

I have been an academic advisor for over 6 years. It has been my joy and privilege to hone my personal advising philosophy and watch the impact of my ideals on my coworkers and most importantly on the students I advise. My philosophy entails these core beliefs:

**Goal setting.** Students must understand that they are in charge of their academic and career goals. My role is one of coach, mentor, teacher and navigator. I help students set appropriate goals, as well as assist them when they find the need to adjust those goals, by helping them to explore their options. I try to transcend the common notion that I am there to “sign forms” or process paperwork. Instead, I encourage students to share their plans for the future with me- everything from their wildest dreams to the random elective that sounded appealing. By focusing on the needs of each individual I am able to help my students achieve beyond their own expectations and truly realize their potential as lawyers, policy makers, analysts, and change agents.

**Appropriate Prioritizing.** Do first things first. It’s a lesson that was repeated over and over as I grew toward adulthood. A lesson that has stuck with me and greatly informs my daily practice as an Academic Advisor. As soon as I meet students, they often begin to talk excitedly about choosing classes or making 4-year plan. However, I gently redirect the conversation. I use our first academic advising meeting as an opportunity for us to get to know one another. I disarm them by sharing with them a little bit about myself. They are often surprised to learn that I am a GT alumna. By taking the opportunity to get to know one another, students see me as a real person, which often makes them feel comfortable sharing with me their personal stories. It is then, once we are both working from a place of mutual respect that we can jump into unlocking all of the potential that their futures entail.

**Authenticity.** My students matter to me personally. They are more than just a GTID number, or a faceless name on a class roll. I want them to know that I care about their struggles and successes, and that I will help them through both. I understand that they are real people with lives that transcend the campus boundaries. In fact quite often those lives are what prompt them to seek my assistance. Whether a family financial transition has impacted their plans and they suddenly find that they are in need of a recommendation letter for a prestigious scholarship, or their personal illness has caused a situation where they need help petitioning the faculty, I am real with them and I am there for them. I cannot solve all of their problems but I can listen with an empathetic ear. I understand that they are whole complex individuals who have stories outside of Georgia Tech. I celebrate them daily and commiserate with them when life is not going as planned. I will honor their individuality by remembering their stories.

**Personalized Learning.** Each of my students must find their own path at Georgia Tech. Whether they are local residents of Atlanta or they are out of state athletes, determining your place at a Tier 1 institution like ours can be a challenge. I encourage the students I advise to personalize their learning path; to follow the road less traveled; to explore courses, lectures, and student groups that peak their interest, even if they aren’t apart of their major or familiar to them. This commitment to personalized learning has developed over time but it was birthed in my own experience. I came to Georgia Tech knowing I wanted to be an architect. That dream gave birth to new plans. Through my personalized learning journey I found my niche, helping others to find theirs.