

Effective Graduate Mentoring

**Office of Faculty Affairs
and Development**

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Today's Agenda:

- Enhanced Definition of Mentoring
- Dangers to Healthy Mentoring Relationships
- Goal-Setting in Mentoring
- Mentoring Contracts
- Mentoring Networks
- Four Goals for Mentors



What
is
Mentoring?

Simple Definition of Mentoring

- A working relationship in which an individual with valuable knowledge and experience shares expertise, advice, and support

Enhanced Definition of Mentoring

- A reciprocal partnership in which an individual with valuable knowledge and experience shares expertise, advice, and support toward the achievement of specific and individualized goals



Reciprocation vs. Survivor Bias and Maladapted Mentoring

- **Survivor bias:** skewed focus on successful cases within a particular context
- **Maladapted mentoring:** mentoring concepts/practices often adapted from personal experience (as a graduate student and/or mentee) that a mentor tends to rely on regardless of situation/student



Credits: Barr, “#1 Unseen Failures;” Graham, “Mentors, Beware Survivorship Bias;” Hemprich-Bennett, et al., “Beware survivorship bias in advice on science careers”

Reciprocation vs. Survivor Bias and Maladapted Mentoring

- **Reciprocation:** acknowledging that mentoring involves mutual investment and give-and-take as part of a sustainable relationship
- **Continually adaptive mentoring:** Learning from your mentees, your colleagues, relevant literature, and your continuing experience as a mentor - testing and trying new approaches and adapting along the way



Planning Metagoals, Goals, and Incremental Goals

- **What are the mentee's goals?**
- **What are your goals?**
- **What are the observable results of these goals?**
- **What are the incremental steps toward these goals?**
- **How will we evaluate these goals?**
- **How will we keep ourselves accountable?**
- **How will we celebrate success?**



Credit: Katherine Stewart, katherinestewartconsulting.com

Mentoring **partnerships** benefit from formal agreements

- **Written document (often from template) that identifies mutual responsibilities, preferences, expectations**
- **Similar but more comprehensive than lab agreements**
- **Mentoring contract vs. mentoring agreement vs. mentoring plan**
- **Four major categories (needs/resources, roles, goals/milestones, required activities)**
- **Best created early in the mentoring relationship**
- **Can be rewritten/adjusted along the way (by mutual agreement)**



Mentoring partnerships networks and needs

1. Getting the Mentoring You Need

- a. A mentoring network includes academic (for example, advising, research, substantive feedback), professional (career guidance, intellectual community), and well-being (personal and emotional) support. Which of these areas will we work on together?

- b. Are there additional resources and support that would help you do your best work (needs such as physical access, workspace accommodations, work hours, language and technology, well-being breaks, dietary needs, etcetera)?

Credits: University of Michigan, Mentoring Others Results in Excellence (MORE) Program



Mentoring partnerships communication expectations

2. Communication

- a. What is the best way/technology to get hold of each other? What is the appropriate timeframe to expect a response?

- b. When will we meet, is an agenda required, how long will the meeting be?



Credits: University of Michigan, Mentoring Others Results in Excellence (MORE) Program

Mentoring partnerships required activities

3. Student's Role on Project

Describe student's primary area(s) of responsibility and expectations (for example, reading peer-reviewed literature, in-lab working hours).

4. Participation in Group Meetings (if relevant)

Student will participate in the following ongoing research group meetings. What does this participation look like?



Credits: University of Michigan, Mentoring Others Results in Excellence (MORE) Program

Mentoring partnerships goals and milestones

11. Completion of Programmatic and Other Milestones (as applicable)

Milestones	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5			Year 6			
	F	W	S	F	W	S	F	W	S	F	W	S	F	W	S	F	W	S	
Qualifying Exam																			
Preliminary Exam																			
Candidacy Exam																			
Dissert. Comm. Mtg.																			

Credits: University of Michigan, Mentoring Others Results in Excellence (MORE) Program



Consultative Mentoring Networks

- One mentor cannot be all things to all mentees
- Build a network of peers (including former students) that can advise you and/or your mentees on specific topics
- Areas may include needs based on identity and situation in addition to particular skills or tasks
- Normalize collaboration and seeking of expertise



Credit: Katherine Stewart, katherinestewartconsulting.com

Other Takeaways from the Mentoring Literature

- Reduce fear
- Normalize difficulty and cultivate a growth mindset
- Express confidence in mentees
- Create opportunities and spaces for difficult conversations



Credits: Julie Posselt, "Normalizing Struggle"

Questions and
Comments?