

STEP-AHEAD MENTORING PROGRAM GUIDE CONTENTS

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PREPARATION: MENTORS

EXPECTATIONS

Use this checklist to develop an understanding of what you, as a mentor, expect to gain from your mentoring relationship. By clarifying your own expectations, you will be able to communicate and work more effectively with your mentee. Add items you deem important.

The reasons I want to be a mentor are to:

- Encourage and support a student in my field
 Establish close, professional relationships
 Challenge myself to new goals
 Pass on knowledge
 Create a network of talented people
 Other _____

The things I feel are off-limits in my mentoring relationship include:

- Disclosing our conversations to others
 Sharing intimate aspects of our lives
 Other _____

I will help my student with new opportunities by:

- Finding job or internship possibilities in my department, center, or lab
 Introducing my student to people who might be interested in working with them
 Helping my student practice for job interviews
 Suggesting potential networking contacts to pursue
 Teaching them about networking
 Critiquing their resume or curriculum vita
 Other _____

The amount of time I will spend with my student will be, on average: 1 2 3 4 hours every week/other week/per month (circle one)

Feel free to share with you mentee!

SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Begin by thinking about your days as a student and the mentoring you did or did not receive:

- What kind of mentoring did you have?
- If you did not have a mentor or several mentors, what aspects of school were difficult for you? How did you cope with them?
- How did/would a mentor (or several mentors) have contributed to your own productivity and satisfaction during your experience?
- What did you like and dislike about the mentoring you received?
- How well did your mentors prepare you for your career?
- Are you still in contact with any of your former mentors? In what way(s)?
- What could your mentor(s) have done differently to be more effective?

Adapted from: Brainard, S.G., Harkus, D.A., and George, M.R. (1998), A curriculum for training mentors and mentees: Guide for administrators. Seattle, WA: Women in Engineering Initiative, WEPAN Western Regional Center, University of Washington.

Questions adapted from: https://case.edu/facultydevelopment/sites/case.edu/facultydevelopment/files/2020-02/Guidebook_for_Mentors_and_Mentees.pdf

PREPARATION: MENTEES

EXPECTATIONS

Use this worksheet to develop an understanding of what you, as a student, expect to gain from your mentoring relationships. By clarifying your own expectations, you will be able to communicate them more effectively to your mentors. Add items you deem important.

The reasons I want a mentor are to:

- Receive encouragement and support
- Increase my confidence when dealing with professionals
- Challenge myself to achieve new goals and explore alternatives
- Gain a realistic perspective of the workplace
- Get advice on how to balance work and other responsibilities, and to set priorities
- Gain knowledge of the "do's and don't's" in my field of study
- Learn how to operate in a network of talented peers
- Other _____

I hope that my mentor and I will discuss:

- Academic subjects that will benefit my future career
- Career options and job preparation
- The realities of the workplace
- My mentor's work
- Technical and related field issues
- How to network
- How to manage work and family life
- Personal dreams and life circumstances
- Other _____

The things I feel are off-limits in my mentoring relationship include:

- Disclosing our conversations to others
- Sharing intimate aspects of our lives
- Other _____

I hope that my mentor will help me with opportunities by:

- Opening doors for me to job/internship possibilities
- Introducing me to people who might be interested in working with me
- Helping me practice for job interviews
- Suggesting potential work contacts for me to pursue on my own
- Teaching me about networking
- Critiquing my resume or curriculum vita
- Other _____

The amount of time I will spend with my mentor will be, on average:

1 2 3 4 hours every: week other week per month (circle one)

RECOMMENDED
CHECKLIST

- Introduce yourself:** What is your background? Why did you sign up for STAMP?
- Icebreakers:** Choose 3 to answer from the list on this sheet (or use your own!)
- Check-in:** How are you doing right now? (eg With working remotely, etc. Be sure to share within your own comfort range)
- Communication:** When will you meet? For how long? On what medium? What are preferences for communication between meetings?
- Goals:** What would you (the mentee) like to accomplish during the Fall semester? (Refer to possible topics below)
- Conflict & Miscommunication:** If either arise, how would you like to handle it? (eg reach out to a third party, schedule an additional meeting)
- Excitement:** What are you most looking forward to from the mentoring experience?
- Complete a Mentorship Agreement** (next page)

MENTORSHIP TOPICS

- Graduate School/Professional degree programs (general questions, application, selection)
- Careers in academia
- Careers outside of academia/alternatives to graduate school
- Stress, health & well-being
- Feedback on resumes, applications, interviews, etc.
- Advisors & networking (contacting & building relationships)
- Other: What else would you like to talk about?

ICEBREAKERS

What is something you can do better than anyone else you know?

