

Academic Advising Academy #6

July 26, 2016

Helping Students Build Academic Grit

As students enter college, they undergo three main stages of adaptation: separation, transition, and incorporation (Tinto, 1993). Ohrablo (2016) suggests first-year students are often faced with new and overwhelming responsibilities, schedules, and structures. *When students are faced with these new experiences, how do they respond? Do they have enough grit to help them persevere and work through challenges?* As academic advisers and coaches, it is important to assist our students through these life challenges, by 1) examining their perceptions, 2) helping them develop a plan, and 3) being a part of their support network (Ohrablo, 2016).

- **What is academic grit?**
 - “Non-cognitive skills... traits other than intelligence that contribute to human development and success” (Hanford, 2015)
 - “Firmness of character; indomitable spirit” (Merriam-Webster, 2016)
 - “Perseverance and passion for long-term goals” (Duckworth, 2015)
- **Why is grit important?**
 - Grit has been shown to be a strong indicator of GPA and retention rates (Duckworth & Peterson, 2011).
 - Grit has been positively correlated with self-efficacy and self-regulation scales (Rojas et al., 2012).
 - Grit helps sustain a person’s interest and effort over time despite failure and adversity (Duckworth et al., 2007).
- **Characteristics of grit (Perlis, 2013; Duckworth, 2015)**
 - Courage: Managing fear of failure
 - Conscientiousness: Being achievement-oriented to work and complete a task
 - Long-Term Goals and Endurance: Practice and follow through
 - Resilience: Belief that positive and negative experiences lead to learning and growth
 - Seeking excellence instead of perfection
- **How to teach grit to students (Davis, 2015)**
 - Read books about grit and discuss trends and studies
 - Use the “[grit scale](#)” and have students complete a self-assessment (Duckworth, 2011)
 - Focus on deliberate practice (Ericsson, 1993)
 - Share examples of grit
 - Help students develop a [growth mindset](#) (Dweck, 2006)
 - Reframe problems
 - Encourage environments that foster grit and delayed gratification
 - Help students develop intentional habits
 - Be realistic
- **Practical tips for working with students (Ohrablo, 2016)**
 1. Assess and dissect the problem (identify outcomes, impact, consequences, influencers)
 2. Provide students a framework and action plan
 3. Reach out and refer students to campus resources
 4. Follow up with short and long-term planning

- **Additional resources**

- [Psychometric Properties of the Academic Grit Scale](#) (Rojas et al., 2012)
- [Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long Term Goals](#) (Duckworth et al., 2007)
- [True Grit](#) (Duckworth & Eskreis-Winkler, 2013)