

Advising and Supporting (A/S)

The Advising and Supporting competency focuses on professional development, interpersonal skills, group dynamics, resource partners, and conflict and crisis situations. This competency emphasizes the development of strategies to address diverse needs, and it is essential to student affairs because it is about building relationships and connecting students to resources. For this competency, my skill level is intermediate.

In my role as a graduate assistant with the FASTrack (Foundations Academic Success Track) program, I actively practice this competency because FASTrack is designed to support first-year students as they transition from high school to college. My responsibilities include planning activities and assisting with student registration, both of which help create a structured and supportive environment for incoming first-year students.

A key component of my role involves working with peer mentors, which sometimes includes students who previously completed the FASTrack program and now are serving as role models and guides for the new students. These mentors help first-year students navigate campus life, manage academics, and cope with challenges such as homesickness. During our meetings, I will check on how mentors are balancing their own coursework and responsibilities, as well as how effectively they are supporting their mentees. These conversations allow me to provide guidance and feedback while also gathering suggestions to improve the program for future students and staff. Conducting these monthly check-ins has made me more confident in giving feedback and offering support.

I also assist with hosting community-building and academically focused events. For example, the annual snow-cone welcome event helps new FASTrack students connect with staff and graduate assistants in an informal setting. Additionally, I helped plan workshops such as resume-building sessions, which equip students with practical skills that extend beyond their first year and prepare them for future career opportunities. On the advising side, I assist staff in developing students' summer course schedules, ensuring they begin their college experience with a clear academic plan. I have become more comfortable guiding students to make informed decisions regarding their education.

Through my practicum at the FedEx Student-Athlete Success Center, I further apply advising and supporting strategies. Although the center has been less busy during basketball season, I have worked with several student-athletes to strengthen their study habits and academic strategies. In these interactions, I rely on my interpersonal skills to build rapport, assess their needs, and provide tailored academic support.

I plan to pursue professional development opportunities to serve students better.