of failing this class. If you are having trouble in understanding the requirements of this class, please stop by my office hours or email me.

Hi Matt, you're doing well in class and I'm delighted to be teaching you. That said I didn't receive a second homework from you and wanted to make sure you stay on track to reach your full potential. I'm looking forward to reading your forthcoming papers!

Susan, I have noticed some of your scores are on the lower side. You may want to come in to office hours, see a tutor for nutrition, and /or work with a study group to help you prepare for this week's exam.

Dan, I'm concerned about your work, lack of participation when we are doing in-class work, and your first reading test.

Tyrone, I'm concerned about your overall work and irregular attendance. Can we talk?

Samantha, you are at a 57% attendance rate out of 100%. Continued absences could negatively affect your performance in this course.

Joe, you received a 55.6 % on your quiz, Please attend office hours for assistance

Examples of effective REFERRAL comments

Maria, I suggest you see an expert in the Center for Academic Success about test taking. You are an active participant in classroom discussions and show good understanding of course material. However, you scored very low on your first exam. I think you could benefit from tips for test prep and test taking.

Hi, Nia. I'm hoping that you can stop by IT Solutions to check in with them about some of the issues we've discussed. Take care!

Allen, I am concerned about your attendance and your ability to balance work and school life. Talking with your assigned advisor could help.

Kayla, I am suggesting you visit the Center for Academic Success for assistance based on the results from your ORION chapter 4 - carbohydrates work.

Joe, you are struggling with grammar and need some help mastering this skill. You have improved a bit, but I would like you to have a firmer grasp on the concepts. Take your grammar book to the Writing Center to review with a tutor.

Sam, you struggled on the Fractions Quiz. Consider going to the Center for Academic Success or the Math and Statistics lab for extra help. One on One tutoring or the workshops can really make a difference helping you polish off the parts you found particularly difficult.

Rachel, you mentioned to me that you are having trouble with your living situation which makes it hard for you to attend class. Connecting with an advisor may be helpful for you to learn more about your options for support.