

I am honored to nominate [redacted] Student Advisor in the Mechanical Engineering Department, for the Outstanding New Advisor – Primary Role Award.

Briana has held the role of Student Advisor for the Mechanical Engineering (ME) Department at [redacted] since July 2016, a bit under two years. According to her formal job description, in this role she: advises and counsels students on academic program of study; monitors student academic progress and identifies students of concern; writes and updates orientation and resource materials; and researches and coordinates technology improvements for student records and processes. Less formally, one could describe her as the human face to the department – the one individual who has her pulse on all of the students and faculty, who helps students and faculty understand and navigate the University's rules and regulations and who connects the [redacted] community to all the resources on campus. In this context, she directly advises any declared ME student and also any student interested in learning about the ME department and degree. She is available to meet with students individually and by email and phone every day. [redacted] is a key member of the Engineering (EN) advising team at [redacted], a team comprised of myself and four EN advising staff members (ME department advisor, CS department advisor, EN Student Success advisor and the BEST (Bridge to Engineering Success at [redacted] advisor), which meets weekly and partners regularly.

In this role [redacted] has been extremely successful, quickly becoming indispensable and beloved. Students write:

- [redacted] is the best advisor I've ever had in my whole academic career.
- [redacted] is ... a leader of change in the Mechanical Engineering department.
- [redacted] is also a great advisor in everything career-related [redacted] has an incredible network across all disciplines. Whatever career path you're looking into, you can be sure that she knows somebody in the field and help connect you to them. She is always up-to-date with the Boston tech scene, as an addition to knowing where most [redacted] students end up doing after graduation.
- [redacted] is a great person to have around. Her door is always open, and she always greets people with a smile.
- [redacted] is an incredible person and I can't imagine the department without her.
- [redacted] has been and I believe will be there to help me through all of the difficult decisions that await me in the future. I couldn't make it through each semester without her.
- From helping me on a weekend to figure out my courses in South Africa, to helping me fit Modern Physics, a class that I really wanted to take, into my over packed schedule she's mentored me through each one of my difficult questions through my college career. Further, she's helped me start my own club and provided me with several resources when I needed them. She's helped me petition other courses into my schedule, and achieve what I want out of my education.
- [redacted] has been able to help me design a balanced course load every semester, allowing me to keep improving my GPA and make timely progress on my degree as I juggled internships, athletics, and music.
- She is always aware of each individual student's situation.
- Not only have I gone to her for help with classes, but I have also used her as a resource for SWE (Society of Women Engineers).

- She also has been with me through my meetings with Student Affairs.

Faculty and staff write:

- In just two years, [redacted] has left an indelible mark on our department and how it operates.
- She brought in new (and more capable) advising software, developed digital versions of all forms and form submissions, started student and alumni newsletters, built up our internal marketing so that students learned what the faculty research, supported student-faculty events, and has generally acted as an ombudsman, listening and helping resolve student issues.
- She has done this always with a smile, enthusiasm, and passion.
- Her endless enthusiasm, creativity, and total reliability to complete everything she starts has made a major change in the department. Both students and faculty have repeatedly praised her work. She is a tireless worker and advocate for the students (with emails being answered at all times day and night). I cannot imagine my job without her.
- [redacted] is been a remarkable asset not only to the Mechanical Engineering Department, but also to the School of Engineering.
- [redacted] has been an excellent resource for graduate student advising.
- I think [redacted] must have an identical twin who shares her job, because I can't imagine just one person accomplishing the number of things she does with such skill, punctuality, and attention to detail. I sometimes feel like the faculty do not devote enough time or attention to student needs, but [redacted] picks up 100% of the slack and does even more. She seems to know details about the lives and academic careers of every single student in the department, and I never worry about students slipping through the cracks anymore because I know she is looking out for them.
- [redacted] is an exceptionally innovative and helpful person.
- Her willingness to make time and be the understanding shoulder and mentor for students in need is strong evidence of her commitment to humanism.
- Briana is an exceptional individual!
- She is GREAT with all our students especially the undergraduate population for which she acts as advisor for many of their day-to-day issues.

