Optimizing Your Mentoring Relationships:

Getting Off to a Good Start

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Goals

- Provide a <u>conceptual framework</u> to support your thinking about mentorship and mentoring relationships.

- Create awareness of <u>national conversations</u> about the science and practice of mentorship.

- Provide tools to support the <u>alignment of expectations</u> among mentors and mentees.

- Encourage movement from mentoring relationships to mentoring networks.

Conceptual Framework

Mentors Play A Number of Roles

- **Advising** - Providing general advice about adherence to rules and/or standards that apply for <u>any mentee</u> in a particular educational program

- **Mentoring** is a significantly deeper relationship, one in which the mentor and mentee commit to meaningful and honest sharing to support a <u>particular individual</u>. The sharing allows the mentor to develop a multifaceted personal understanding of the mentee and provide committed assistance in order that the mentee progresses toward achieving his or her academic professional

- **Sponsoring** involves <u>promoting protégés directly</u>, using influence and networks to connect them to high-profile assignments, people, pay increases and promotions.

- **Supervising** involves supplying the <u>oversight, resources and feedback</u> to an individual that has been hired (or volunteers for) a formal role in an organization.

Effective mentorship is critical to …

- **Enhanced science identity, sense of belonging, and self-efficacy**
  (Palepu *et al*, 1998; Garman *et al*, 2001; Paglis *et al*, 2006; Lopatto, 2007; Bland *et al*, 2009; Feldman *et al*, 2010; Cho *et al*, 2011; Chemers *et al*, 2011; Thiry and Laursen, 2011)

- **Persistence**
  (Gloria *et al*, 2001; Solorzano, 1993; McGee and Keller, 2007; Sambunjak *et al*, 2010; Williams *et al*, 2015; Bordes-Edgar *et al*, 2011; Campbell and Campbell, 1997)

- **Research productivity**
  (Steiner and Lanphear, 2002, 2007; Wingard *et al*, 2004)

- **Higher career satisfaction**
  (Schapira *et al*, 1992; Beech *et al*, 2013)

- **Enhanced recruitment of URMs**
  (Hathaway *et al*, 2002; Nagda *et al*, 1998

Research Mentoring Relationship → Mentee Self-Perceptions → Positive Outcomes

Faculty, academic staff, postdocs, graduate students and undergraduate researchers each have a role to play in optimizing mentoring relationships.

MENTOR ← Faculty

MENTOR/ MENTEE ← Jr Faculty/ Post-docs/ Graduate Students

MENTEE ← Undergraduate Researchers
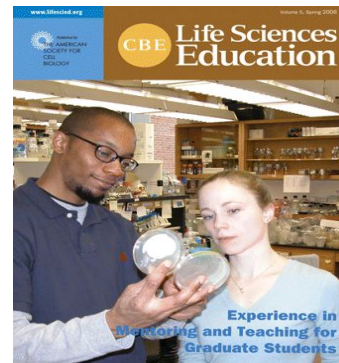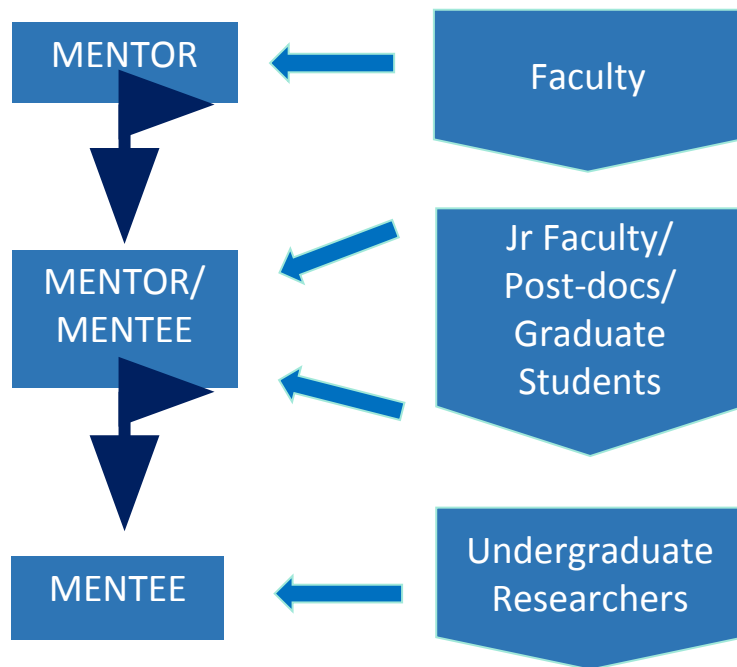
Mentoring Teams: Informal Mentors; Near Peer Mentors; Peer Mentors; Career Coaches; Others

