

Optimizing Mentoring Relationships by Aligning Expectations

A Workshop for Faculty, Postdocs and Graduate Students

November 8, 2019





Participant Goals

- Articulate the role that graduate students, postdocs & faculty have to play in promoting inclusive mentoring relationships;
- Recognize the important role that proactive approaches to aligning expectations can play in trainee success;
- Identify domains of expectations within which misalignment of expectations often occur;
- Utilize & adapt tools for aligning expectations among graduate students, postdocs & faculty
- Describe the findings (and implementation tools) from the 2019 National Academies Report, “Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM”



Welcome

- Thomas Jeitschko, Associate Provost & Graduate Dean
- Your Facilitation Team
 - Judi Brown Clarke (Natural Science/BEACON Project)
 - Katy Colbry (Engineering)
 - Rebecca Grummet (Agriculture & Natural Resources)
 - Melissa McDaniels (Graduate School)
 - Tony Nunez (Graduate School / Social Science)
 - Judith Stoddart (Graduate School / Provost / Arts & Letters)
 - Danielle Zoellner (Natural Science / Kellogg Biological Station)



Structure of the Day

10:00AM - 10:15AM	Welcome & Overview	Plenary (tables)
10:15AM - 11:45AM	Expectations, Stumbling Blocks and Strategies to Align Them	Breakouts (tables)
11:45 - 12:15	LUNCH	Plenary (tables)
12:15 - 1:30	Aligning Expectations in (Disciplinary) Context	Plenary (tables)
1:30 - 2:00	Next Steps & Resources (National Academies Report on Mentorship)	Plenary (tables)



Mentorship: A Definition (NAS, 2019)

Mentorship is a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of the relational partners through the provision of career and psychosocial support.



Core Elements of Effective Mentoring Relationships

- Trust
- Self-Reflection
 - Trainee - What do I want to get out of this relationship?
 - Mentor - What do I want to provide and how should I provide it?
- Alignment of Expectations
- Education (Mentoring is a skill you can learn and teach)



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Expectations, Stumbling Blocks and Strategies for Aligning Them (breakouts)





Breakout Session Goals

- Start to identify key areas around which mentor/mentee expectations might be misaligned
- Understand that there are no “right” answers, but that these are areas of conversation that need to be discussed and also revisited over time
- Identify some other areas where mentor/mentee expectations might impact the relationship and where assumptions/expectations could be discussed



Breakout Room Assignments

- Sunporch:
 - Participants: Graduate Students & Postdocs
 - Facilitators: Judith Stoddart, Danielle Zoellner, Katy Colbry
- Ballroom:
 - Participants: Faculty
 - Facilitators: Tony Nunez, Judi Brown Clarke, Rebecca Grumet



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Two activities:

- Graduate Student-Advisor Expectation Worksheet

(10:15 - 11:15)

- Case Study

(11:15 - 11:45)



Activity #1: Graduate Student-Advisor Expectation Scale

Student-Advisor Expectation Scales

Read each of pair of statements describing end points on a continuum. Estimate your position and mark it on the scale. For example, if you believe very strongly that it is the advisor's responsibility to select a research topic for the student, on scale #1 you should circle '1'. If you think that both the advisor and student should be equally involved, circle '3'.

The other side of this document describes ways to use this worksheet.

Course of Study & Dissertation Planning

1. The advisor should suggest and approve which courses the student takes.	1 2 3 4 5	Students should solely determine which courses they take.
2. It is the advisor's responsibility to select a promising dissertation research topic.	1 2 3 4 5	The student is solely responsible for selecting the dissertation topic.
3. The advisor should select the other members of the dissertation reading committee.	1 2 3 4 5	The student should select the members of the dissertation reading committee.



Instructions

Expectations scale worksheet is just one tool for identifying expectations for mentoring relationships / interactions.

1. Complete the entire worksheet on your own (4-5 minutes)
2. Talk to your neighbor (5-6 minutes):
 - a. What are similarities and differences among your responses?



Instructions (continued)

Expectations scale worksheet is just one tool for identifying expectations for mentoring relationships / interactions.

- Let's do a room census:
 - Look at your responses to #4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16 - go up to the poster and put a dot along the scale

ITEM #	1	2	3	4	5
4					



Instructions (continued)

Discussion:

- What do you notice about our census results? What patterns do you see?
- Let's look at our responses to a few of those questions:
 - We see differences
 - What assumptions underlie those differences?
 - What conclusions might be drawn?

