

# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

*A presentation given annually at The University of Arizona Graduate Orientation*

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“A mentoring relationship is a close, individualized relationship that develops over time between a graduate student and a faculty member (or others) that includes both caring and guidance.”

*(from U of Michigan Graduate Handbook)*

## MENTORING & MENTORS

### **Types Of Mentoring And Mentoring Roles**

Advisors, Supporters, Tutors, "Masters," Sponsors, Models

### **Finding And Choosing Mentors**

Start with self-appraisal

Identify potential faculty

Initiate contact, provide dossier\* & investigate possibilities; follow up

\* See reverse for dossier suggestions

Seek out **multiple mentors** as needed (for specific expertise, alternative strategies, second opinions, etc. / think "outside the box," e.g., virtual mentors)



## EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

### **What To Expect (And Require) From Mentors**

Availability for interaction

Effective communication (and listening!)

Advice, guidance

Research direction

Feedback

Initiation into “the discipline”



### **What Mentors Expect And Need From You**

Responsibility, knowledge of degree requirements & policies

(be aware of all relevant Departmental, Graduate College, *and* University policies)

Initiative and commitment

Ability to receive criticism, heed advice

Communication of progress on a regular basis

Resourcefulness in seeking expertise (take advantage of *all* committee members, etc.)

Respect of mentor’s time demands

Scholarly discourse!



## STRATEGIES FOR A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING EXPERIENCE

### **Communication Is Key**

Update, clarify, initiate, summarize, follow-up, get/give feedback, remind tactfully

### **Avoid Mentoring Pitfalls**

Know yourself, appreciate roles, accept input, use tact, seek advocates if needed

Safeguards: (1) know policies & get it in writing; (2) keep copies

Address crises, reassess timeline, change mentor if necessary

### **Maintain An Ethical Mentoring Milieu**

Value diversity; foster collegiality

Avoid departmental politics

Ask questions & encourage discussion on ethics issues

Respect boundaries (hierarchical, time, sexual, etc.)



## TOWARD SELF-MENTORING

**Knowing yourself** helps to deal with advice overload & conflicting recommendations

**The 4 R’s:** Record, Remind, Reflect, Refine

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR DOSSIER FOR A POTENTIAL MENTOR:**

- Curriculum vita (contact info, education, employment, experience, skills – focus on *academic* info)
- Statement of goals (e.g., why pursuing a graduate degree, career aims, research interests, copy of grad application essay, etc.)
- Course transcripts (or list of courses taken or planned; draft of *Plan of Study* form, etc.)
- Other useful information (e.g., abstracts, papers, summary of thesis work, etc.)

## **SOME USEFUL WEBSITES & REFERENCES:**

### **Miscellaneous Mentoring Websites:**

*On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) National Academy of Sciences 2009  
[http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12192#toc](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12192#toc) (free pdf download available; includes grad student case studies for discussions; updated resources on research ethics; useful for nonscientists too)

*Adviser, Teacher, Role Model, Friend -- On Being A Mentor To Students In Science And Engineering*  
National Academy of Sciences 1997 (targeted at mentors, but grads may find useful)  
[http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=5789&page=R1](http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=5789&page=R1)

### **Useful University of Arizona Sites:**

*The University of Arizona Graduate College webpage:* <http://grad.arizona.edu/>

Log in to gain access to the Graduate College resources you'll need, including:  
*the online Graduate Catalog:* <http://grad.arizona.edu/catalog>  
*and other useful info:* <http://grad.arizona.edu/current-students>

*Office for the Responsible Conduct of Research:* <http://www.orcr.arizona.edu/>

*Policies of The University of Arizona*  
<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2014-15/policies/aaindex.html> (all the academic policies in writing, from A to Z)

*Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and procedures of The University of Arizona*  
<http://equity.arizona.edu/policies>

### **Other:**

*Mentoring, The Faculty-Graduate Student Relationship*, Position Paper of the Graduate Council of The University of Arizona, 1996

Moss, P., DeBres, K., Cravey, A., Hyndman, J., Hirschboeck, K., Masuci, M., 1999. [Toward a feminist mentoring praxis: strategies for ourselves and others](#): *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 23 (3):413-427.

You can find Dr. Hirschboeck's Graduate Orientation presentation on  
"**Making the Most of Your Mentoring Opportunities**" posted on the website:  
<http://www.ltrr.arizona.edu/kkh/mentoring.htm>