And now for the rest... Opening Pandora’s box

There are some good students with some bad problems
What I have run into over the last 10 years

I have had lots of fantastic students, but also:

• Student with **physical injuries** that cause chronic pain, can’t concentrate on their project, project drags out so long that they end with (grade of ’EM’)

• Student that has gotten into so deep **economic problems** (partly due to partner leaving) that they are in a constant state of panic, stress and depression, project ends with them getting psychological help and taking study leave (grade of ’EM’)

• Student with what appears to be **chronic ’putting off’** problems, can’t make themself come to DTU to do their project, ends with them going to student psychologist and taking leave from studies (grade of EM).

• Student that has already **had 3 attempts** to do their bachelor project with other supervisors and asks me to be supervisor on the 4th attempt, they get dispensation and the student passes with lowest possible grade.

• Student, not originally from Copenhagen, that is being **stalked by an ex-lover**. DTU video surveillance seems to confirm this, police aren’t able to help, student returns to originaly home town without completing project (grade of EM).

• First year student that **can’t adjust to University life** and is overwhelmed by the thought of upcoming exams, gets some advice from me, and student counselling, and continues their education.
You may be like me, a bit naive.

Some things to think about:

• How far should we, as supervisors go to help the students
• What is our duty and what are we expected to do
• What am I prepared to do/am competent to do?
• Am I prepared for the unexpected?
• Where to send the students for professional help?
• What to do if a student’s situation starts to affect me?
What is the student like?
How can you assess the student?

Made a contract with a cute fuzzy animal.
What are you like?
• Nice, friendly?
• Competent, all knowing?
• Lots of hair?

How are you perceived by a student?
This may be very intimidating for a student
‘Nice Tim’ according to Google search

http://ikchen.tumblr.com/post/4745128036/topless-tim-nice-belt
Do you unwittingly stress the student?

TIM SHUSHS US

http://memegenerator.net/instance/36310143
Can you prevent getting in too deep?

Mutual expectations meeting with student at project start?
• Who are you, who are they, what do you each expect?
• May help stop students getting into problems during the project
  • Stress about the project
  • Stress about the supervisor
  • Stress about living up to expectations (real and perceived)

Will it help with students that have serious underlying problems?

http://www.rightattitudes.com/2008/08/20/never-surprise-your-boss/
DTU’s education policy

Studerende
På DTU har de studerende let og ubesværet kontakt med deres undervisere. Dette er et vigtigt element i læringsskulturen på DTU, hvor undervisere og studerende har respekt for hinanden og den fælles uddannelsesproces.

- DTU’s undervisning er lagt an på, at de studerende er interesserede i at dygtiggøre sig, og de er initiativrige med hensyn til egen læring.
- Et succesrigt ingeniørstudium kræver, at man har evne, lyst og energi til at blive ingeniør og er klar til at yde den indsat, det kræver.
- DTU forventer, at de studerende ønsker at udvikle sig til nytænkende, troværdige og engagerede ingeniører.

http://www.dtu.dk/~media/dtudk/om_dtu/organisation/dtus_strategier_og_politikker/uddannelsespolitik_2010.ashx
Where to get help

Studievejeldning – (DTU) student counselling
studvejl@adm.dtu.dk; Camilla Nørring cng@adm.dtu.dk

Advises the students on:
- Everything about their studies,
- Working in groups, Life as a student, exams stress, applying for leave of absence, transfer of merit for courses
- simple personal problems etc

http://www.dtu.dk/uddannelse/studieliv/faa_en_god_studiestart/studievejledningen_paa_dtu
Student Counselling (Studenter rådgivning)
Advises students on the really heavy personal problems
• Anxiety, fear, harrassment, depression, self confidence, death, parents..
• There is a psychologist that the students can be referred to
• Denmark wide

http://www.srg.dk/
Where can you get help when you have a student with a serious personal problem?

Studievejeldning – (DTU) student counselling
studvejl@adm.dtu.dk ; Camilla Nørring cng@adm.dtu.dk