What's the hardest part about working virtually for you? The easiest?

What's the last great TV show or movie you watched?

Are you a listener or a talker?

What's your caffeinated beverage of choice? Coffee? Cola? Tea?

If you could bring back any fashion trend what would it be?

What is your most used emoji?

What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

If you had to delete all but 3 apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?

If you could do anything in the world as your career, what would you do?

This handout was developed based on a literature review conducted by MindCORE staff on evidence-based mentorship practices. To learn more, [visit our website here.](#)

MENTORSHIP AGREEMENT

The purpose of this template is to assist you in documenting mutually agreed upon goals and parameters that will serve as the foundation for your mentoring relationships. While mentors and mentees may find mentorship agreements to be useful, they are optional. This template is expected to be altered to meet individual needs.

Goals (what you hope to achieve as a result of this relationship; e.g., gain perspective relative to skills necessary for success in academia, explore new career opportunities/alternatives, obtain knowledge of networking, skill development, etc.):

Steps to achieving goals as stated above (e.g., meeting regularly, getting feedback on projects, doing specific worksheets/exercises, etc.):

Meeting frequency (frequency, duration, and location of meetings):

Confidentiality: Any sensitive issues that we discuss will be held in the strictest of confidence. Issues that are off limits for discussion include:

Relationship termination clause: In the event that either party finds the mentoring relationship unproductive and requests that it be terminated prior to December 2020, we agree to honor that individual's decision without question or blame.

Mentor's Signature _____

Mentee's Signature _____

Date _____

MEETING AGENDA TEMPLATE

DATE:

WHAT I'VE DONE SINCE LAST MEETING:

QUESTIONS/ISSUES:

FEEDBACK:

WHAT I PLAN TO DO BEFORE NEXT MEETING:

NEXT MEETING DATE/TIME:

SELF-ASSESSMENTS

The following three self-assessments are meant for self-reflection, exploration, and as discussion starters for mentorship pairs. Mentees may take whichever interests them (or both mentees and mentors can take them) or find other self-assessments online.

1. **Strengths & Interests Self-Assessment**
2. **Exploring Values**
3. **Core Competencies in Research Fields**

After completing, consider the following in your mentorship pair:

- What areas do you want to develop further?
- How might you highlight your strengths?
- How do your values and strengths interact with your current schoolwork or projects?
- How do you think your values and strengths will affect your goals?

WORKSHEET FOR IDENTIFYING INTERESTS, VALUES, AND STRENGTHS

CORNELL CAREER SERVICES

Specifying Interests

Five activities I enjoy are:

Three activities I do not enjoy:

If I had no schedule or financial limitations, this is how I'd like to spend...

...a day: _____

...a week: _____

...a year: _____

I prefer to work with _____ people _____ data or ideas _____ things

Assessing Work Values

Rank	Value	Can I Compromise?		Rank	Value	Can I Compromise?	
___	Achievement	Yes	No	___	Leisure time	Yes	No
___	Contribution to society	Yes	No	___	Congenial co-workers	Yes	No
___	Creativity	Yes	No	___	Routine responsibilities	Yes	No
___	Helping others	Yes	No	___	Status/prestige	Yes	No
___	Financial reward	Yes	No	___	Teamwork	Yes	No
___	Independence	Yes	No	___	Variety	Yes	No
___	Intellectual challenge	Yes	No	___	Other (specify: _____)	Yes	No
___	Job security	Yes	No				

Identifying Strengths

List:

Past Experience	Tasks/Responsibilities	Strengths Used and Developed
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Make a prioritized list of strengths:

Strengths Listed Above	Ways Demonstrated	Priority
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EXPLORING VALUES

OVERVIEW OF VALUES

Values highlight what's most important to you. Some questions you want to ask yourself when considering values and your career are: Do you want to work for a large or small organization or company? Is working with other people more appealing than working alone? Do you like your responsibilities to be well defined or do you like some room for creativity?

WORK VALUES EXERCISE

The following exercise helps you identify the work and personal values that are most important to you. The list describes values and attitudes related to job satisfaction.