National Conversation

A National Focus on Mentoring

- National Academies of Science
- National Institutes of Health
- National Science Foundation
- Sloan Foundation
- Howard Hughes Medical Institute & Burroughs Wellcome Fund

A National Focus on Mentoring

The Science of Effective Mentorship: A Consensus Study (National Academies)

A final report of a consensus study identifying evidence (or lack thereof) of successful programs and practices for mentoring individuals in STEMM fields

An online interactive guide of effective programs and practices that can be adopted and adapted by institutions, departments, and individual faculty members

Available October 2019

http://nationalacademies.org/mentoring

NAS Study Director Maria Dahlberg

What questions or topics are most pressing for you and your colleagues?

Alignment of Expectations**

** One of the most important things you can do to get off to a good start.

Questions:

- Align expectations about what?
- Impact of diverse perspectives on aligning expectation?
- Does alignment mean agreement?
- Do differences in expectations mean a relationship won't work?

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The HOW of Mentoring

COMMUNICATION

- [ ] Through what channel? (e-mail, text, cell, other)
- [ ] Response time
- [ ] Days / times of day available
- [ ] To what degree is the content confidential?
- [ ] Handling disagreement or conflict
- [ ] Meetings - frequency and length
- [ ] Meetings (in-person, Skype, Zoom, other)
- [ ] Meeting preparation (expectations for mentor/mentee)
- [ ] Meetings - How goal oriented should they be?
- [ ] If one of us needs to cancel, what should we do?
- [ ] How should we follow-up on meetings (e.g., summarize advice given/taken, information promised, support offered)
- [ ] Other

The WHAT of Mentoring

Mentors:
To what degree are you comfortable providing support to your mentee in each of these domains of expertise? On what topics is your time with the mentee best used?

Mentees:
What are your greatest needs for professional development? On what topics is your time with your mentor best used?

The goal is NOT to achieve a "match", the goal is to create a plan to make sure the mentee gets the support they need (either directly from the mentor or from another person). Recognizing this takes pressure off of that relationship and promotes an expanded network for the mentee.

Doing the Research

- [ ] Methods & Technical Skills
- [ ] Data analysis
- [ ] Research integrity & ethics

Progressing In Research

- [ ] Career options
- [ ] Job opportunities
- [ ] Leadership roles in professional Societies

Other

- [ ] Managing difficult conversations
- [ ] Managing expectations
- [ ] Written communication
- [ ] Public speaking
- [ ] Work Life balance

General Tips

Mentors

- Be honest about what you can and cannot do - you don't have to be everything to every mentee (and cannot!).

- Work with colleagues to share mentoring responsibilities and skills.

- Design structured peer

Mentoring Relationships > Mentoring Networks

Why?

- Diversity of perspectives
- Shared responsibility
- Interdisciplinary connections
- Cross-institutional partnerships

Questions?

Upcoming Graduate School Workshops

**Developing Conflict Management and Communication Skills
in Research Teams**

September 20, MSU Union

- This is an interactive workshop that teaches communication skills and how to use them to set expectations jointly following an interest-based approach of negotiating. The workshop is free and open to all graduate students, postdocs and faculty, but registration is required. Registration is available at https://grad.msu.edu/events/developing-conflict-management-and-communication-skills-research-teams.

Upcoming Graduate School Workshops

Optimizing Mentoring Relationships to Promote Diversity and Research Excellence

September 27, 110 Chittenden Hall

- The Graduate School and Postdoctoral Office at MSU invite graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to gather for an extended workshop about how to optimize their research mentoring relationships. More information and registration is available at https://grad.msu.edu/events/optimizing-mentoring-relationships-promote-diversity-and-research-excellence-1

Upcoming Graduate School Workshops

Optimizing mentoring relationships by aligning expectations:
A workshop for faculty, postdocs and graduate students.

