

Graduate Student Advising Philosophy

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Embarking on a graduate degree is a challenging and difficult journey, yet it is also a great opportunity for intellectual and personal development. My general philosophy on advising graduate students is that active learning is vital to a student's success, and I believe that my role as a member of the graduate faculty is to be a facilitator, helping graduate students to achieve their goals during the program and after they graduate.

Below, I delineate my philosophy of advising and my expectations of graduate students in a formal advisor–advisee relationship, although my advising isn't limited to students who are officially my advisees.

Advising philosophy

One of the primary goals in earning a Ph.D. degree is to become an independent scholar. Being an independent scholar means that one can develop one's own research agenda, refine one's research ideas and questions so that they can be implemented, design and conduct research, share the results in an effective way so as to have the work published, and be able to further guide future students of one's own.

In mentoring students to achieve this goal successfully, I help them to be focused on their work and make sure it's moving forward and heading in the right direction. This involves guiding them to a good starting point and helping them to avoid pursuing dead-end paths. In this process, student-centered learning and the advisee's own motivation is pivotal. I respect students' research interests, as well as their diverse backgrounds, career goals, and learning processes, and am very patient about a student's learning progress.

My responsibilities as an advisor

When working with a student as a faculty advisor, I take on the following responsibilities:

1. To help the advisee in developing a degree plan in terms of the coursework, the research agenda, and the timeline.
2. To supervise the advisee's comprehensive exams and the development and completion of a dissertation.
3. To support the advisee in academic career development in terms of conference presentations, publications, and teaching experience.
4. To assist and counsel the advisee on being prepared for the job market.

Additionally, I help advisees to become socialized into academia. There are many unspoken rules, expectations, understandings, and bureaucratic norms that are common in academia,

and one of the main learning goals of a graduate program, in addition to intellectual growth, is coming to understand these dynamics and learning how to be a good citizen of one's academic discipline and university.

Expectations of advisees

In order to have healthy, productive, and effective advisor–advisee relationships, I expect the following of my advisees:

1. To remember that the advisor–advisee relationship is a two-way dialogue in which open, honest, and frequent communication is essential. Advisees should be honest and upfront about their progress or lack thereof, and be open to constructive feedback, even if it may at times be blunt.
2. To take the initiative and be proactive. Advisees should actively seek out relevant ideas, information, research, or opportunities to engage. I strongly believe that students' active learning strongly influences their learning outcomes.
3. To walk the walk, not just talk the talk. I don't like having a weekly meeting where we just talk and talk without meaningful progress being made. Talking may make an advisee feel relieved, but by itself does not produce anything. Let's be respectful of each other's time.

Serving on or chairing a thesis/dissertation committee

In order for me to chair a dissertation committee or serve as a committee member, there should be a connection between a student's research agenda and my research interests or my methodological expertise. My research centers on public relations—specifically, corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication (e.g., visual strategies, social media), public engagement with CSR activities, company–nonprofit partnerships, crisis communication, and closely related areas. Methodologically, my expertise is greater in the area of quantitative research methods and advanced statistics.

Even if I am not a dissertation chair or a committee member, if students would like to work on a paper together, to ask for some advice about their research agenda, or to see whether I would be a good fit as a dissertation advisor or committee member, my door is open. However, it is not my responsibility to do an in-depth review of a dissertation or paper of a student who is not my advisee, although I will be happy to give brief verbal feedback during a meeting.