



College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Academic Advising Center

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To Whom it May Concern,

I'm writing to enthusiastically recommend my co-worker Dan Shields. Dan and I have worked together in the Academic Advising Center (AAC) for UF's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) since 2010. I've been an academic advisor there since 1999. Below are just a few examples of how Dan makes things easier for us to do our jobs as academic advisors.

Dan works daily to maintain our office website. The range of "constituents" who use our services, the numbers and kinds of events we facilitate, and how we make ourselves accessible all make this a time-consuming chore that requires ingenuity, adaptability and creativity. For example, students on a pre-health track are served by our office. One of our cornerstone events for these students is a fall "welcome" where students can attend presentations from all of the professional programs on campus and interact with student organizations and community agencies that offer relevant pre-professional experience. During the pandemic, Dan and the pre-health advisors brainstormed on how to make this all virtual so that the event could carry on. Through a combination of Zoom, streaming and uploaded recordings to the website, all of the information was made available to students as it had when the event was "live".

Another constituency is "exploratory" students. One of this team's welcome events involves introducing new students to advisors from programs all across campus. Also prompted by the pandemic, we asked advisors to record introductions of themselves and their majors in lieu of hosting a large, in-person gathering. Dan collected these recordings for us and organized them into a resource students can now access year-round off of our team's page. Students applying to transfer to CLAS use the transfer "menu" Dan set up to access competitive admissions criteria for their corresponding majors. Students just seeking general advising access our appointment calendar system that Dan put together in collaboration with one of our co-workers.

As an office that is responsible for discussing department, college and university requirements with students, accurate information is critical. In other words, we advisors need access to the most current information to then be able to communicate it to students. Dan has been playing a significant role in helping us uphold this responsibility. Internally, we have an electronic "manual of operation" where we've attempted to file all types of information from the state level to the college level that has a bearing on how we do our jobs. In the past, we've struggled to keep the manual current thus defeating its purpose by making some of the ever-changing information irrelevant. Thanks to Dan, that information is currently the most up-to-date ever (at least since the manual was initially created). Without the prompting from anyone, Dan uses initiative to capture what he reads through campus e-

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mail and other media or what he learns about through other sources and thinks to file it in the manual so that the rest of us can benefit from the knowledge.

These are just some examples of how Dan contributes to the functioning of the AAC. On a more empirical level, Dan is an ideal co-worker. No matter how busy his plate is with projects, he's willing to stop what he's doing to answer IT questions or provide ideas that will help someone else's project along. He actively listens and is prepared with clarifying questions when asked to get involved with a project. As someone who has collaborated with him on multiple projects and whose understanding of technology is novice at best, I very much appreciate how Dan patiently helps me figure out how to articulate what kind of IT support I need in a given situation.

For all of these reasons, I highly recommend Dan to you. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kathy Rex  
Assistant Director  
CLAS Academic Advising Center