On my part, I am so grateful for [redacted]. [redacted] is a key member of the undergraduate engineering advising team and I cannot imagine engineering advising at [redacted] without her. She provides steady, caring and knowledgeable support to hundreds of undergraduates - advising which has direct meaningful impacts on our students. Indeed, I am co-chairing the Undergraduate Working Group of President Monaco's Mental Health Task Force and [redacted]'s name came up several times during our listening sessions. Students specifically named her as contributing to their stronger mental health, and advocated for more [redacted] on campus!

One of the highest compliments I can pay another individual is to say that when I ask them if they will take care of something for me, I can then totally forget about it in total confidence that it will be done well - this is always the case with [redacted]. She is the height of competence and reliability, and she makes my job so much easier. Because of her dedication to supporting declared and potential mechanical engineering undergraduate students, I am able to devote time to projects that I might not otherwise have been able to. Projects such as increasing access to

study abroad, addressing undergraduate mental health issues, and teaching a seminar for first generation low income freshmen, among others. In addition to freeing up some of my time to focus on such efforts, she helps me to advance many of them through her opinions, expertise, initiative, hard work and strong partnership, all of which I rely on. One concrete example is that about a year ago she brought a proposal to me to improve all of the engineering forms. As of now, all of the forms have been rewritten to be more clear and over half of them have also been moved online, with the remaining ones to follow. [REDACTED] has worked tirelessly on this project, working closely with me, the Registrar's office and also the department administrative assistants, to achieve such significant progress. Additionally, she has led an effort to introduce a new advising and degree certification software platform to the University by means of a pilot in the ME department. The software has now also been adopted by the Computer Science department, and it is likely the entire School of Engineering at [REDACTED] will follow suit. In this context, she has been extraordinarily creative and industrious, demonstrating strong leadership and partnership with so faculty and staff on campus.

In terms of interpersonal characteristics, she is uncharacteristically mature for someone so young and early in her career – perhaps explained by some of her life's experiences. She is unusually clear on boundary setting has a strong sense of and is guided by the philosophy that what students want is not always what is in their best interests, things that more seasoned faculty and administrators often struggle with or don't grasp. She is empathetic, a good listener, sincerely caring and passionate about [REDACTED] and her students' experiences, creative, authentic, cooperative and an extremely dedicated and tireless worker.

One specific example that demonstrates the role that [REDACTED] plays in the ME department concerns a second semester senior who was in an extremely serious skiing accident two weekends ago. After learning of his accident, [REDACTED]'s first step was to send flowers to him at his hospital in Vermont. Then she worked closely with me, colleagues in Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and the student's fellow classmates and professors to arrange for the student to stay on track with his academics. She jumped in to the point of walking around to classrooms to identify which were wheelchair accessible and rescheduling the meeting location of one to accommodate this student. Further she worked closely with a professor on adjustments to the lab exercises to accommodate the student's impaired fine motor skills due to his hand injuries (substitutions for soldering, for instance) and coordinated with his peers to make sure he had access to missed materials and notes. This student is now back on campus and well positioned to catch up on missed work and graduate on time, a remarkable accomplishment considering the extent of his injuries. While it is the case that I and my other colleagues in SAS would have taken many of these steps, it is certain that the degree of attention and "touch" that this student received from [REDACTED] was much higher than any other one of us would have been able to provide, making a profound and significant difference for this student.

[REDACTED] exemplifies the qualities outlined in the criteria of the Outstanding New Advisor – Primary Role Award and is richly deserving of your consideration for it.

Thank you.

