

# ACADEMIC ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

## ALLISON BRILLHART



"I love connecting with students authentically, human to human! The relationship building that allows me to help others in this role is key to my own growth, as well; learning from the folks around me is my favorite thing," says Allison Brillhart when asked what she loves most about her job. Allison has been an Undergraduate Academic Advisor in the College of Engineering & Computing (CEC) since September 2021. "As Allison is coming into completing her full first year, I have watched (her) come into her own as an advisor," says her supervisor, Sarah Jusiewicz. Allison describes herself as someone who creates genuine relationships with individuals through which she can support and uplift them. According to Jusiewicz, it is clear she is putting her words into her advising practice. "Here in the College of Engineering



**ALLISON BRILLHART**

Undergraduate  
Academic Advisor,  
College of Engineering  
and Computing

& Computing we have a new sticky trend happening---Allison has adopted a sticker box instead of a candy bowl. It is a magical box full of stickers that student can take to add to their computers and water bottles or just strike up a conversation."

Allison maintains a caseload of approximately 300 CEC students from orientation through graduation. Her goal is to ease students through transition, courses, crisis, and general university life by effectively communicating and connecting them to appropriate campus resources. She describes her advising approach as trauma-informed with an emphasis on holistic wellness, providing "a way to create a culture of care and establish well-being as a value."

"It is the small things that add up to a be a big impact", says her supervisor, "and recently I have noticed that Allison has adopted her signature block to say 'Be Well' with a link to mental health services. For me this shifted my perspective of approaching mental health as 'what's wrong?' to 'I am here for you!'. the intricacies of the courses and answer any specific questions I may have about the programme never taken more than 15 minutes to get back to us on any of our crazy questions!" It is clear from her students' perspectives that she is putting her words into action.

**Theo Smalls, a sophomore majoring in Mechanical Engineering says,**

"I always appreciate how she writes down what I'm saying and she listens intently to what I think about how my career should be planned."

Allison has a background in academic coaching and also spent time as a Crisis Line Advocate at the West Georgia Prevention and Advocacy Resource Center where she supported clients calling the crisis hotline by listening, affirming, and connecting them with resources. Her past experience has provided her with the necessary tools to not only help her students, but care deeply for them as well.

"Allison is always eager to hear what I think first rather than force what she thinks I should do. She provides accurate information and resources for her students so they can be successful. If there's something she doesn't know she finds out and gets back in a very timely manner," says Smalls.

When asked what she would say that if she could give a fellow advisor one piece of advice she said, "Take care of yourself, as best as you can -- you cannot pour from an empty cup. Create a work environment that sparks joy, identify and utilize the support in your life, and be mindful of both work and life seasons so that you can optimally manage your time."

**It is no wonder that Allison sparks joy in those around her from her advisees to colleagues. We thank her for being a champion of mindfulness and mental health.**



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