**Decision Tree**
For Dealing with Difficult Mentoring Situations

**Situation:** As a faculty mentor, you find yourself dealing with an unusually challenging relationship with a mentee. Your usual approach doesn’t seem to be working and either their performance is far off what you would expect and/or their behavior has proved especially problematic to deal with and is becoming a serious obstacle. The following algorithm is intended to guide your thinking as you try to determine what kind of problem you are facing and how best to approach it, including when to consult with FSAP.

```
Could this just be a communication breakdown?

Yes

Clarify roles and responsibilities, goals, policies, the nature of the mentoring relationship

No

Does the mentee seem to appreciate the consequences of the problem?

Yes

Might there be some form of impairment? (Consider level of insight, defensiveness, attitude toward mentor, willingness & ability to change)

No

Discuss what happens if the problem is unresolved and its consequences for the mentoring relationship, agree on a mutually acceptable approach

No

Consider whether or not to continue mentoring relationship (with newly clarified goals and approach), or if there might be too poor a fit of personalities, styles, etc.

Yes

Does the impairment appear to be primarily (a) cognitive, (b) emotional, and/or could it be related to (c) a substance abuse problem?

Call FSAP for a confidential consultation 476-8279

Yes

No
```