Senior Associate Dean of Undergraduate Advising  
School of Engineering

## EDUCATION

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA 02155

Master of Science in Engineering Management, expected May 2018

[REDACTED] School of Engineering | Medford, MA 02155

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Cum Laude Honors, conferred May 2014

Primary Major: Mechanical Engineering | Secondary Major: Biomedical Engineering

GPA: 3.35

## EXPERIENCE

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*Student Advisor* | July 2016 – Present

- Assisted in defining new staff advisor role within the Department of Mechanical Engineering
- Meet with students regarding academic progress and planning
- Support struggling students through one on one meetings and by connecting them with campus resources
- Assist in curriculum redevelopment efforts within the department

*Admissions Counselor* | August 2015 – Present

- Evaluated applicants for [REDACTED] University undergraduate programs
- Recruited students for the School of Engineering

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*Independent College Counselor* | March 2017 – Present

- Assist high school students in identifying colleges and universities for future study
- Provide advice and assistance with the preparation of college applications

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*CEO and Co-founder* | January 2014 – Present

- Managed and operated small medical device startup company
- Designed ivProtek, a medical device for pediatric IV stabilization

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*iOS Springboard Mentor* | November 2014 – August 2015

- Trained and mentored new technical advisors

*iOS Technical Advisor* | August 2014 – November 2014

- Supported customers with iOS technologies remotely

*Specialist* | November 2013 – August 2014

- Evaluated customer needs and offered technology solutions over a wide range of platforms
- Lead customers through troubleshooting device and software issues

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*Research Associate* | November 2012 – October 2013

- Conducted general research management for two small start up subsidiaries of an investment firm
- Designed and developed a product for a biomedical device application
- Managed company finances and quality systems

[REDACTED] | Medford, MA

*Grader & Lecture Assistant* | September 2013 – May 2014

- Coordinated lecture materials for weekly lectures in control systems course
- Graded coursework and supported students with technical problem solving

*Resident Assistant* | August 2011 – May 2012, May 2012 – August 2012, August 2012 – May 2013

- Supervised and managed students in a residence hall setting

*R&D Engineering Intern* | May 2012 – November 2012

- Prepared and executed research studies related to silk textiles for use as medical devices
- Created and manufactured surgical models for use in demonstrating and practicing the use of the devices

*Translational Neurology Intern* | January 2012 – May 2012

- Surveyed scholarly articles on using EEG as a platform in aiding drug development for Parkinson's Disease

*Pharmacotoxicology Intern* | May 2011 – August 2011

- Prepared toxicology summary tables for a New Drug Application
- Examined the relationship between pre-clinical high dose and clinical high dose selection through a literature review

## AWARDS AND PROJECTS

*STEM Commission Sponsored Conference Presenter* | NACADA National Conference 2017 | "Engineering: Involving Faculty in Advising"

*Employee Distinction Award Nominee* | 2016-2017 Academic Year

*\$100K New Ventures Competition, Second Place Winner* | Presented a business plan for the ivProtek medical device for pediatric patients

*University Senior Alumni Award* | One of twelve seniors selected as someone who embodies the spirit and ethic of University

*Senior Mechanical Engineering Capstone Project* | Design of a medical device to assist in the insertion of IV catheters in pediatric patients

*2011 University Speaker Design Competition, First Place Winner* | Designed audio speaker with a team of 3

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

**National Academic Advising Association** | *Member, Conference Presenter* | 2016 – Present

**American Society of Mechanical Engineers** | *Member* | 2012 – Present

**American Society for Engineering Education** | *Member* | 2016 – Present

**Society of Women Engineers** | *Member* | 2010 – Present

## SKILLS

**Computer:** MATLAB, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, SolidWorks, MathCAD, VBA

**Laboratory:** Cell Culture, Silk Extraction & Processing, Instron Testing, Dialysis, TFF, Clean Room Protocol

## ACTIVITIES

**Society of Women Engineers** | *Section President, Corporate Relations Chair, Publicity Chair, Freshman Representative* | September 2010 – May 2014

**Society of Women Engineers Region F** | *Regional Collegiate Representative* | August 2013 – May 2014

**American Society of Mechanical Engineers** | *Senior Representative, Academic Chair* | September 2010 – May 2014

# Mechanical Engineering

## **Personal Advising Philosophy**

As the Student Advisor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at [redacted] University, I partner with students, faculty and staff to ensure that each student feels fully supported both academically and personally in our program. My advising philosophy incorporates aspects of learning-centered advising, intrusive advising and developmental advising.

