A Phoenix Rising*

A workshop for students who are at academic risk

*A note about the title of this workshop
The word *Phoenix* is connected in meaning to *new beginnings* and the symbolism comes from the stories of a mythical bird represented in both Greek and Egyptian mythology as illustrated by the following text on the Phoenix.
The Phoenix Myth

The phoenix is a mythical bird that traditionally symbolizes immortality, resurrection and life after death. In ancient Greek and Egyptian mythology, it is associated with the sun god.

According to the Greeks, the bird lives in Arabia, near a cool well. Every morning at dawn, the sun god would stop his chariot to listen to the bird sing a beautiful song while it bathed in the well.

Only one phoenix exists at a time. When the bird felt its death was near, every 500 to 1,461 years, it would build a nest of aromatic wood and set it on fire. The bird then was consumed by the flames. A new phoenix then sprang forth from the pyre. It embalmed the ashes of its predecessor in an egg of myrrh and flew with it to Heliopolis, "city of the sun," where the egg was deposited on the altar of the sun god. In Egypt, it was usually depicted as a heron, but in the classic literature as a peacock or an eagle.

The Phoenix Bird

The following is based on a story by Hans Christian Andersen (1850)

In the Garden of Paradise, beneath the Tree of Knowledge, bloomed a rose bush. Here, in the first rose, a bird was born. His flight was like the flashing of light, his plumage was beauteous, and his song ravishing. But when Eve plucked the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, when she and Adam were driven from Paradise, there fell from the flaming sword of the cherub a spark into the nest of the bird, which blazed up forthwith. The bird perished in the flames; but from the red egg in the nest there fluttered aloft a new one—the one solitary Phoenix bird. The fable tells that he dwells in Arabia, and that every hundred years, he burns himself to death in his nest; but each time a new Phoenix, the only one in the world, rises up from the red egg.

Over the years the myth of the phoenix has come to represent a chance for a new beginning. The phoenix helps us to remember that we have a chance to learn and begin again even after situations that create feelings of disappointment or failure.
UNSW Policy on Academic Standing


Postgraduate Rules: Academic Standing (There are different rules for Postgraduate Students: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/academicstandingrulespg.html

Academic Advising Website
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/AcademicAdvising.html

Major aspects of student progress policy
♦ Applies to all students including first year students
♦ Rules for undergraduate students and postgraduate students are different
♦ Rules are applied to results automatically at the end of each session (from July 2009, Provisional Suspension and Provisional Exclusion will apply at the end of 1st Semester, and at the end of semester 2, Suspension or Exclusion will apply)
♦ Students not in Good Standing will be allocated an academic advisor
♦ Interview with an Academic Advisor is a major component of this policy
♦ Future enrolment requires a consultation with your Academic Advisor for all levels beyond Referral
♦ Academic Standing is not part of an official academic transcript

Undergraduate
♦ Good Academic Standing applies when MORE than 50% of session enrolment load has been successfully completed
♦ If 50% or less of session enrolment load is successfully completed a different academic standing is applied
♦ Distinguishes unsatisfactory and nil progress
♦ Undergraduate Levels of Academic standing are:

  Referral = must see an academic advisor
  Needs next session to be 50% or more satisfactory results before return to Good Standing

  Probation = must see academic advisor
  Needs next 2 sessions to be 50% or more satisfactory results before return to Good Standing

  Provisional Suspension = must see an academic advisor
  Need to discuss your progress, plan for improving results, and seek approval for future enrolment

  Suspension (2 sessions with automatic re-admission) = must see academic advisor

On re-enrolment following 1 year Suspension
Academic Standing is placed at Probation

Probation = must see an academic advisor
Needs next 3 sessions to be more than 50% satisfactory results = return to Good Standing (i.e. after passing more than 50% of attempted load upon return from Suspension, will move to “Good” level.

