Shadow & Share:  
Advising Appointment Observation

Shadowing advising appointments and being shadowed by peers is a powerful way to reflect on and improve your advising practice. Consider the following guidelines to get the most out of your shadowing experience.

**Learning objectives:**

✓ Foster a culture of collaborative learning  
✓ Reflect on advisor skills and strengths  
✓ Identify areas of future growth  
✓ Foster self-direction for advisor professional development

**Steps:**

1. Identify **who** you want to observe and be observed by  
2. Meet to discuss **expectations** and observation logistics  
3. Participate in reciprocal **observations**  
4. Meet to give/receive **feedback** about the observation  
5. Create an **action plan** to implement what you have learned

**Conversation starters for before the observation:**

☐ What is the purpose of the observation? What do you each hope to gain from the experience?  
☐ What is your advising philosophy?  
☐ What aspects of advising are you each most interested in receiving feedback about?  
☐ How and when will feedback be given?  
☐ Will the observer participate in the advising appointment?  
☐ How will the student be notified of the observation? How will you seek their permission?  
☐ Will you include appointment preparation and/or advisor notes in the observation or only the student interaction?  
☐ How will you set up the physical space to be conducive to the observation?  
☐ What concerns do you each have about the observation?

**Conversation starters for after the observation (for the observer):**

☐ What went as you expected? What were the surprises?  
☐ What went well? Why?  
☐ Is there anything you would do differently?  
☐ What do you think the student learned?  
☐ When was the student most engaged?  
☐ What was your thought process during the appointment? How did you decide how to respond to the student?
Characteristics of reflective feedback:
(Adapted from the UW Teaching Academy)
- Promotes reflection as part of a dialog between the giver and receiver
- Is reciprocal allowing both parties to observe, think, ask, report and respond
- Focuses on observed behavior rather than on the person
- Is descriptive rather than judgmental
- Is specific rather than general
- Is directed toward behavior that the receiver can change
- Is solicited rather than imposed
- Is well timed. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the observation
- Involves asking questions and sharing information rather than giving advice, leaving the individual free to change in accordance with personal goals and needs
- Considers the amount of information the receiver can use rather than the amount the observer would like to give
- Requires a supportive, confidential relationship built on trust, honesty, and genuine concern