



Graduate Student Advising Statement

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General Statement and Advising Philosophy

As an educator, I am collaborative, strength based, supportive, and relational. I believe in the words of Dr. James P. Comer that “No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship.” I view student advising as a collaborative learning process that requires intentional effort to build a professional and personal relationship (between myself and my advisees) grounded in mutual respect and support. I am committed to understanding my students’ professional and life goals, and I strive to help them gain the learning experiences necessary to achieve these aspirations. My goal is to encourage my advisees to be creative, innovative, and to fully realize their potential. By the time they graduate, I want them to be confident in their skills and have a competitive CV that stands out in the job market. We will work collaboratively to position you for success, ensuring you qualify for interviews for any job you desire, whether in academia, industry, or another field. This might require hard work to secure publications, research presentations, clinical experiences, and teaching opportunities that will strengthen your CV and help you land your preferred job after your PhD.

Communication

The best way to reach me is through email: asiim004@umn.edu. When you email me, expect a response within 24 hours. I often provide my cell phone number to my students and can be reached by texting. However, I prefer that all work-related matters be communicated via email. Please only call or text me if the situation is urgent (e.g., a same-day submission deadline reminder) or if I haven’t responded to your email within 24 hours. Do not expect me to always take a call or respond to your text immediately due to my teaching, clinical and service responsibilities. But I try to be responsive in a timely manner. I do not respond to work calls or emails on weekends unless it is something urgent. Weekends are for self-care, family, and friend time.

Feedback

Generally, I try to be open, gentle, honest, and constructive when giving feedback to my students. I will also consider cultural and contextual factors (the student’s stage of development). My feedback on most papers will come in the form of a returned version of your document in track-changes mode with comments in the margins. I always encourage you to ask any questions you may have; to me, there are no silly or stupid questions. Likewise, I am open to constructive feedback from my students and greatly value multiple and diverse perspectives. In certain instances, if you ask me a question and I do not know the answer, I will work collaboratively with you to find the answers.

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts are a normal part of every human relationship. If you have a problem with me or a concern about your progress in the program, please talk to me first. Let’s see if we can come to an understanding of your concerns and see if we can resolve the problem. If we can’t resolve the issue, we can collaboratively work to find someone neutral (e.g., our department chair) to help us have a



civil and respectful conversation. Likewise, I will follow the same approach if I ever have a conflict or concern regarding you

Meetings

I prefer to meet with my students on a weekly basis for 1 hour, in their first semester (of their 1st year), and then spread the meetings out on an as needed basis. This can change throughout the program for a variety of reasons. In our meetings, we will discuss 1) how you are doing personally and professionally? What went well during the week, what did not, and why, what you could have done differently, and goals for the next week. You can also propose a topic for our meeting.

Program Requirements

You will need to be a self-advocate for your degree plan and any clinical experiences you want to have. This means meeting me with occasionally and checking in on whether or not you're meeting program goals. We can also meet to discuss your clinical experiences and if you're getting the training you need to be an effective CMFT researcher and clinician.

Writing, Authorship & Publishing

Writing and publishing is essential to the life of a graduate student. I'd like my students to have at least 6 publications after they have completed their doctoral work with me. Depending on the job/career path (i.e., academia v. industry) you want to take, having more like 8-10 will enhance your marketability when you go out on the job market. By the time you graduate, I expect you to have multiple publishable manuscripts in the publication pipeline on topics related to your scholarship agenda. I will provide guidance in making good decisions about whether pursuing a specific manuscript will be a good use of your time and effort.

Authorship: I like to discuss authorship at the outset of any project we work on together. Let me know if you are interested in authorship, so we can discuss the level of investment and work required to be included as an author on a paper or research presentation. Being a research assistant does not automatically guarantee authorship. To be considered an author on a manuscript, you need to make substantial scholarly contributions, such as participating in data analysis, conducting and writing literature reviews, among other significant contributions.

Teaching

It's valuable for graduate students to learn the basics and behind-the-scenes aspects of instructing a course. If you're interested in gaining teaching experience, let's discuss it. I'll do what I can to involve you as a TA in my classes or, more specifically, invite you to co-teach with me, providing feedback on your teaching. I also encourage you to seek opportunities to guest lecture in other classes. I won't find these opportunities for you—you'll need to pursue them independently. You're welcome to discuss these opportunities with me, but there's no obligation to do so

National Meetings

I expect that we will do research together and that you and I will present together at state and national conferences such as the NCFR, AAMFT and others. As you may need mentoring in this process, it is expected that we would share authorship on most projects we do together. I expect you to be thinking of presenting your research at national meetings. WE can always discuss who takes leadership on certain presentations, roles, and expectations for co-presenting



Service

Participating in community service at the department, college, university, or professional association level is valuable for making positive contributions in the community, growing leadership skills, networking, and building a strong CV. I often encourage my students to take on a service role at one of these levels. However, before accepting any service role, let's discuss it together to ensure it won't distract you from your academic work. As a best practice, I don't encourage my first-year advisees to take on service roles unless there are special circumstances. Your first year should be focused on adapting—learning your way around, setting up your plan of study, building networks with peers, and understanding the department and college culture

Independence

I see graduate students as future colleagues, so from the start, I expect my students to bring independent ideas for papers to our meetings. Academia often requires self-motivation, and I share that perspective. As my student, I expect you to be a self-starter and an advocate for yourself. I value independence and place trust in my students to work autonomously. Simply put, I prefer not to micromanage individuals. Once tasks are clearly defined, I trust that my students will successfully achieve their goals with minimal supervision. Nevertheless, I will remain available to offer support as required. I am always here for you so do not be afraid to bring any questions or ideas to me. The best advice I can offer is to think about how your idea connects to and contributes to your overall research program before bringing it forward.

Professionalism

I will be professional, ethical, and respectful in my dealings with you. I expect the same from you. Being professional doesn't mean we won't laugh or play because I like a good laugh while working. However, it means that 1) I be reliable, 2) available and approachable to guide you when you need me, 3) I will set standards and appropriate boundaries to guide our work, and 4) respect your personal and professional boundaries, culture, and others. Further, Professionalism means fulfilling your commitment to work the agreed number of hours per week. I typically don't monitor hours closely as long as the work is being completed. However, if failing to meet expectations becomes a pattern rather than an exception, we'll need to address it. While you're a student now, you're being trained to become a professor and a colleague. I expect you to have your own ideas and opinions, and you should feel comfortable sharing them with me, even if they involve disagreement

Personal Life

I value my personal life and self-care, and I believe my advisees should prioritize their own personal lives as well. It's important that we model mental and emotional health in our professional lives. I encourage my advisees to maintain a well-rounded work-life balance that suits their individual needs.

Ethics

My advisees are typically C/MFT clinicians, and I expect them to adhere to the AAMFT's code of ethics. If you don't have a copy of the Code of Ethics, you can find it here;

https://www.aamft.org/AAMFT/Legal_Ethics/code_of_ethics.aspx



Equity and Inclusion

As an educator, I am committed to the supportive values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. I believe that every student should feel safe and have a sense of belonging in a learning environment, such as a research lab.