



# Responsible Cardinals of Research

*A Newsletter for Student Researchers*



## The Power of Mentorship

August 2023

Dear Students,

Today, as you embark on a new semester at Ball State University, I want to share an invaluable secret that can transform your academic experience and shape your future: the power of mentorship. Whether you're pursuing a degree in the humanities, sciences, or any other field involving research, having a mentor can change the trajectory of your career.

Research mentors are experienced researchers who share their experience, knowledge, and wisdom with you, the mentee, to promote your professional growth and development. While having the opportunity to participate in important research in your chosen field of study is one of the more exciting aspects of mentorship, the benefits of participating in a research mentorship relationship reach far beyond the library or laboratory.

If you have any questions about finding a mentor, how mentorship relates to the responsible conduct of research (RCR) or would like to learn more about the RCR Student Training Program offered by the Office of Research Integrity (ORI), please don't hesitate to reach out at [orircr@bsu.edu](mailto:orircr@bsu.edu).

Wishing you the best in your future research career!

Sincerely,  
Rachael Alaniz, MSW, MPA  
Responsible Conduct of Research Officer

### In this Issue:

- ✓ The Benefits of Mentorship
- ✓ Mentorship and RCR
- ✓ Your Responsibilities
- ✓ Finding Your Mentor
- ✓ Mentorship Agreements
- ✓ Mentoring Resources

## What do you have to gain from participating in a mentorship?

- An ally in promoting your professional growth.
- The achievement of career goals.
- An understanding of organizational culture and networking.
- An awareness of the responsibility of researchers to the world at large.
- Social preparedness to enter the workforce.
- A feeling of belonging.
- An understanding of the ethical and social responsibilities of researchers.
- Professional productivity.

## Your Responsibilities as a Mentee

- Develop clear expectations of learning objectives and skills to be achieved.
- Maintain a mutually respectful mentorship.
- Identify an area of focus for your research.
- Develop a timeline to achieve educational and research goals.
- Be dedicated to honesty and respect all ethical standards.
- Pursue regular feedback to improve your scientific work.
- Ensure you are knowledgeable about policies, deadlines, and research requirements at the university.

## Identifying the right mentor for you

Once you've decided you'd like to participate in a research mentorship, these four steps can help you to find a mentor to assist in achieving your goals:

1. **Do your research.** Identify the leaders in your field with interests similar to yours.
2. **Network.** Attending university events, volunteering within your department, and joining professional organizations are all excellent networking opportunities.
3. **Ask for help.** In addition to networking, seek the assistance of a well-connected acquaintance or friend and ask if they would be willing to offer an initial introduction to a potential mentor.
4. **Make the formal request.** If the mentor agrees, be sure to formalize the agreement.

**Fun Fact:** Mentor and trainee responsibilities make up one of the core areas of RCR. Mentors have a responsibility in training the mentee in RCR and modeling ethical behavior in research.

## Mentoring Resources at Ball State

**Teacher Scholar Program:** A campus-wide one-semester long program that engages undergraduate student researchers in 5 hours/week of research or a creative endeavor with their mentor.

**The Pathways Mentoring Program:** A mentoring program that supports undergraduate and graduate students from marginalized backgrounds as they pursue graduate education and beyond.

**ORI Peer Mentoring:** ORI graduate assistants (GAs) offer one-on-one consultation regarding research proposals, including answering questions about writing a protocol, submitting through IRBNet, or any other issues that may come up throughout the submission process. To set up a phone or in-person appointment with a GA, send an e-mail to [ORIhelp@bsu.edu](mailto:ORIhelp@bsu.edu) or call the direct GA line at **765-285-5088**.

## Setting Your Mentorship Up for Success with a Mentorship Agreement

Mentoring relationships can form organically through an existing professional or personal relationship or formally when a student joins a mentorship program at the university. In other cases, a mentorship relationship emerges when a student finds themselves with an immediate need for the assistance of the mentor. However your mentorship relationship is formed, it is important that you decide what type of mentoring relationship you would like to have and be prepared to communicate your needs and expectations to your mentor prior to formalizing a research mentorship relationship.

Creating a mentor agreement allows you and your prospective mentor to learn more about each other, understand each of your goals for the relationship, and set parameters for the relationship. By evaluating the expectations of both you and your mentor prior to beginning to work together, you and your mentor will be setting yourselves up for a successful mentorship relationship.

Once you and your mentor have discussed and agreed upon the mentorship expectations, the ORI offers a mentorship agreement form, which can be accessed [here](#).

**Pro Tip:** Some Colleges or Departments have their own mentoring programs. Speak to your advisor or department to inquire about mentorship opportunities within your field of study.

### What if they say “No”?

Be sure to remain pleasant and understand that mentorship is a big commitment. Thank them for their time and ask if they have a colleague to whom they might be able to refer you.



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Office of Research Integrity**