

**Virginia Solis Zuiker**

**Associate Professor**

In my opinion, an important aspect of my professional life as a university professor is my role as an advisor and as a mentor. I view my role as one that fosters a graduate student’s growth both academically and professionally while they are pursuing their graduate degree and post-graduation. As a faculty member, it is my belief that part of my responsibility is to begin to prepare and socialize future scholars and educators to become the best professional that they aspire to be in an academic and professional setting. I am here to support you as you navigate the program goals and your individualized goals and to help position you so that you are the best qualified for an academic position when you graduate from the University of Minnesota.

**My “Driven to Discovery”:**

I am the first person in my family of origin and in my extended family to earn a doctorate degree and I am a Hispanic/Latinx scholar and educator from South Texas. I was very fortunate growing up because both of my parents had an opportunity to earn college degrees in education and become schoolteachers. My mother was a home economics teacher who first introduced me to my discipline. My personal upbringing led me to focus on the Hispanic/Latinx community. My research agenda focuses on the economic perspective of the family which includes the viability of self-employment and family-owned businesses, and young adults/college students’ money management practices.

Although these are my research passions, I am open to working, advising, and mentoring students who have other research interests especially when these ideas complement any aspect of finances and families.

**Communication:**

Communication is a two-way process meaning we both need to be in communication throughout your graduate tenure. The best way to reach me initially is through an email message that provides the reason for contacting me. If you send me an email and I haven’t responded in 48 hours, then send me a friendly reminder that you have not heard back from me and include your request in that second email. If we can resolve the issue via email, that is great. If not, and you would like to meet with me, provide several dates and times that work for you, and I will find the best one that works for both of us. You can also go to my Google calendar and schedule a meeting.

When we are scheduled to meet, my expectations are that you will be there on time and if you are running late or can no longer meet, I expect that you will notify me of your situation as soon as you can. I will do the same for you. I understand that life happens.

Where we meet depends on the task. Once we determine that we need to meet, we can meet face-to-face or virtually. When my office door is open, you can always stop by and ask questions and/or stop by and update me on your progress. I do enjoy communicating with you!

**Meetings:**

Typically, I ask that advisees and graduate assistants meet with me on a weekly basis. We can meet face-to-face or virtually. At the beginning of a semester before classes start, I will ask you to send me days and times when you can meet, and I will look over my calendar to find a common day and time each week for both of us to meet. I do understand things will come up during a semester, so if you need to change our meeting times just send an email and I will do the same if this situation arises for me. The agenda for the meeting will depend on the task. If you want me to read a manuscript ahead of our meeting, please send your manuscript two to three days ahead of time so that I can fit this into my schedule. If I am not able to meet your request, I will let you know.

**Assistantships:**

During your appointment, there might be times when you need to travel and/or you have a family event requiring you to be away from campus. Please communicate with me ahead of time so we can plan accordingly and adjust work if needed. It is important to note that graduate assistantship appointments continue during winter and spring breaks and so I do expect that if I ask you to work on something during the breaks that the task is completed. Again, please communicate with me!

Feedback:

With a manuscript, when I provide feedback, I will typically be using “track changes” within the documents and I will provide both edits and/or comments. I am not a copy editor; rather when I am providing feedback, I am also trying to let you know that as a reader, am confused by something you wrote, and I am asking you to reconsider rewriting that section to better clarify what you meant. If I do not understand what you are trying to convey, most likely reviewers will also not understand. I will do my best to be respectful in my comments back to you. You may not agree with my comments, and I invite you to voice your concerns over the comments so that we can have a discussion on how to continue to improve the manuscript. I would prefer that we discuss the comments, and we can do that in a virtual and/or face-to-face meeting. I do ask that you give me one to two weeks to read and comment on your manuscript. If we are in communication, we can work on the best turnaround timeline for feedback based on the task.

Publications and Authorship:

Our graduate program expectations are that by graduation you will have several published articles and additional ones in the pipeline all relating to your scholarship interests. I am here to provide guidance in helping you make good decisions about which manuscript ideas are ones to pursue based on your time commitments and whether they are in line with your career goals. I am interested in seeing you succeed in our graduate program!

When working on my research agenda and data that I have either collected and/or access to and have provided you access to, my expectations are that I am a co-author to each of the manuscripts. The authorship order is negotiated on a case-by-case basis. If you were working on data that you have collected and were seeking my expertise and guidance, I would expect that you would be the first author, but depending on my contribution, that I would also be included as a co-author again negotiated on a case-by-case basis. These expectations are also for conference presentations. My expectation is that we might first present our research at a national conference and then work on the manuscript and submit it to a peer-reviewed journal.

Much of my work is with collaborators, I look at my advisees as collaborators, and as long as they have made a significant contribution to a manuscript, I have no issues including them as a co-author unless I am working on a research project that involves outside researchers whose protocols may not include additional authors. In these cases, I would have a conversation about expectations with research assistants who are working on some aspect of the project.

Course Requirements:

When working with advisees, I believe it is both of our responsibility to know the program requirements. I expect that we will discuss where you are in the process throughout your graduate experience. Ultimately, you will provide me with your checklist and portfolio so that we can discuss where your strengths are and what you still need to work on to move forward.

**Equity and Inclusion:**

Equity and inclusion are central to my teaching, research, outreach, and advising. I will strive to promote social justice and diversity across each domain of my work.

**Resolving Conflict:**

If a situation between us comes to the point that we both cannot resolve the situation in a fair manner, I would suggest that our next contact person be the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and then next the Department Head. From there, the normal chains of command should be contacted College HR Lead, or Office of Student Conflict Resolution.