

My Academic Advising Philosophy

Purpose of Advising

I believe the purpose of advising is to help students navigate their academic journey by helping them to become independent learners and thinkers capable of identifying resources and taking ownership of educational and career goals. When I advise students, I aspire to create new and innovative ways to meet students where they are. Each student has unique needs and begins at a different level of development. I identify the level of development of each student and work to meet their academic needs. I use Arthur Chickering's theory of identity development to not only identify a student's level of development but also to help them navigate through the vectors/stages of the theory, specifically focusing on helping students develop autonomy to move towards interdependence. Students can reach interdependence through an appropriate level of challenge and support. I use Sanford's theory of challenge and support to help my students learn to take ownership of their decision-making. I support them in the decisions that they make but also challenge them to evaluate their decisions and think through them before acting. I provide advice but make sure that they make their decisions on their own.

The thing that I value most about my role as an academic advisor is getting to know my students. I believe that it is very important to connect to and appeal to the humanity of my students. I have learned so much from my students in the past three and a half years. But I believe the most important thing that I have learned is that every student needs someone to be their advocate. As their advocate, I do my best to be the center of their academic support system pulling other into the circle, others like their career coach, their instructors, and other professional to support their learning and career success.

I know I have made a difference when my students have accomplished an academic goal or when I am able to help them relieve some stress or anxiety about their academic progress. At the end of the day, if my students feel supported, are working towards accomplishing their goals, and are taking ownership for their decisions and actions, then my purpose is fulfilled.

Commitment to Every Student

I have a commitment to every student that I advise, I do my best to commit to five basic principles with each of my student:

More than a number. I do my very best to know that each of my students. To not only remember their name but also to remember facts about their personal life, their social involvement, and their career goals. If I see my students outside my office I ask them about their day and refer to something they have previously told me. Even though I have many students, I never want any of them to feel that they are just a number. Schlossberg's theory of Marginality and Mattering, discusses how students react to transition and the belief that they matter to someone. College itself is a huge transition for students. As part of the College experience students go through many transitions academically, socially, and personally. As students move through these transitions its easy for them to feel self-conscious and isolated. Students need to know that through these transition it is easy for them to feel self-conscious and isolated. Students need to know that the transitions they face are normal and there is a way to work through all the changes.

Students need to know that they are supported and have the belief not only that they matter to someone, but that someone has their best interests at heart. Students need to know that their

concerns, needs, and wants are important. Most importantly student need to know that someone will celebrate their successes and encourage them to do better when they fail. When I work with a student, I make sure they know that they are important to me and that their success is important to me. Every advising meeting or email is about them; getting to know them, helping them, showing them that they matter.

Involvement. I believe that it is very important for students to be involved outside of the classroom. This can mean involvement in a student organization, an internship opportunity, or involvement in the community. I encourage my students to be involved on campus or in the community in some way. Involvement outside of the classroom will teach students important life skills and connect them to a cause or purpose larger than themselves. Alexander Astin's Theory of Involvement states that there is a direct correlation between student involvement and academic performance. I strongly believe in and participate in involvement through the advisement of a student organization.

The Advising Relationship

It is important to me to establish a rapport and meaningful relationship with each advisee. To do so, I follow the ethical standards and core values set by NACADA. Core Values one and two state that academic advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise and advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate in the advising process. Core Value one means that I do my very best to understand where my students are in their growth and development, and support them in every way that I can. Supporting them, means respecting their ideas and belief systems, teaching them and guiding them through their academic endeavors, helping them to set goals, and advocating for them. One way I aim to support my students is to look for every viable way to help them, whether it be academically or personally. When my students are struggling academically, I point them to the resources that can help, like tutoring, or academic coaching. When my students are struggling personally, I take the time to talk through the issues they may be having, identify resources and set a plan of steps to take to move forward. For any student that may be struggling in any way, I make sure that I follow up with them to see how they are doing after we have met. Each term I identify my students who are in academic trouble (below 2.0 GPA). I reach out to them and meet with them one on one. We work together to identify their needs academically and personally and we plan and set goals. I also reach out to my students who have had recent academic success. As well as congratulate my high achieving students for their good grades.

Core Value two means that I advocate for my students when needed. One major way that I advocate for my students is through a team collaborative effort between departments and our in hour career center to provide each student with the support they need. Each student meets with me and then I refer them to their career coach for result help, internship placement, etc and they are also referred to the designated program champion for their major, so they can gain industry information and begin to capitalize on networking opportunities. Through my advising relationship with every student I approach each advising situation in an ethical manner. I embrace and celebrate each student for their unique diverse background and provide all students with the same information regarding their academic program and any opportunity that may arise. Even when my students are at fault in any given situation, I use it as an opportunity for a teachable moment and still support them and advocate for them for what is in their best interests.

Autonomy is Key.

I believe it is very important for every student to emerge as emotionally intelligent leaders capable of taking ownership of their ideas, action, and make meaning of their experiences. I expect them to know the importance of life-long learning. It is my hope that upon graduation, all of my students reach the fourth level of Perry's Scheme- "Commitment within relativism". According to Perry, at this level students can accept knowledge and combine it with their own experiences. They are also able to commit to their own values and beliefs. I work with my students to help them develop their own ideas, values, and purpose. I ask them questions about why they chose their major, where they see themselves after graduation, and why they make the decisions that they make. For instance, when a student begins a sentence with "because my mom think," I ask well what do you think? I want all my students to be independent thinkers and learners read to take ownership for their lives.

The Future is Now

I encourage my students to begin preparing for post-graduation TODAY! The decisions they make each day, the risks they take, the opportunities they seize, the things they learn, are all working together to shape their future. I work with my students to create a timeline of what they should be doing now to prepare for tomorrow. I encourage them to go to the career fair even as a sophomore. I encourage them to volunteer or shadow in their chosen career field and to have at least one internship before graduation. Every step they take prepares them for their future.