

## Personal Philosophy of Advising

As an academic advisor, it is my goal to help students navigate the many hurdles and barriers that exist in higher education. I believe in a holistic advising approach that includes intrusive, prescriptive, and appreciative models.

**Student Centered:** First and foremost, it is the student that matters. I want to make a positive influence on my students' lives. I understand that each student is an individual, with their own story and future goals. It is important to realize that every student's needs are different.

**Empowering:** Advisors must provide the tools needed to be successful and help students develop problem solving and critical thinking skills. It is important to lead by example, keeping interactions a good balance of professional and personal. I work to empower students to make informed decisions.

**Comfortable:** I strive to provide a comfortable environment where students are free to ask any question, even if they feel it is "silly." I believe in creating an inviting space that can spark conversation. I keep a couple of family photos, plus some items that are conversation starters (travel items, movie paraphernalia, etc). I think this sets a tone for students to be comfortable. My students should feel safe in my space and free of judgement. Active listening: I feel it is very important to ask students open-ended questions. I make an effort to not make assumptions of what a student needs and always ask "What can I do for you today?" When asking a student about their courses, and you get a "Fine" or "Okay" I will ask the student to define "Fine" to get them to say more.

**Positivity:** It is imperative that as an advisor we focus on what is going well for the student and not just the negative. If a student is struggling, we talk about what is working first. Why is it working? And then we address the "what is not working."

**Strong Relationships:** With large caseloads, it can be a challenge to build a strong relationship with each student. I strive to use memory devices on previous conversations with a student to help them realize I do care about their goals, their families, and their situations so they will open up to me.

**Accessible:** My personal goal is to respond to emails within one business day. If I don't yet have an answer, I work to give an idea when the student can expect an answer. During peak enrollment, I utilize auto-reply to remind students how to make an appointment or to include pertinent details so I can more rapidly respond to their query.

**Knowledgeable:** Advisors need to be aware of the university's resources, procedures, policies, and offices. It is critical that you can get the student the information they need. It is important to have easy access to information to share with students. I keep quick links to the updated online tutor schedule, graduate school information, and other flyers. For my particular majors, I also keep items like police academy flyers and tips to get started flying at the airport.

**Academic Integrity:** As an university official, I must uphold the standards and mission of the University. This often means having difficult conversations with my students explaining policies and procedures and why the policies matter.

**Trust:** Not only is it important to build trust in a relationship with your student, you also must build trust between the chairs and coordinators of the programs you support. Resource Building: Advisors must keep positive working relationships with those on campus that can help a student resolve a hurdle, such

as Admissions personnel, financial services, or the Registrar's office. I find that if someone actually knows you they will help you with a situation that much more effectively.

**Innovative:** Every semester I work to update how I communicate with students and push to be more proactive in my approaches. With ever changing technologies, I think it is critical to work on methods that reach students the most effectively.

**Reflection:** As I am working with students, I am always asking myself, "could I do this step in a different way to better help my students?" It is important to continuously improve as an advisor and advising as a whole at the university. When working on committees, I ask myself, "how will this change affect my students?"