First, Check off all work values you consider important. If there are other work values not included in this list that you feel are especially important, add them to your list. Return to your selections and then choose the 4-5 MOST important values. Once you come up values that are currently the most important to you (values do evolve), keep them in mind as you consider different career paths.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help Society: Do something that contributes to improving the world we live in | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence: Determine the nature of my work without significant direction from other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help Others: Involved directly helping people either individually or in small groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Moral Fulfillment: Feel that work contributes to a set of morals that I feel is important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Contact: Have a lot of day-to-day contact with people | <input type="checkbox"/> Location: Find a place to live, which is conducive to my lifestyle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work with Others: Work as a team member towards common goals | <input type="checkbox"/> Community: Live where I can participate in community affairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliation: Be recognized as a member of a particular organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Schedule: Be able to work according to my own schedule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make Decisions: Have the power to decide on courses of action and policies | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge: Engage in the pursuit of knowledge and truth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Alone: Do projects on your own with minimal contact with others | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual Status: Become an expert in a given field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition: Engage in activities that clearly compare my abilities to others | <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic Creativity: Engage in creative work related to the arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power and Authority: Oversee and delegate work activities of other people | <input type="checkbox"/> General Creativity: Create new ideas for programs, written materials and organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work under Pressure: Time pressure and deadlines are prevalent | <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics: Study or appreciate the beauty of objects and ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Influence People: Be in a position to change attitudes or opinions of other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision: Have a job in which I am directly responsible for the work of others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fast Pace: Work in situations where there is a lot of activity and tasks must be completed quickly | <input type="checkbox"/> Change and Variety: Have work responsibilities which frequently change. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excitement: Experience a high or frequent level of excitement in the course of my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Precision Work: Work in settings where details are important and there is little margin for error |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure: Have work duties that require frequent risk taking | <input type="checkbox"/> Stability: Have job duties and work routines that are highly predictable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Profit: Have a strong likelihood of earning a substantial salary for my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Security: Be assured of keeping my job and a reasonable financial reward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition: Be acknowledged publicly for the quality of my work | |

Core competencies self-assessment checklist

Modified from National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)

Rate your current level of development in each of the following, with 1 being 'needs attention' and 5 being 'extremely competent'. For more information see www.nationalpostdoc.org/?SixCoreComps

1	DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
	Analytical approach to defining scientific questions						
	Design of scientifically testable hypotheses						
	Broad-based and cross-disciplinary knowledge acquisition						
	Detailed knowledge of specific research area						
2	RESEARCH SKILL DEVELOPMENT						
	Research techniques and laboratory safety						
	Experimental design						
	Data analysis and interpretation						
	Effective search strategies and critical evaluation of literature						
	Grant application and scientific publishing processes						
3	COMMUNICATION SKILLS						
	Writing						
	• Scientific publications						
	• Curriculum vitae, resume, cover letters, teaching statements						
	Speaking						
	• Presenting research to scientific and lay audiences						
	• Conference and seminar presentations						
	• Job interviews and job talks						
	Teaching and mentoring						
	Special situations (networking, managing the news media)						
4	PROFESSIONALISM						
	Workplace: connecting with the immediate working team						
	Institutional: connecting with the research infrastructure						
	Collegial: connecting with the discipline of expertise						
	Universal: connecting with society in representing an expertise						
5	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS						
	Personnel management						
	Project management						
	• Establishing priorities						
	• Short- and long-term planning						
	• Time management						
	• Establishing/maintaining effective collaborations						
	• Developing/managing budgets						
	• Tracking use of and ordering supplies and equipment						
	• Recordkeeping in print and electronic media; establishing data back-up protocols						
	• Running a meeting						
	• Delegating responsibilities						
	Leadership skills						
	• Identifying and clarifying goals						
	• Motivating/inspiring others						
	• Serving as a role model						
6	RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH						
	Data ownership and sharing						
	Research with human subjects (where applicable)						
	Research involving animals (where applicable)						
	Identifying and mitigating research misconduct						
	Conflicts of interest						

GOAL SETTING

STARTER GOALS

Starter goals are broad goals a mentee first presents to their mentor. Starter goals may include working on work/life balance, career development, developing a research project etc.

For example, let's say your mentee wants to work on a work/life balance. While a desirable goal, it lacks specificity and measurability - starter goals trigger further conversations that produce clarity and insight, ultimately leading to the creation of "SMART goals."

Here are a number of ways to help your mentee develop concrete starter goals.

1. Don't confuse symptoms with solutions. Even if your mentee thinks they have identified a learning goal, they may be working on a symptom (e.g., communication), not the underlying challenge or problem.
2. Ask "why" questions to promote increased self-awareness and focus. For example, "Why is this goal important to your development?" If the goal isn't important enough, your mentee will have little energy and enthusiasm for completing it.
3. Check your assumptions by asking clarifying questions. For example, "What do you mean when you say you want to get ahead?" or, "I'm a little confused. Can you give an example?"

"SMART" GOALS

SMART goals are: Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic & Time-bound.