November 8, 2019, MSU Union

- The goal of this workshop is to provide a structured forum for important discussions about the role that **both faculty and graduate students/Postdocs** play in optimizing mentoring relationships in the research context. The workshop will be divided into both plenary and breakout sessions, allowing faculty and graduate students/Postdocs to have conversations about opportunities and challenges together, as well in separate venues (as cohorts). More information and registration is available at https://grad.msu.edu/events/optimizing-mentoring-relationships-aligning-expectations-workshop-faculty-postdocs-and

The advisor should determine how often and when to meet with the student.	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide how often and when to meet with the advisor.
Faculty-student relationships are purely professional and personal matters are not appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5	Close personal relationships are essential for successful advising.
The advisor should check regularly that the student is working consistently and on task.	1 2 3 4 5	Students should work independently without having to account for how they spend their time.
The advisor should be the first place to turn when the student has problems with the research project.	1 2 3 4 5	Students should try to resolve problems on their own, including seeking input from others, before bringing a research problem to the advisor.
The advisor is responsible for providing emotional support and encouragement to the student.	1 2 3 4 5	Emotional support and encouragement are not the responsibility of the advisor – students should look elsewhere.

The advisor is responsible for finding funding for the student until the student graduates.	1 2 3 4 5	Students are responsible for finding their own sources of funding.
The advisor is responsible for introducing the student to others in the field, especially at conferences.	1 2 3 4 5	Students are responsible for building their networks in the field.
The advisor is responsible for providing career advice and preparation to the student.	1 2 3 4 5	Career advice and preparation are not the responsibility of the advisor – students should look elsewhere.

Domain	Description
Research	Knowledge of scholar about current developments in research area
	Technical skills of scholar in research methods and procedures
	Research productivity of scholar (e.g., conference abstracts, publications, grant
	Progress of scholar toward research independence
	Responsible conduct of research by scholar and mentor
Education	Didactic activities (e.g., coursework, seminars, workshops) of scholar to fill gap
	Other educational activities to facilitate the scholar's professional growth and c
Professional development/ career advancement	Skills development of scholar (critical thinking, creativity, writing, speaking, revi managing time and projects, teaching, mentoring, leading teams, working with
	Academic promotion of scholar (understanding and meeting promotion requir
	Networking by mentor on scholar's behalf
	Skills development of scholar in the conduct of team science
	Maintaining appropriate work-life balance of scholar
	Supporting of scholar's exploration of different career pathways
	Socializing the scholar to institutional culture (e.g., structures, processes, interp
	Identifying a process for ending the research mentoring relationship while con scholar professionally as needed
Support	Allocation of scholar's effort to research vs. nonresearch activities
	Support provided by mentor for scholar's research (e.g., space, equipment, sup
	Facilitated access of scholar to experts, training opportunities, key committees
	Opportunities to develop and work on multidisciplinary team projects
	Attendance of mentor at scholar's presentations
	Advocacy on behalf of scholar
	Emotional support of scholar
Communication	Frequency of meetings with mentor, mentorship team, and program leadership
	Topics to be addressed at meetings, information to be prepared in advance of
	Completion of progress reports by scholar and mentor for program director an
	Coordinating input from multiple mentors and research team members
	Constructive critique and feedback (offered by mentor; asked for, reflected on, lowed up on by both mentor and scholar)
	"Ground rules" for communication (e.g., openness, truthfulness, confidentiality
Personal conduct/ interpersonal relations	Ethical/professional conduct by both scholar and mentor
	Understanding and respect for diversity by both scholar and mentor
	Strategies for managing conflicts in the mentoring relationship
	Appropriate acknowledgement of one another's contributions to shared projec

CTSA, Clinical and Translational Science Award; KL2, mentored clinical/translational research career development program.

[a]Drawn from review of the AAMC' "Compact Between Postdoctoral Appointees and Their Mentors"[10] and mentoring contracts or agreemen grams (with permission): Columbia University; Mayo Clinic; University of Alabama at Birmingham; University of California at Davis; Univers Carolina; University of Rochester; Vanderbilt University.

Table 3. Types of expectations included in mentoring contracts and agreements.[a]