

Mentoring Guidelines

Mentoring is defined as a close relationship between a graduate student and a faculty member who provides guidance, support and research advice in an individualized manner.

Graduate Council recognizes that the mentoring of graduate students by faculty is an integral part of the graduate experience for both. The responsibilities of the faculty mentor are broad and diverse. They include, but are not limited to serving as a role model, advising a student as to course work requirements, and providing formal instruction in a given discipline as well as helping students identify and achieve their individual short and long-term educational goals. While the major professor usually acts as a student's primary mentor, many of the mentoring "functions" described below, may also be performed by other program/group faculty and staff over the course of a student's graduate experience. A corollary to this recognition is that much of the interaction of faculty with all students includes important mentoring components. Similarly, graduate students have important responsibilities to ensure they are open to and accepting of faculty mentoring and articulate their needs effectively. Thus, it is together that faculty and students identify and discuss their goals and expectations for each other, and outline approaches to reach those goals and satisfy those expectations.

Basic mentoring practices include guiding students through program expectations, protocols of academic conduct, degree requirements, research and teaching, capstone work (such as thesis or dissertation research), and professional development.

1. Mentors and/or the advising system should provide, and students should acquire, a clear map of program requirements from the beginning, making clear the coursework requirements, and expected timelines for completion of all required examinations and capstone requirements.

Mentors are responsible for

1. Respecting their student, including the student's identity including race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, age, visible and non-visible disability, nationality, sexual orientation, citizenship status, veteran status, religious/non-religious, spiritual, or political beliefs, socio-economic class, status within or outside the university, or any of the other differences among people.
2. Assisting students in the identification of support networks (people who can help the student for different aspects of their tenure at UCD).
3. Being a student's advocate and assisting the student in a timely manner in finding sources to support dissertation research (teaching assistantships, research assistantships, fellowships, research needs and required resources, including desk and/or laboratory space).
4. Addressing problems or challenges that could affect completion of the degree as soon as they become aware of them.
5. Tailoring, modifying or adjusting the faculty member's mentoring style to the particular needs of each graduate student, to a reasonable extent.
6. Encouraging an open exchange of ideas, including by empowering students to independently follow research ideas of their own whenever feasible.

7. Checking regularly on progress. Graduate Council recognizes each graduate program/group, mentor and mentee should agree upon a reasonable frequency of meetings and communications, which may vary widely by discipline, but should not usually occur less than at least once per quarter.
8. Encouraging and giving feedback on written work, oral presentations and experimental work in a timely manner within a mutually agreed upon time frame, and consistent with Graduate Council policies
9. Providing and discussing clear criteria for authorship of collaborative research, consistent with Graduate Council policies on co-authorship.
10. Encouraging participation in professional meetings of regional groups as well as of learned societies and facilitating interactions and networking with other scholars, on campus and within the wider professional community.
11. Helping the student in identifying appropriate resources for career guidance, providing help with preparations of CV and job interviews, as well as writing letters of recommendation in a timely manner.
12. Empowering and encouraging the student in seeking their own career paths and supporting the student independent of the chosen career paths they identify.
13. Participating regularly in mentorship training.

As partners in the mentoring relationship, graduate students have responsibilities. These responsibilities include:

1. Respecting their mentor, including their mentor's identity including race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, age, visible and non-visible disability, nationality, sexual orientation, citizenship status, veteran status, religious/non-religious, spiritual, or political beliefs, socio-economic class, status within or outside the university, or any of the other differences among people
2. Seeking assistance from multiple individuals/organizations to fulfill the mentoring roles described above, because one faculty member may not be able to satisfy all of a student's mentoring needs.
3. Understanding and clearly articulating to their mentors their own mentoring needs and how they change through their graduate tenure.
4. Respecting their mentor's other responsibilities and time commitments.
5. Communicating regularly with their mentors, especially their major professor, including updates on progress, challenges, needs, goals and expected completion timelines.
6. Completing tasks in a timely fashion and following mutually agreed upon timelines and informing mentors about expected absences and delays before they occur.
7. Participating in departmental and graduate program/group community including attending activities, lectures, and events.
8. Acting in a manner that will encourage professors to see them as colleagues. Seeking constructive criticism and feedback on academic work.
9. Seeking information, exploring career options and developing clear career goals.
10. Participating regularly in mentee-ship training.

While we have tried to provide general examples of what mentoring means, we recognize that each discipline has its own special set of mentoring needs and challenges. Therefore, Graduate Programs/Groups may set specific guidelines to further define the individual roles of Graduate

Advisors, major professors, faculty supervisors, and staff program/group advisors (see Appendix A for an example). Graduate programs/group mentoring guidelines and activities will be reviewed during the program review process.

Additional Resources and Guidelines

(Links active as of June 15th, 2016.)

- I. [Mentoring Matters \(UC Davis\)](#)
- II. [How to Mentor Students: A Guide for Faculty \(University of Michigan\)](#)
- III. [Research Mentoring: Cultivating Effective Relationships \(University of Wisconsin\)](#)

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Appendix A: Example Breakdown of Roles and Responsibilities

- a. Academic advisors are expected to
 - i. Communicate degree requirements to advisees.
 - ii. Respond promptly to communications from advisees.
 - iii. Set clear expectations for the timeline of degree progress.
 - iv. Review mentees degree progress on an annual basis.
 - v. Meet with student's academic advisory committee as required by the graduate program.
- b. Major professors are expected to
 - i. Set clear and reasonable expectations for their students.
 - ii. Respond promptly to communications from students.
 - iii. Review expectations and progress on a regular basis.
 - iv. Provide timely feedback on student's preparation of publications, conference presentations, exhibitions, performances, or comparable communication with the academic community.
 - v. Establish in advance a mutual understanding on criteria for co-authorship of collaborative work consistent with Graduate Council policy, if applicable.
 - vi. Hold meetings of student's dissertation committees as required by the graduate program.
 - vii. Provide clear guidelines for starting and finishing dissertation or thesis work
 - viii. Meet individually with each of their students to review degree progress, goals and other topics on a quarterly basis.
- c. Faculty supervisors of graduate students are expected to
 - i. Set clear and reasonable expectations for their supervisees.
 - ii. Respond promptly to communications from supervisees.
 - iii. Insure justifiable resource allocation among supervisees.
 - iv. Establish in advance a mutual understanding on criteria for co-authorship of collaborative work consistent with Graduate Council policy.
 - v. Compensate supervisee financially for work for the supervisor, but unrelated to their degree progress.
 - vi. Review supervisee's performance on an annual basis.
 - vii. Comply with applicable policies and laws regarding employer-employee relationships including non-discrimination and sexual harassment laws.