Stanford



Thien Crisanto

Undergraduate Advising Director, Academic Advising Operations

Bio

BIO

Thiên Crisanto (pronounced Tee-en Chris-on-tow) serves as an Undergraduate Advising Director in the Academic Advising Office (VPUE). She brings a unique blend of scientific expertise, creative industry experience, and dedication to student success to her role. Before joining Academic Advising, she supported students as an Academic Coach at Stanford's Center for Teaching and Learning.

Thiên earned her Ph.D. in Plant Biology from UC Berkeley, where she conducted research in microalgal photosynthesis, bioenergetics, and molecular genetics. As an undergraduate, she transferred to Cal Poly Humboldt and majored in Cellular and Molecular Biology with a minor in Botany. There, she researched photosynthetic sea slugs, macroalgae, marine-based solutions for climate change, and bioengineering. Her academic journey began with an A.A. in Merchandise Product Development from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, followed by several years of experience as a designer, costumer, and visual merchandiser.

Her commitment to student success began at Cal Poly Humboldt, where she served as a peer mentor, and continued through multiple roles at UC Berkeley—including facilitating internships and conferences, peer advising, and participating in student government. This foundation has evolved into a career centered on supporting student persistence, resilience, and academic development. Over the years, she has helped students successfully secure internships, gain admission to Ph.D. and medical school programs, and launch meaningful careers.

In addition to academic advising, Thiên is especially passionate about supporting Stanford students who are navigating anxiety related to high achievement, exploring their goals, and facing academic challenges, particularly in rigorous STEM fields. Having taken a nontraditional path herself, she is deeply committed to normalizing the wide range of experiences students bring to college and helping students access opportunities that may initially feel out of reach.

Outside of work, Thiên can be found enjoying her many hobbies, which include paddling along the California coast, camping with her animals, composing music, practicing yoga, long-distance roller skating, or sewing whimsical costumes. A Southern California native, she has lived in four different regions of the state; her favorite being the far Northern Coast. She dedicates her volunteer time to ocean-health initiatives and to programs that expand access to surfing opportunities.

Thiên is fluent in Vietnamese.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Associate of Arts, Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising , Merchandise Product Development
- Transfer, Cuesta College
- Bachelor of Science, California Polytechnic Humboldt , Cellular and Molecular Biology, Minor in Botany
- Doctor of Philosophy, University of California, Berkeley , Plant and Microbial Biology