Provisional Exclusion = must see academic advisor
Need to discuss your progress, plan for improving results, future enrolment options

Exclusion from the Program for 2 years (must apply for entry to program following exclusion period) and must see academic advisor
Levels of Academic Standing - UNDERGRADUATE

**Good**
No failures or pass (or better) on *more than* 50% of 6 or more enrolled UOC (units of credit)

**Referral**
Single session of not passing more than 50% of enrolment load

**Probation**
Single session of NIL progress (from Good Standing or Referral)
OR
Two sequential sessions of not passing more than 50% of enrolment load (from Good Standing or Referral)

**Provisional Suspension**
(New from July 2009)

**Suspension**
Two sequential sessions of NIL progress
OR
Three sequential sessions of not passing more than 50% of enrolment load

**Provisional Exclusion**
(New for July 2009)

**Exclusion**
Returning from suspension and one session not passing more than 50% of enrolment load (in 6 or more UOC)

**Exceptions**
If there are exceptional circumstances e.g. Potential Graduate or successful appeal, progress rules may be waived

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No implications for student: overrides any other standing
ACADEMIC ADVISER RECORD OF INTERVIEW
(The Academic Adviser and the student should indicate completion of the
advising process by signing this form. A copy is to be retained by the student.)

A BACKGROUND

Student Details

Family name ___________________________Given Names __________________________STUDENT ID ________________

Program ___________________________ Major/Study Plan ___________________________

Academic Record

Current session: U of C attempted ________ U of C passed ________

Previous session standing Good ___ Referral ___ Probation ___ Other ___________

Current standing Good ___ Referral ___ Probation ___ Other ___________

B CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (Brief notes using only the space on this form please!)

Factors contributing to performance last session (eg academic ability, commitment to academic work, employment, health, problems at home, other factors)

Are the factors affecting academic performance permanent or temporary?

Plans to improve performance next session?

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS SIGHTED

☐

C ACADEMIC ADVISER ADVICE

Name of Adviser (print) _____________________________________________Date of Interview/s _______________________

Units of Credit Approved Full load ☐ OR Restricted Units of Credit ☐

(give details below)

Other Recommendation by Academic Adviser (must specify below)

D STUDENT COMMENTS ON THEIR OWN INTENTION FOR ENROLMENT AND ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVICE GIVEN BY ACADEMIC ADVISOR (Student to write own comments)

E STUDENT HAS BEEN INFORMED OF APPEAL PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

F RECOMMENDED REFERRAL TO UNIVERSITY SERVICES (refer Student Guide or Student Services Resource Guide for options)

Counselling Service ☐ Equity and Diversity Unit ☐ Other

The Learning Centre ☐ Careers and Employment ☐ Please specify..................................................

International Student Services ☐ Aboriginal Education Program ☐ ...............................

G SIGNATURES

Enrolment plan outlined above is for Session............200......
a copy of this RECORD OF INTERVIEW is held by both parties.

Adviser ___________________________Date / / Student ___________________________Date / /
Review of Results, Appeals and Grievance

Requesting a Review of Result
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/Results.html

Complaints/Grievances
https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html#Academicmatters

Postgraduate Academic Progress Process (NB different rules apply for post-graduate students)

Procedures for Review of Results
In Summary:

The University of New South Wales recognizes that all decisions which affect a student’s standing or progress in a program or course must be made fairly and must be based on appropriate academic criteria.

A review of a result may take one of two forms:
1. **Checking a mark**: an administrative check that all marks have been included in the final composite mark;
2. **Re-assessment**: an academic re-assessment of a piece of work.

Students may apply to have a piece of work re-marked, but must first discuss this with the course examiner. If students still have reasons to believe that the mark they have received does not reflect their performance they may apply for re-assessment.

Students are required to give reasons to justify their request. Where insufficient reasons are given the Assessment Executive Committee of the Faculty or Board may decline to take action.

Please note that a re-assessment of results will include a check of the addition of marks. In either case the review may result in the mark going up or down.

**The application form must be submitted not later than 15 working days** after the return of the piece of work or from the date of issue of the Notification of Results of Assessment, whichever is earlier. All marked work returned to students must be kept in case it is needed for re-marking.
Appeals against Suspension or Exclusion Appeal:
(Note: New rules from July 2009:
Appeals will only be required at the end of Semester 2 each year)

Students can appeal to the relevant Program Authority: see website:

You must complete the Application to Appeal Against Suspension or Exclusion form (pdf) and attach a typed supporting statement and any relevant supporting documentation.

Your application must address the reason(s) why your academic performance has not been satisfactory. These reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following:

• academic issues;
• medical problem(s);
• employment related problem(s);
• course related problem(s);
• family/personal problem(s).

You must also advise what steps you have taken to overcome your problem(s).
You must provide independent supporting documentation (from a specialist doctor, counsellor, Justice of the Peace, Minister of Religion, for example) that clearly outlines:

• the date your circumstance(s) began or changed;
• how your circumstance(s) were beyond your control;
• how your circumstance(s) affected your ability to study;
• what action(s) you have taken to overcome the circumstance(s).

