

## My “Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment” Philosophy

### **Introduction**

While my role here at Xavier University is “Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment,” many of those who know me have probably heard that I am also the coach for Xavier’s Club Fencing team. It’s my go-to when I’m asked to share a fun fact about myself or to talk about any hobbies and interests. And, once people learn that I coach fencing, it often becomes their go-to when introducing me to others here at Xavier, as in “This is John, he works in the Office of the Graduate School. Did you know that he also coaches fencing?” So, when it came time for me to reflect on my time in AFMIX, it felt only natural to incorporate something from the fencing side of my life.

As part of the requirements for me to be considered an official coach by the US Fencing Association, I had to complete several online training modules. One of these modules was titled, “Coaching Essentials” and focused more on the philosophy of coaching as opposed to knowing fencing fundamentals and theories. The overall goal of this module was to help the coach develop their “Coaching Philosophy”. This Coaching Philosophy was much like a personal mission statement, and the process of creating it, as outlined in the training, was based on self-reflection and discernment. When I took this training, it was one of several items that I needed to complete, and admittedly, felt more like a box that I needed to check instead of something to really reflect on and complete intentionally. I completed the assignment, and then largely forgot about it.

During our time in AFMIX, we spent a good amount of time discussing the ideas of Ignatian discernment, Xavier’s Core Values, and how we see ourselves fitting into the mission of the university. During some of these discussions, I found myself thinking back to the Coaching Philosophy exercise from my training and I realized that the way they had us go about creating our Coaching Philosophy was actually very Jesuit. It had us consider our “why”, reflect on our past and current practices, and state our own beliefs and values. Our Coaching Philosophy was then supposed to come directly from our answers to these questions.

For my AFMIX reflection, I decided to revisit the “Coaching Philosophy” exercise with more intentionality, but with two changes. First, I decided to go through the exercise focusing on my role as an Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment. I wanted to figure out what my philosophy was with my role here at Xavier and see if creating this guiding principle helped me work with greater purpose. And second, I decided to tweak the exercise a bit so that it could apply to any role here at Xavier. My hope is that anyone else could use this same exercise to create their own philosophy if they wanted to do so. What follows are the steps to create your own philosophy, with my own answers filled in as an example.

# Your Role Philosophy

## Step 1: Your “Why”

- Questions to ask yourself:
  - For what reasons did you take on this role?
  - For you, what are the core responsibilities of this role? What do you do?
  - How have your motives evolved? Is what motivates you different now than when you started?
- Using these answers, create a short “why” statement.

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I believe that Xavier offers quality graduate programs that have a chance to make a real impact on students’ lives. As a recruiter and admissions advisor, I help find applicants, help them discern whether our program is best fit for them, and assist in the application process to make it a personal and welcoming experience.

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## Step 2: Your Beliefs and Values

- Questions to ask yourself:
  - What experiences did you have during your education journey, both the positive and the negative?
  - Which people have helped shape you into the person you are today?
  - What other aspects of your life have influenced your values?
  - How has your time at this institution influenced your thinking?
  - How are you under pressure in this role?
- Having considered your answers, name three values that are important and guide what you do. Add a statement to each on what this value means to you.

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1. Understanding – Everyone’s situation is different. When deciding on a school/program, they bring different priorities and concerns. My goal is to help them discern if Xavier is the right fit for them.
  2. Equity – Some applicants will need more assistance than others. There will always be priorities in my role, but each applicant is an individual and I should help within my ability to give them as much assistance as needed.
  3. Continued Success – Xavier needs students in order to continue its mission. My role is to help find quality students who can positively contribute to the Xavier community so that Xavier can continue to be Xavier.
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### Step 3: Create a “Why Statement”

- **Build a short message that describes your mission. This combines your “Why” with your prioritized values.**

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In order for Xavier University to continue its mission, we must continue to bring in students who feel that they belong at Xavier and can contribute positively to the Xavier community. As a recruiter and admissions advisor, I can contribute to this goal by providing personalized and compassionate assistance to our applicants, allowing them the opportunity to discern if Xavier is a good fit for them and by helping them complete the application process.

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### Step 4: Behaviors

- **Your behaviors (how you go about your day-to-day tasks) are influenced by various considerations. Some examples are below:**
  - **Your organization’s philosophy and expectations**
  - **Your professional knowledge/area of expertise**
  - **Who you interact with most on a daily basis (students, other staff, applicants)**
  - **What time of the year is it (beginning or end of the semester, summer, etc.)**
- **Thinking about your own role, write down some key considerations that impact how you perform your role.**

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1. Recruitment goals – Xavier wants to grow our graduate enrollment, so there is a need to continue improving on our existing numbers.
  2. Familiarity with Xavier – as a two-time alum and someone who has been around Xavier for a long time, I am familiar with Xavier, its culture, and the surrounding community/the Cincinnati area. Many of the applicants that I speak with are not as familiar or may not even be from the US.
  3. Uncertainty – there is a lot of uncertainty right now with higher education in the United States. Much of this uncertainty disproportionality affects or directly targets certain demographics.
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## Step 5: Your Philosophy

- **Copy your “Why Statement” into the final box. Then add in the behaviors you most want to lean into in your role. This will create your Philosophy statement**

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### My Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment Philosophy

In order for Xavier University to continue its mission, we must continue to bring in students who feel that they belong at Xavier and who can contribute positively to the Xavier community. As a recruiter and admissions advisor, I can contribute to this goal by providing personalized and compassionate assistance to our applicants, allowing them the opportunity to discern if Xavier is a good fit for them and by helping them complete the application process. In my role I must always keep in mind that, while my goal is to bring more students to Xavier University, I cannot lose sight of the individual person. Students who come to Xavier should have every opportunity to be successful at Xavier, so I must always be honest and understanding in my conversations, so that applicants feel heard and can make the best decisions for their futures.

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