

Shawn J. Parry-Giles, Professor

Ph.D. Advising Philosophy

I seek to work closely with graduate students to facilitate their progress through their degree in a timely manner. I seek to guide students in creating a meaningful and consequential research programs that most reflect their research interests and help them prepare to meet their professional goals. I also guide students on creating a teaching portfolio that further enhances their career goals.

I assume a student-centered approach to advising. I base meeting times on student preferences. Some students wish to meet regularly each semester while others set up meetings as they have issues to discuss. I provide substantive feedback to student work in a timely manner and devote considerable time to helping students prepare for their comprehensive exams and to publish their work as journal articles and their dissertation as a book if that is their career goal.

I also help students prepare to enter professional careers. I offer guidance in seeking out internship opportunities and completing projects at UMD that are relevant to their career goals. I also provide mentorship on teaching, writing, and applying for academic and non-academic positions. And I offer guidance on managing work-life balance. I continue to provide similar support once students graduate.

In turn, I do expect graduate students to take responsibility for meeting deadlines, submitting paperwork on time, and generally maintaining good standing in the program. I expect students to be self-motivated, eager to learn, and interested in enhancing the quality of their work as they progress through the program. The ideal student works hard but also enjoys the work and is motivated by the excitement of learning and teaching.

In the end, I thoroughly enjoy working with energized and collegial graduate students. I am inspired by my work with graduate students. Such collaborations for me are one of the more meaningful parts of being a professor. I am thus motivated to devote considerable time and energy to each graduate student's career development. The ideal learning experience is ultimately reciprocal as we each learn from one another, which is the ultimate goal of graduate school—to help instill and promote an excitement for a life-time of learning.