

## Promoting At-Promise Student Success

### Passionate Student Facing Challenge of Balancing Work, School, and Financial Burdens

**Purpose:** This student vignette highlights the difficulty that students may face in balancing full-time work and school schedules. It emphasizes the financial demands students may face to pay for their schooling and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

#### Student Vignette:

Chris worked the closing shift at the restaurant last night, getting home well after midnight. The next day, he needed to be on campus by 7 am for his Monday morning lecture. On his way to class, he realized that he had not completed his teaching hours required for his practicum course. He had planned to complete them last week, but could not because he had to pick up three extra shifts at the restaurant to pay rent, which had just increased.

When he started the program, Chris was confident he could manage everything. He had worked through his undergraduate degree while holding a full-time job, but the practicum hours required were far different from the coursework he was used to. It demanded consistent presence and energy that he no longer felt he had. The stress was catching up to him, and both his manager at the restaurant as well as his practicum supervisor were beginning to lose patience. He knew he could not quit his job because he had bills to pay. He considers dropping out of the teaching program but decides to come to you for advice before making a final decision.

#### Guiding Questions:

1. Have you encountered a situation like this? If so, briefly reflect on those experiences. How did you support the student? What approaches were beneficial? What approaches were less successful?
2. Describe the challenges Chris is navigating. What are the key issues that need to be addressed to support Chris before the semester ends? What resources exist on campus that may be helpful? What are his strengths that can be leveraged in this situation?
3. Given your role (e.g., academic advisor, program director, faculty, etc.), what might you do to support Chris? What are some limitations in your current knowledge and skills in meeting Chris' needs? What resources or opportunities can you connect him with on and off-campus?
4. Reflect on the concept of ecological validation. How could the norms framing student interactions (holistic, proactive, strengths-oriented, and developmental) and the work of educators (collaborative and reflective) be leveraged to support Chris?
5. What policies and practices could be shifted to support students in a similar situation? What would need to happen to initiate change? Who would be involved in this process?