Once you've met a few times and talked about starter goals, start developing SMART goals:

1. Be as specific as possible, and drill down until you come up with a way to measure success. Ask: "How will we know if you achieved it?" "What will success look like?"
2. Encourage action rather than contemplation. Too often goals start with "I will think about" or "I will explore." SMART goals have action words & should answer: "What will you DO?"
3. Provide a reality check. Help your mentees set realistic milestones that link to a larger goal. That will keep them motivated and create enthusiasm for further progress.
4. Set a deadline. Having time-bound goals helps create a sense of urgency. It's perfectly appropriate to choose a lofty goal that will propel you forward, but unless that goal is broken down into smaller steps, you may get fatigued or burned out.

CAREERS & GRAD SCHOOL

DISCUSSION ABOUT CAREER PLANNING

- What is your ideal career scenario in **five year's time**? Where do you want to be working? What will you be doing? At what level? Working on what type of projects?
- What is your ideal career scenario in **three year's time**?
- What would you like to achieve in **the next year**?
- What **actions** are needed to achieve these ideal scenarios?
- What can you **start working on now**?
- What **time would you like to set aside** for activities to support your career?

Adapted from www.ithinkwell.com.au

CAREER EXPLORATION RESOURCES

With your mentor (or before your meeting), try exploring the following resources and discussing what you find:

What can I do with this major? Learn about typical career areas and types of employers that hire people with each major, as well as strategies to make you a more marketable candidate. <https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/what-can-i-do-with-this-major/>

Career Explorer: Take a career test and get resources to explore compatible career paths. <https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/careerexplorer/>

MyIDP: Offers exercises, a career path predictor, and a goal tracker for those interested in pursuing a PhD in STEM. <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>

Versatile PhD: Provides a community forum, career finder, and resources for non-academic jobs for those interested in a scientific industry career paths outside of academia. <https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/versatile-phd/>

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Explore the following resources and talk in mentorship meetings about your reactions, questions, and goals:

NETWORKING

<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/career-services-online-courses/>
<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/quick-guide-to-informational-interviewing/>
<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/tips-for-networking-on-linkedin/>
<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/channels/make-connections-network/>

INTERVIEWS

cdn.uconnectlabs.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/74/2019/08/Interviewing-guide-1.pdf

RESUMES & CV'S

<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/resources/career-services-resume-guide/>
<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/cover-letter-writing-guide/>

GRAD SCHOOL PREP & APPLICATIONS

<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/preparing-for-graduate-school/>
<https://careerservices.upenn.edu/applying-to-graduate-school/>

STRESS & WELL-BEING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What are some ways that each of you typically cope with stress?

What has worked and what hasn't?

Consider the types of stressors listed to the right - which do you feel has impacted each of you the most?

Mentees: What are your concerns or questions about stress & well-being?

Mentors: What have your experiences taught you in addressing your own wellness?

What are three ideas for reducing stress and improving well-being you'd like to try in the next month?

Consider the following article on coping with COVID-19 stress as a student:

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/student-stress>

Did you relate to anything in the article? How have each of you been coping?

Ideas for managing stress:

- Practicing time management skills, using calendars
- Setting specific goals, using to-do lists
- Exercise
- Good sleep habits
- Mindfulness & breathing techniques
- Taking breaks (eg walking outdoors, listening to music)
- Journaling
- Socializing & getting support from friends & family

Common Stressors

- **SOCIAL:** (New relationships, balancing academic life with social life, living with or without family members, adjusting to the new environment)
- **ACADEMIC** (Strict schedules, deadlines, low grades, challenging classes, exams)
- **DAILY LIFE** (Daily commute, part-time job, financial burdens, etc)

ENDING MENTORSHIP

TIPS FOR CLOSURE

To ensure meaningful closure, consider the following:

- Be proactive.** Agree on how you will come to closure when you first negotiate your mentoring partnership. Make one of the ground rules an agreement to end on good terms. Many mentoring partners adopt the no-fault rule, meaning that there is no blaming if the partnership is not working or one person is uncomfortable.
- Look for signals.** Check out your perceptions and assumptions when the first indicators appear.
- Respect your partner.** If they wants to end the relationship and you don't, you must honor their wishes.
- Evaluate the relationship.** Periodically, check out the health of the relationship. Make sure your needs and those of your partner are both being met. Make ongoing evaluation a commitment.
- Review your goals.** Regularly review your goals and objectives with your mentoring partner. Gauge where you and your partner are in the accomplishment of goals and objectives.
- Integrate.** When it is time to come to closure, ask how you can use what you've learned. Without closure, you lose the value-added dimension of integration. Good closure involves taking what you've learned from the mentoring relationship and applying it. Focus on both the process and the content of the learning in your discussion.
- Celebrate.** Find meaningful ways to celebrate your accomplishments and be vocal in your appreciation of each other.
- Move on.** Once you have redefined your relationship, "let go" of the relationship as it was and embrace it as it will be going forward.