



Responsible Cardinals of Research

A Newsletter for Student Researchers

Set Your Research Mentorship Up for Success

September 2023

Communication is the Key to a Successful Mentorship

Communicate Early: Make sure you and your mentor are on the same page in terms of roles, responsibilities, and expectations prior to beginning your work together.

Communicated on a Schedule: Decide on when, how, and how often you and your mentor will communicate about your project.

Communicate (Even when it is Hard): Create a conflict resolution plan with your mentor, in case you ever need it. Then, if the need arises, use the plan as your guide to resolve any misunderstandings or miscommunications.

Set Goals for your Mentorship to Measure your Success

By agreeing upon and setting measurable goals, you and your mentor can easily and objectively track your successes and recognize when a goal may need to be revised.

Make your goals **S.M.A.R.T.**

- **Specific:** Make your goals narrow and specific so you can plan for how to achieve them.
- **Measurable:** Keep your goals measurable so you can easily track your progress.
- **Attainable:** Set goals that can be reasonably accomplished within the stated time period.
- **Relevant:** Keep your goals aligned with *both* your long-term objectives and current project.
- **Time-Based:** Set an end-date for each goal to increase your motivations and clarify prioritization.

In this Issue:

- ✓ The Key to Successful Research Mentorships
- ✓ Setting Measurable Goals
- ✓ Mitigating Misunderstandings
- ✓ What to Include in a Mentorship Agreement
- ✓ The Two-Way Street
- ✓ Reevaluating your Goals and Expectations

A Case for Mentorship Agreements: Problematic faculty and student mentorship relationships can often be attributed to a lack of transparency and communication about each person's goals and expectations for the relationship. Ironing out the details of the mentorship relationship prior to the relationship beginning can help prevent problems in the future.

Key Components to a Mentorship Agreement:

Creating a mentorship agreement with your mentor prior to beginning your work can ensure a prosperous mentorship relationship for both parties.

To safeguard your relationship, consider creating a formal mentorship agreement including the following:

- Goals
- Skills and Needs
- Time Commitment
- Meeting Schedule
- Preferred Modes of Communication
- Authorship Agreement
- Conflict and Dispute Resolution Plan
- Responsibilities
- Expectations
- Research and Academic Support
- Compliance Procedures and Ethics
- Feedback and Evaluation Plan
- Plans for Publication or Presentation
- Transition Plan

Mentorship is a Two-Way Street

As a mentee, you are sure to benefit from your relationship with your mentor academically, personally, and professionally. But, did you realize your mentor has just as much to gain from their relationship with you? Check out how both mentors and mentees can benefit from a mentorship relationship:

	The Benefits to Mentors	The Benefits to Mentees
Knowledge and Skill Building	Working alongside mentees... • offers a fresh perspectives and novel ideas. • challenges a mentor's preconceptions. • stimulates a mentor's own creativity. • encourages a mentor to view problems from different angles.	Interacting with a mentor can... • inspire a mentee to explore new research avenues. • expose a mentee to innovative thinking and unique perspectives. • spark creativity and lead to groundbreaking research ideas.
Professional Development	Mentors are provided the opportunity to... • foster leadership skills. • improve communication skills. • improve their ability to convey complex ideas effectively.	Mentees are provided the opportunity to... • expand their professional network. • attend and present at conferences. • find potential future job opportunities and collaborations.
Personal Fulfillment	Mentors get to... • contribute to the growth of the next generation of scholars. • witness the mentee's future successes. • make a positive impact in the field and leave a lasting legacy.	Mentees receive... • a sense of direction and purpose. • the knowledge they have a supportive guide. • a boost in self-confidence • self-belief in their research abilities.

The Living Document: Given the open-ended nature of academic work, you may find that your needs and goals change as your work progresses. Consider a mentorship agreement a living document and don't be afraid to make changes so that it includes goals and activities that are attainable and in-line with your current work.

October Learning Events (advanced registration at the links below is requested):

October 17, 2023 – [Module 3: Film and Discussion at the Greenhouse](#)

October 30, 2023 – [Module 4a: Policies and Best Practices in Human Subjects Research](#)



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Office of Research Integrity