All documentation that you lodge must be original; you may not submit photocopies.

You must lodge your appeal no later than the deadline advised on your letter of notification of SUSPENSION or EXCLUSION.

You have the right to appear before the Re-Enrolment Appeal Committee of the Academic Board. If you wish to appear before the Committee you must clearly indicate this in your appeal. However, the Committee will only consider information provided in your written appeal, it cannot consider "new" information introduced at interview, so you should make your written appeal as comprehensive as possible.

Please note: the Committee's decision is final; there is no further right of appeal within the University.
FACTORS INFLUENCING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The following checklist can help you to identify the issues that influenced your academic performance. You may use it in a number of ways.

You can use the checklist to identify areas you want to work on or change. In addition you can take it to any consultations you have with your academic adviser or a student service on campus e.g. a counsellor or a learning advisor.

You can use it as a reminder of the general issues you want to discuss with your academic advisor during your interview. The checklist is designed for you to keep. If you choose to show the completed checklist to your academic advisor we have asked the academic advisors to ensure that the checklist is returned to you at the completion of the interview.

Begin by considering the general categories of issues that contributed to your academic challenges. You may also want to respond to the specific questions under each category. *Filling in the checklist is not compulsory*. Its purpose is to guide both you & your academic advisor in identifying problems so that the most appropriate solutions may be sought.

✔ any of the following that apply to you

**Academic Factors**

- Sometimes I think I am in the wrong course or program
- I experienced failure or lower than expected performance in my first semester of first year
- My previous experiences of learning have been very different to what I think is expected at UNSW
- In my prior study I memorized information then demonstrated my remembering in exams.
- At university I have applied myself to learning and understanding concepts and I apply these by analyzing and critiquing theories
- I feel uncomfortable taking a position on a theory or other learning content that differs from that of my lecturer or tutor
- I have had difficulties changing and adapting my learning style to one that suits the university learning environment
- I am good at analysing what has affected my studies
- I could do with some help in identifying what went wrong and how to change or manage next session
- I am good at doing something about the things that affect my studies
- I have been hesitant to seek help from my lecturers/tutors
- I have had a learning disability that has interfered with my academic achievement
- I have struggled with the complexity of my course work
- I have trouble keeping up with the pace of the course
Study skills

☐ I think my learning skills are working well for me

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?

Circle the most appropriate option

- planning
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- time management
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- use of the library to research topics
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- note taking in lectures
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- reading strategies
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- report writing skills
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- recalling facts and understandings
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- doing extra reading around the lecture topics
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- exam preparation strategies
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

- skill in using computer technology
  - Strong
  - Good
  - Average
  - Needs improving

Do you avoid doing assessment tasks for any of the following reasons?

☐ put off starting an assignment because I am not sure how to structure it or where to begin

☐ put off doing assignments because of anxiety e.g. fear of doing assignment and failing

☐ put off doing assignments because I feel intense stress while doing them

☐ put off doing some assignments because there are too many to do in the time available

☐ avoid tutorials because of a fear of speaking up in class

☐ delay or avoid presenting in tutorials because of anxiety about how I will go

Do any of the following apply to you?

☐ miss lectures because I would rather be doing anything other than study

☐ miss lectures and tutorials because I don't like the course

☐ miss lectures because I get a kind of claustrophobic feeling

☐ miss lectures because of work commitments

☐ miss lectures because of family reasons

☐ avoid lectures or tutorials because I am afraid of speaking up in front of others

☐ avoid exams or preparing for them because of anxiety

☐ avoiding coming to lectures because I feel awkward if someone talks to me

☐ avoid lectures because I don't get anything out of them

☐ struggle with the complexity of my course work

☐ have trouble keeping up with the pace of the course

Language

☐ I think my English language skills may not been strong enough and may have contributed to my academic problems?
Begin by considering the general categories of issues that contributed to your academic challenges. You may also want to respond to the specific questions under each category. *Filling in the checklist is not compulsory. Its purpose is to guide both you & your academic advisor in identifying problems so that the most appropriate solutions may be sought.*

**Transition Issues**

- **any of the following that apply to you**
  - I have fallen behind my friends because I deferred a year or failed some courses
  - I am uncertain of my choice of course or career path
  - I am unclear about the benefits of the course I am doing re: my future career
  - I am excited by the thought of finishing my course
  - I think my motivation to complete the course is quite low
  - My focus on my studies has been disrupted by the death of a relative or friend, a broken relationship or by divorce
  - I moved to Sydney from a rural area or another country to attend UNSW
  - I have suffered some stress as a result of getting used to Sydney, the Australian culture or being at university
  - I have been quite lonely in my time at university

