



Chantel, a senior, Plan: Attorney



Meet Chantel. Chantel is a senior and has lived in Cedar Rapids her entire life. While her mother struggles financially and works long hours, she has been Chantel’s guiding light and strongest advocate and has found ways to provide for Chantel and her two younger brothers without impeding too much on Chantel. Chantel joined LBA (Leaders, Believers, Achievers) as a 6th grader and, once she was introduced to the idea of a purpose, found herself. Chantel was a 4.0 learner at her traditional high school and filled her schedule with AP courses her freshman and sophomore years. She and her mother recognized that Chantel was ready for a school like City View and is entering her second year here.

Chantel is highly engaged in local politics and in civil rights issues and wants to go to college to study political science and become a civil rights attorney. Chantel is warm and kind and has zero tolerance for people who bully and dehumanize others. She will be the first to speak up and will do so passionately. While she has friends at school, Chantel minimizes her time with them outside of school because they often want to engage in things that are not in line with her values and her purpose. When people first meet Chantel, they often mistake her for a woman in her early 20’s.

Last year Chantel was engaged in a project around Community Gun Violence and wants to stay on that team this year to step up and be more of a leader. Chantel needs to focus on scholarships and getting as much financial aid as possible as well as real experience working in and around law offices, observing live trials, and connecting with civil rights attorneys from across the country to build her network and ensure she knows exactly what this work entails.

Chantel’s “Week in the Life” Example:

It's mid January and all the traditional schools and colleges have wrapped up their first semester. Chantel received 9 college credits last semester through Kirkwood Community College. She is preparing for some Coe College classes and only has a few more high school standards to wrap up.

Monday:

Chantel arrives a bit before 8:20 and takes her place among the learners to begin her day. Each day begins in community and is led by learners. Seniors Micheala Ford and Josh Winter call the group to order.

"This week's focus is on the value of responsibility," says Micheala. "For those of us engaged in traditional virtual or dual enrollment courses, this is the week to get those started so owning that and getting off to a good start is important."

"With a few people around you, please share how you've grown in the area of responsibility and what your focus will be over the next several weeks in regard to responsibility."

Chantel listens intently and respectfully to her group members. One freshman, Bodie, is complaining about being treated unfairly in an online course where he received a D and wished the teacher would have taken responsibility for helping him more. "Bodie, tell me about what you did to get the help and clarity you needed to be successful," Chantel asks.

"I logged in every day and listened to all the lessons! She never reached out when she saw I wasn't doing well!"

"OK. So, this semester, what can you do to take on more responsibility for being successful instead of leaving it in the control of others?," Chantel asks him.

"Ugh!!! So it's really up to me to ask for help and make sure I understand?! Isn't that the teacher's job!?" asks Bodie.

"Yes, and the teacher can't always know when you need help and what kind of help you need. That's the whole point of this value of responsibility. The more you own and take responsibility for, the more control you'll have over your own results. I think maybe you just need to step up."

"That sucks," says Bodie. "How am I supposed to do that?"

"Start simple, Bodie. As soon as you feel lost or don't understand, immediately reach out to the teacher or one of the learners here and ask for help. Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness. The longer you stay quiet and wait, the harder it's going to be to dig yourself out."

When it comes to Chantel's turn she says, "I feel like I'm getting closer and closer to living in State 5 (on the values rubric)- Professional Performance. I almost always catch myself when I'm

about to blame or throw shade on someone else. I was scared about college courses last semester but decided to own it. I had to ask a lot of questions but things went well. I also took on leadership of my project team “CR Gun Violence” and that was a whole new level of responsibility. Moving forward, I’ve got to stay on top of the college applications and scholarships I’ve got out. I need to be able to make a choice in the next few months.”

