



Ram Advisors

SBS ACADEMIC ADVISING CHATBOT

Tarek, Karim, Benedict, Stella

The Problem We're Solving

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Students struggle with dispersed info across Suffolk.edu, SmartCatalog, and Workday

REPETITIVE QUESTIONS

Advising offices receive high-volume, repetitive inquiries

AFTER-HOURS NEEDS

Students need support when offices are closed

LIMITED STAFF TIME

Staff time is limited for routine questions

OUR SOLUTION

An AI assistant to help advisors AND students

Helps students navigate easy questions, knows when to escalate to a counselor or department, and frees advisors for complex issues.

Who This Chatbot Helps

FOR STUDENTS



First-Year Students

New to Workday and registration



International Students

F-1 visa questions, credit limits



Confused About Requirements

Major/minor rules, course planning



Students on Probation

Understanding next steps

FOR ADVISORS



Saves Time

Bot handles repetitive FAQs



Reduced Volume

Fewer routine emails/calls



Better Focus

More time for complex advising



24/7 Coverage

Students get help after hours

Our Value Proposition

24/7

Advising Support

Available whenever students need help, even outside business hours

Quality and Consistency



Consistent Answers

Accurate, policy-aligned responses



Suffolk-Only Sources

Only official Suffolk policies



Multilingual Support

Helps in multiple languages

Efficiency and Student Support



Reduces Inquiries

Frees staff for complex needs



Smart Escalation

Guides to right office



Email Templates

Ready-to-send escalation emails

The 6 Core Categories



PRIMARY CATEGORY

1. Residency & DoubleCounting

★ TEAM FOCUS



2. Academic Standing

Probation, warnings, GPA



3. Program of Study

Majors, minors, changes



4. Registration in Workday

Credit requirements



5. Holds in Workday

Advisor, financial, immunization



6. Credit Load & Overload

Full-time, petitions, limits



BONUS CATEGORIES

Classes, Career, Email Templates

How We Built It

1

Identified Questions

Collected real student questions (Del 2)

91 Utterances

2

Created KB Chunks

Structured knowledge base (Del 3)

7 Major Sections

3

Designed Instructions

Instruction set & guardrails (Del 4)

5 Phases

4

Added Extra Features

Classes, emails, career opps

Bonus Categories

5

Deployed & Tested

Uploaded to ChatGPT Plus

 Live




Key Feature 1: Email Escalation Templates

"I have a financial hold on my account that's preventing registration. How do I get this resolved before my window closes tomorrow?"

Ram Advisors: You can get this resolved! Contact Student Financial Services immediately:

 sfs@suffolk.edu  **617-573-8470**

 *Here's a ready-to-send email template...*

To: sfs@suffolk.edu

Subject: Urgent – Financial Hold Blocking Registration

"Dear Student Financial Services, My name is [Name] and I currently have a financial hold preventing registration..."


WHY THIS MATTERS

Students often don't know who to contact or what to say. Our bot provides:

✓ Right Office Identified

✓ Contact Info Provided

✓ Copy-Paste Email Ready

 **Faster resolution, less stress, better communication**

Key Features 2 & 3: Course Help & Career Opportunities



FEATURE 2: Course & Class Guidance

"What are the AI classes at Suffolk?"

Ram Advisors:

Core AI Courses:

- ISOM 260 – AI for Business (intro to ML, business apps)
- ISOM 360 – AI for Business Bots (chatbots, automation)

These are required for the AI Minor/Concentration!



FEATURE 3: Career Opportunities

Bot can help students explore:

- find courses related to the industry they want
- Find job opportunities ideas based on major/minor



BONUS: Multilingual Support

Ram Advisors responds in multiple languages! Example: A student asked about F-1 visa issues in Arabic, and the bot replied with full guidance AND an email template in both Arabic and English.

إيمكنني مساعدتك بالعربية
(I can help you in Arabic!)


Safety, Guardrails & FERPA Compliance

WHAT THE BOT CANNOT DO

- X Access student records, grades, or personal data
- X View transcripts or uploaded screenshots
- X Calculate GPA or predict academic outcomes
- X Make changes to Workday accounts
- X Browse non-Suffolk websites

WHAT THE BOT CAN DO

- ✓ Explain Suffolk policies and procedures
- ✓ Guide students to the correct office
- ✓ Provide email templates for escalation
- ✓ Explain course requirements and majors
- ✓ Answer FAQs about registration, holds, etc.

 **FERPA PROTECTED:** Bot redirects personal record questions to MySuffolk or appropriate office

 **SUFFOLK-ONLY:** Only uses Suffolk.edu and SmartCatalogIQ for policy information

Constraints & Our Learning Process



CONSTRAINTS WE FACED

Technical:

- ChatGPT Plus can't restrict domains → enforced via instructions
- No access to Workday data
- File uploads blocked as guardrail

Policy:

- Some questions need human judgment → we escalate
- KB needs annual updates for accuracy



PROTOTYPE EVOLUTION

Version 1: Basic bot with weak FERPA compliance

→ Learned: needed strict guardrails

Version 2: Added escalation logic

→ Learned: students need contact info AND templates

Version 3: Full guardrails + email templates

→ Current version with all safety features



KEY INSIGHT: Structure = Quality

The more organized our knowledge base, the better the chatbot output. We restructured our KB multiple times to improve response accuracy. Clear categories, consistent formatting, and logical grouping made a huge difference.

What We Learned



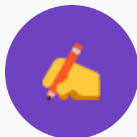
Policy → Knowledge

Translating complex policies into structured, retrievable chunks



Safe AI Design

Building guardrails for student-facing educational AI



Instruction Writing

Writing prompts the model follows reliably



Ambiguity Challenge

Students phrase questions in many different ways



No-Code Tradeoffs

Balancing ease vs control, speed vs customization



Impact & Vision

"This prototype shows the potential for SBS to offer 24/7 advising support to all students."

"Future versions could integrate more categories, interactive workflows, or course planning."

"We built a strong foundation for a scalable advising solution."

Thank You! 🎉