### **Academic Education**

Crookston was the first to introduce the model of advising-as-teaching (Crookston, 1972), but my philosophy more directly aligns with the nine principles of effective faculty advising put forth by Kramer:

- “1) engage the student;
  - 2) provide personal meaning to students’ academic goals;
  - 3) collaborate with others or use the full range of institutional resources;
  - 4) share, give, and take responsibility;
  - 5) connect academic interests with personal interests;
  - 6) stimulate and support student academic and career planning;
  - 7) promote intellectual and personal growth and success;
  - 8) assess, evaluate, or track student progress; and
  - 9) establish rapport with students.
- (Kramer, 2003)”

My unique background as an alumna of the Department of Mechanical Engineering allows me to fully embrace this learning-centered advising paradigm, also referred to as advising-as-teaching. I see myself as an educator whose primary work is outside of the classroom, but with strong knowledge of the in-class content that informs my understanding of the entire academic curriculum. Thus, I see myself fulfilling the role of an advisor as teacher as outlined by Lowenstein: “whereas the individual course is the domain of the professor, the overall curriculum is most often the domain of the academic advisor, and the excellent advisor coaches the student through the process of learning the curriculum (Lowenstein, 2005).”

### **Holistic Education**

I aspire to provide students with the academic support and guidance to enhance their learning, while furthering their developmental education outside the classroom. I place as much value on a student’s academic growth as I do on their developmental growth as a person. I provide support for growth through the development of strong advising relationships with students and by allowing students to take ownership of their decisions as encouraged by developmental advising theories (King, 2005). In this way, my philosophy aligns with both a developmental approach and a learning-centered approach.

### **Proactive Support**

In taking on my current role and understanding the role of faculty advisors, I have increasingly adopted practices that align with intrusive advising theories. As a full-time staff member, I have the unique ability to dedicate additional time to struggling students and identify students in need of support. As discussed by Varney, I am committed to the idea that intrusive advising is not “hand-holding,” but is instead a targeted approach at motivation and support (Varney, 2007). In seeking out and offering additional support to these at risk students, I see myself as promoting the NACADA vision that “effective advising is at the core of student success (NACADA, 2017).”

# Mechanical Engineering

## Professional Development

As the first professional advisor to be hired within an academic department in the School of Engineering at [redacted] University, I have seen the value in learning from other institutions and taking advantage of professional development opportunities. I constantly work to expand my theoretical knowledge and professional network through NACADA sponsored opportunities. I have participated in the "Theory and Practice of Advising" eTutorial and spent several days at Virginia Tech learning about their various advising structures. I also attend the national NACADA conference annually, where I co-presented this past year on how to better involve faculty in engineering advising.

As I move forward in my career as an advisor, I plan to continue my exploration of the various advising theories and incorporating them into my work. Working with students is both complex and inspiring and as an academic advisor I aim to always be a friendly figure who students feel comfortable approaching for support.

Sincerely,



[redacted]

Student Advisor

Department of Mechanical Engineering

[redacted] University

## Works Cited

- Crookston, B. (1972). A developmental view of academic advising as teaching. *Journal of College Student Personnel*(13), 12-17.
- King, M. C. (2005). *Developmental academic advising*. Retrieved from NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Developmental-Academic-Advising.aspx>
- Kramer, G. L. (2003). *Faculty advising examined: Enhancing the potential of college faculty as advisors*. Bolton, MA US: Anker Publishing Company.
- Lowenstein, M. (2005). If Advising is Teaching, What Do Advisors Teach? *NACADA Journal*, 25(2), 65-73.
- NACADA. (2017). *Our Vision and Mission*. Retrieved from NACADA: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/About-Us/Vision-and-Mission.aspx>
- Varney, J. (2007, September). Intrusive Advising. *Academic Advising Today*, 30(3).