As the Community gathering ends, Chantel catches up with Al, the counselor and leadership coach, for a scheduled 9:15 meeting. Chantel confirms that she is enrolled in the Coe College courses “History of Political Parties in the United States” and “Introduction to Politics” which both begin on Wednesday. Al and Chantel review the city bus schedule and her work at school to ensure she can make all the transitions. She shares with Al that on Friday she received her scholarship offer from Iowa - full paid tuition - meaning she only had to worry about room, board, and books. “Congratulations! So, what are you thinking?” asks Al.

“It feels good to have that in my back pocket but, as you know, my dream school is the University of Chicago and they were supposed to have a decision for me this week.”

Chantel leaves the meeting and goes to the quiet area to find a small table to work at until the structured break in 30 minutes. Chantel texts a few friends and her Mom and then reviews her calendar for the week.

For structured break Chantel chooses meditation. She has been trying to get into the practice for the last few months and feels like regularly using structured break for meditation may help her build a habit.

After structured break Chantel meets with the science teacher, Shawn. Chantel has met all of her Iowa Core Standards except for two physics standards. Rather than look for a Discovery that covers them, Shawn has agreed to do some 1:1 with her to help her finish the last two standards up. They visit and discuss the standards and what they mean and Shawn finishes by giving Chantel a couple of things to do and research. They set a meeting for next week to review.

Chantel has 90 minutes before her CR Gun Violence Team Meeting at 12:30 so she jumps in her car, which her Mom let her use today, to grab a few groceries for the family. After dropping them off at home, Chantel is back in time for her team meeting.

Her team is meeting with Dedric Doolin, the head of the local NAACP, this afternoon. The team has been interviewing and meeting with influential leaders in the community who care about this issue and are engaged in helping find a solution. She and her team have prepared their questions and the interview goes well. Dedric and the team have a spirited and engaging conversation and her team learns a lot. After thanking Dedric for his time, the team takes a quick break and comes back to discuss and synthesize the conversation. The team has been mapping and charting these various interviews looking for similarities and differences in viewpoints, perspectives, and proposed solutions. In two weeks they are scheduled to meet with

the city's Gun Violence Task Force, of which they are members, to discuss their work and try to help the Task Force identify their own strengths and areas of conflict and barrier. Their sponsoring teacher, Becky, really helps Chantel today. Chantel has to redirect her team several times and work through some very personal and emotional issues that resulted from what they heard from Dedric and the others they'd talked to. She learns a lot about managing conflict and emotional situations and she and Becky debrief that after the team meeting. She feels the team is in a good place and Becky agrees.

It is already 2:45 so Chantel goes back to the main room for the end-of-the-day wrap-up. Al announces that everyone needs to be here and ready to go at 8:30 Wednesday because a special event is planned. Chantel wondered what that could be about. After the meeting, Chantel heads home. She needs to review her Community session tomorrow and get familiar with the college course syllabi.

Tuesday:

Chantel and fellow senior, Blake, are leading today's community session. Tuesday's are project sharing and update day. Chantel calls the group to order and welcomes the "Lawless Birdwatchers" to the stage to update the school on their project. Chantel and Blake ask a few questions at the end and then welcome the last group, "The Catbarn" project. At the end, Blake announces the two projects who will be presenting next Tuesday.

Chantel now has some time before the meditation session. She takes the elevator down to the main floor and walks over to The Bluebird Cafe. She grabs a coffee using a City View HSt voucher provided by a local sponsoring organization and grabs a seat where she works on the physics assignment Shawn had given her the day before.

After her meditation session, Chantel heads to the city bus depot. She wants to do a trial run to Coe and make sure she knows what building and classroom she needs to go to tomorrow. She is a bit nervous as this was going to be a very new experience. She finds her room and happens into one of her professors. They chat for a bit and then Chantel takes the city bus to her neighborhood and walks home from the stop. Her little brother is ill today and her Mom had to go to work at 1:00 so Chantel returned home to care for him.

Wednesday:

Chantel arrives earlier than usual this morning. It was odd because her mother got dressed up this morning and gave her a ride to school. Her Mom apparently has a job interview. Chantel wishes her well as she jumps out of the car.