Activity #2: Case Study



Dr. Smith has welcomed a second-year graduate student, Pat, onto her research team. Pat recently started working with Dr. Smith after transitioning from another research team in the department. While Pat's initial progress has been good and always makes Dr. Smith's scheduled meetings, Dr. Smith is bothered that she seldom sees Pat in the office. When Dr. Smith asks Pat about it he explains that he is a single parent with two young children. He doesn't have family nearby to help with childcare, and given his school debt, can't afford full-time help. Thus, he often works from home and after the kids are in bed at night. Dr. Smith says nothing more at this time, but feels uncomfortable that she doesn't have the opportunity for more informal contact and supervision, and doesn't have any experience working with someone in this situation. Dr. Smith wonders if she needs to have a talk with Pat or if she is being overly concerned about something that is not really an issue and should wait to see how things play out.



Case Study (continued)

Table Conversation (identify a note-taker and someone to report out):

- What expectations on the part of both Dr. Smith and Pat could be at play?
- To what extent do you expect your [Faculty or GS/PD] to be flexible in their professional expectations?
- To what extent do you alter your expectations to accommodate their needs/preferences?



Case Study (continued)

Large Group Discussion

- Table Conversation Reports
- What are 3 concrete strategies to:
 - Prevent this situation from arising;
 - Address this situation now



LUNCH (11:45-12:15)



- Go get lunch then sit at your assigned table.
- Table assignments:
 - Tables have been assigned to cluster (generally) participants by broad disciplinary / college areas.
 - Attempt to not have GS/PD & Faculty from same department at same table.
- Sample Mentoring Compacts
 - Casually examine
 - Have you ever used a written compact?
 - Affordances and constraints?
 - How could you modify?



ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS IN CONTEXT (12:15-1:30)





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Case Study

Small Group

- Identify recorder and reporter
- What are 3 concrete strategies to:
 - Prevent this situation from arising;
 - Address this situation now



Challenges to Discussing Expectations

- What gets in the way of having conversations about expectations?
- How can you ameliorate these challenges?
- What can individuals and departments do to promote having conversations about expectations?



The Big Reveal



Graduate Student-Advisor Expectation Scale



- What do you observe?
- Table Discussion (identify note-taker and person to report out)
 - What do you observe?
 - What might account for similarities and differences that you see?
 - When there are differences, what approach can be taken to talk about those differences.
 - How could a tool like this be modified (added to, edited) to make it relevant for your discipline?
 - What other strategies have you used to prompt conversations about different types of expectations?



Next Steps & Resources



CONSENSUS STUDY REPORT

The Science of **Effective Mentorship** in STEMM



THE SCIENCE OF EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP IN STEMM

ONLINE GUIDE V1.0

[Overview ▾](#)[Mentorship Defined ▾](#)[Program Development and Management ▾](#)[Actions and Tools ▾](#)

Mentorship is essential in developing science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine (STEMM) professionals. It is a set of skills that can and should be learned, practiced, and improved upon with self-reflection and feedback. If you are a mentor or mentee yourself, or if you are a leader in your organization responsible for ensuring that your faculty and their mentees have the skills to engage in the most effective mentoring relationships, this website is for you.

Throughout this website, you can find:

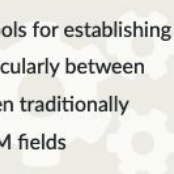
RESOURCES

Help develop and maintain strong and effective mentorship education initiatives in STEMM



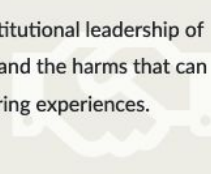
MENTORING TOOLS

Successful mentorship programs and tools for establishing strong mentoring relationships, particularly between faculty and students who have been traditionally underrepresented in STEMM fields



INFORMATION

Convince STEMM faculty and institutional leadership of the value of effective mentorship and the harms that can result from negative mentoring experiences.





Core Elements of Effective Mentoring Relationships

- Trust
- Self-Reflection
- Expectations
- Mentorship Education

Report Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Adopt an Operational Definition of Mentorship in STEMM



Recommendation 2: Use an Evidenced-Based Approach to Support Mentorship



Recommendation 3: Establish and Use Structured Feedback Systems to Improve Mentorship at All Levels



Recommendation 4: Recognize and Respond to Identities in Mentorship



Recommendation 5 Support Multiple Mentorship Structures



Recommendation 6: Reward Effective Mentorship



Recommendation 7: Mitigate Negative Mentorship Experiences



Recommendation 8: Recommendations for Funding Agencies that Support Mentorship



Recommendation 9: Recommendations to Scholars of Mentorship





How might we (collectively) raise awareness about these recommendations?

- Existing:
 - Mentorship Education (mentoring & mentoring-up)
 - Faculty Learning Community
 - Department and College-Specific Training
- Other Ideas?



What are your individual next steps for aligning expectations in your mentoring relationships?



Evaluation