**Situational**

- I have had financial problems
- I have had to spend a lot of time earning money in paid work and my studies have suffered
- I have had a period of time when I have had no regular or fixed address
- I have moved often over the past session/year
- I have had other problems in my living situation
- My responsibilities outside of university have been conflicting with my studies

**Relationships**

- I have experienced a relationship loss or conflict within a significant relationship
- I have experienced episodes of serious conflict with parents/family
- I am under a lot of pressure from my parents to succeed
- My family have set ideas about the marks they want me to get and the hours they want me to spend studying
- My parents have separated/divorced
- Someone important to me died or became ill

**Developmental**

- I think that my life experience and maturity help me in the challenges of university life I have fallen behind my friends because I deferred a year or failed some courses
- I frequently feel lonely
- I would like a bigger friendship network
- I have had disrupted relationships with significant people e.g. parents/partner or friend
- I have had periods of low self-esteem, poor self-confidence, anxiety and depression
- I have experienced social shyness and/or difficulty making new friends
Begin by considering the general categories of issues that contributed to your academic challenges. You may also want to respond to the specific questions under each category. *Filling in the checklist is not compulsory.* Its purpose is to guide both you & your academic advisor in identifying problems so that the most appropriate solutions may be sought.

**Health**
- I have experienced significant illness during my time at university or needed specific medical attention (e.g. a recurring condition or a medical operation)
- It is possible drug or alcohol use may have adversely affected my studies
- I have suffered from anxiety or depression while at university
- I have suffered from other mental health issues while at university
- I have had other obsessive or compulsive behaviors that adversely affected my studies
- I have experienced trauma, illness or misadventure e.g. injury, serious accident, victim of a crime which has affected my academic work
- I have suffered from a severe lack of motivation to do most things
- I usually spend more than 4 hours a day on the internet or reading and responding to email or news groups
- I have a learning disability that has interfered with my academic achievement
- I have a physical disability

**Other Issues that have affected my capacity to make academic progress:**
- __________________________________________
- __________________________________________
- __________________________________________
Stage of Change Model

Permanent Exit

Maintenance

Relapse

Precontemplation

Enter Here

Action

Determination

Contemplation

Temporary Exit

(Adapted from Prochaska and DiClemente, 1986)

Stages of Change Model

The Stages of Readiness to Change is a tool which can help you assess where you are in your journey along the road to change. Using the model as a tool for self reflection can help you gain a greater understanding of the process of change and help them move toward successfully make sustained change to the behaviours that they have identified for targeting. Achieving the desired outcome from the statement: “I am going to work harder” means acting differently over time in very defined and specific ways. The difference must be must be more than a promise to self.

This 'model' or framework for thinking about change has been tested with people attempting to change behaviours such as smoking, unhealthy eating and exercise habits, as well as various other habits and behaviour patterns. It can also be applied to any major life decision where a person may be ‘in two minds' about it, such as whether to leave a job or stay.

The six stages which people tend to go through in the process of change are described below. In this model, people move 'from being unaware or unwilling to do anything about the problem, to considering the possibility of change, then to becoming determined and prepared to make the change, and finally to taking action and sustaining or maintaining the change over time'.

As you can imagine, this rarely a straightforward process. Proachaska and DiClemente emphasise that 'moving through the stages of change requires effort and energy for thinking, planning and doing'. No wonder even thinking about change can make you a bit tired!

- Pre-contemplation = comes before thinking about change
- Contemplation = thinking it over
- Preparation / Determination = making a decision to change
- Action! = doing
- Maintenance = keeping going
- Relapse = slipping back

It is important to remember that people often cycle through these stages a number of times before they successfully change a particular pattern of behaviour, so don't give up the first time - think of it as spiralling upward rather than going round in circles!

For more information on the use of the model of change and how it applies to you see CAPS Counsellor!
Additional Resources for Getting Back on Track

Phoenix Rising Online: [http://www.students.unsw.edu.au/phoenix](http://www.students.unsw.edu.au/phoenix)

University Health Service: 9385-5425

Arc (Student Activities and Advocacy): 9385-7700 [www.arc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.arc.unsw.edu.au)

Careers and Employment: 9385-5429.