When she walks into the room she sees a big spread of bagels, fruit, juice and coffee in the back of the room. "Wow," she thinks, "Something pretty important is happening at this morning's

celebration.” She grabs a seat near the window and stares out at the Cedar River while she waits for things to start.

“Good morning everyone!” says the principal, Dan. “Good morning!” everyone replies.

“Today is a very special day as we have a very important announcement to make and a celebration to have. Today’s session will run about 45 minutes instead of 15. As you know, this is the season where our seniors begin to declare their after high school plans. Today we have our first senior to celebrate.”

Chantel perks up. She wonders who it might be.

“I’d like you to give a warm welcome (which is always a boisterous standing ovation) to Dr. Mary Hernandez, the Vice President of Enrollment at the University of Chicago.” Chantel sits up. “What!?!” she thinks. As Dr. Hernandez approaches the podium, she catches sight of some people coming out of a nearby conference room. She looks over to see her Mom, her two brothers and her Uncle Cedric and Aunt Judith from Chicago walk in.

“Good morning!” says Dr. Hernandez. “What a fantastic and warm welcome! Wow, that makes a person feel pretty good! I’m thrilled to be here today to share some exciting news with all of you and, especially, one person. Due to her outstanding academic record, her amazing leadership on her projects and in this school, I am honored to announce that Ms. Chantel Smith is being offered a 100% full ride to the University of Chicago!”

The room erupts and the learners jump to their feet and look to Chantel. Chantel is dumbstruck and tears start rolling down her cheeks as she walks to the podium to greet Dr. Hernandez and her family, who have now assembled at the front of the room.

“Chantel, here is your offer and we hope that you decide to join the University of Chicago family next fall. This scholarship is for all four years and is for 100% of your tuition, books, room and board. You are receiving 1 of only 3 scholarships like this we give out each year.” The room again erupts in applause and cheers.

Chantel shakes Dr. Hernandez’ hand and runs to her Mom to give her a huge hug. Her brothers and Aunt and Uncle join in a group hug. After a few moments, Chantel is able to compose herself and steps to the podium. “Wow. I’m speechless. . . Dr. Hernandez, I accept your offer!” The room explodes in applause again. “Thank-you. I won’t let you down.”

“Congratulations, Chantel!” Dan says. “We are so very proud of you! Now it’s time to celebrate! Everyone, please grab a little breakfast and let’s celebrate Chantel!”

Everyone rushes to congratulate and hug Chantel and Chantel and her family enjoy the celebration. At about 10:30 Chantel realizes she needs to head to Coe for her 11:00 am class. “No

bus today, Chantel,” says her Uncle Cedric. “I’ll take you to Coe and, at 1:00, when you’re done, we’re all taking you out for a late lunch.”

Thursday

While Chantel has no real obligations this morning, she goes instead to hear this morning’s learner stories and just be in the space with her teachers and classmates. She spends the morning talking to staff and thanking them for everything they’ve done for her, does her meditation, and spends some time daydreaming about her new life in Chicago before heading to her job shadow with the Assistant District Attorney.

Friday

This morning Chantel works on a few things for her online courses and then gets ready and takes the bus to Coe for her classes. After her Coe classes she returns home drained from a big week. Binge watching Netflix tonight seems appropriate.

Chantel’s Semester Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Community	Community	Community	Community	History of Political Parties - Coe
History of Political Parties -Coe	Online Coursework	History of Political Parties - Coe	Online Coursework	
Intro to Politics - Coe	Online Coursework	Intro to Politics - Coe	Online Coursework	Intro to Politics - Coe
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
Cedar Rapids Gun Violence Project Team	Meet w/Shawn re: Science	Cedar Rapids Gun Violence Project Team	Meet w/Shawn re: Science	
	Job Shadow: Ass’t District Attorney		Job Shadow: Ass’t District Attorney	