CRAS [http://cras psy.unsw.edu.au](http://cras.psy.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385 3829 (Career assessments – small fee).

CRAS provides vocational assistance aiding in career and study choices, career changes, and career planning. The service aims to increase individuals self-awareness in relation to career interests, aptitudes, work values and other work-related characteristics as well as to more broadly assist with the career decision-making process.

UNSW Counselling and Psychological Services[CAPS].
[www.counselling.unsw.edu.au](http://www.counselling.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-5418 (Kensington campus); Ph: 9385-0733 (COFA).
(Free one on one counseling and workshops for UNSW students).

International Student Services [www.international.unsw.edu.au](http://www.international.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-5333. (Visa support, support for international students):

The Learning Centre ([www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-3890 (Support with academic & learning issues; writing tutors and workshops)

Student Equity and Disabilities Unit [www.equity.unsw.edu.au](http://www.equity.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-4734 (support – disabilities and discrimination):

Housing Office: [www.housing.unsw.edu.au](http://www.housing.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-4985

Student Central ([www.studentcentral.unsw.edu.au](http://www.studentcentral.unsw.edu.au)
Ph: 9385-8500 (enquiries re. forms, enrolment, standing, etc):

Ph: 9385 3805 (Social and academic support and assistance for indigenous students)

Centrelink Youth Students’ Line:
Ph: 132 490 (Assistance with financial payments).
A Phoenix Rising*

A workshop for students who want to achieve according to their ability

WORKSHEETS for Exercises
PHOENIX RISING WORKSHEET

TASK 1: Identifying Factors Contributing to Academic Difficulties
Refer to your "Checklist of Factors Contributing to Academic Difficulties". Take the factors that you have identified which have hampered your academic progress. Write these factors in the list below.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

Remembering the Stages of Change Model outlined in the seminar. Make a note of what Stage of Change are you at with each of the above factors.

Where do you want to be?
If you are having trouble identifying what issues are really getting in the way of your academic progress try answering the following question.

When you are alone take some time to clear your mind, close your eyes and really focus upon the following question.

“If, while you were asleep, a miracle happened and the factors influencing your academic performance that you have now identified were no longer occurring, what would your university life be like, who would you be spending most time with, what would you be doing/studying and what would you be enjoying about your academic/Uni. Life?”

Write the response that immediately comes to mind no matter how silly it sounds.

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Consider if you need to change anything in your enrolment, uni life style, etc as a result of exploring the answer to this question.
PHOENIX RISING WORKSHEET
TASK 2: What Needs To Change?

With each “risk factor” you identified in the first task sheet identify and write down:
- What barriers are there to changing these factors?
- Who is involved in the issues or could be involved and asked to help?
- What would need to change in order to reduce the impact of the risk factor(s) identified?
- What cannot change? Or what would need to be different for this to change?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
PHOENIX RISING WORKSHEET: TASK 3

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE NEXT SESSION

To improve your progress next session develop a plan of action to change those factors that you have identified in Task 1 & 2 that are in need of change.

• Go Back Over TASK SHEET 2
• Identify what factors need to change and rank the issues in order of importance or according to how much impact they have upon you.
• Select the first factor.
• List action steps you could take to change the issue.
• This can include seeking advice or assistance in mapping out steps for change.
• Include the resources & people you identified who can help and how you would like them to help.

BE SPECIFIC AND USE ACTION WORDS.

Factor 1 (top priority for change).
Action Steps
* *
* *
* *
* *

Factor 2 (second priority).
Action Steps
* *
* *
* *
* *

Factor 3.
Action Steps
* *
* *
* *
* *

WHEN WILL I REVIEW THESE PLANS? _________________________________
PHOENIX RISING WORKSHEET: TASK 3

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN FOR NEXT SESSION.

To improve your progress next session develop a plan of action to change those factors that you have identified in Task 1 & 2 that are in need of change.

• Go Back Over TASK SHEET 2
• Identify what factors need to change and rank the issues in order of importance or according to how much impact they have upon you.
• Select the first factor.
• List action steps you could take to change the issue.
• This can include seeking advice or mapping out steps for change. Include the resources & people you identified who can help and how you would like them to help.

BE SPECIFIC AND USE ACTION WORDS.

Factor 4.
Action Steps
*
*
*
*
*
*

Factor 5.
Action Steps
*
*
*
*
*
*

Factor 6.
Action Steps
*
*
*
*
*
*

WHEN WILL I REVIEW THESE PLANS? __________________________