

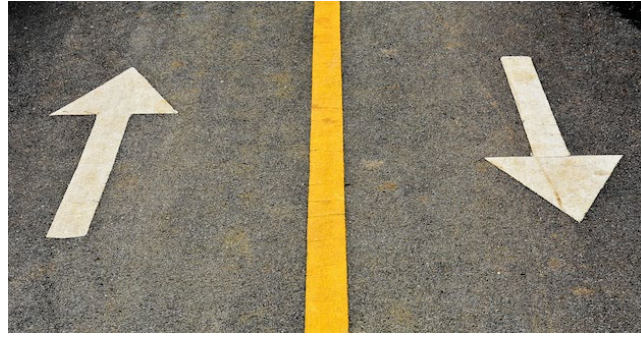
Mentoring – Focus on Trainees

Laura S Van Winkle, PhD DABT
Professor of Respiratory Toxicology
School of Veterinary Medicine
UC Davis



of EXCEPTIONAL CARE AND INNOVATION





Mentoring is a two way street

- Both the mentor and the mentee must participate
- Each should be willing to learn from the other
- Each has responsibility

But how do you get started at the beginning?

First: Determine if this is a good fit for the Mentor and the Mentee

- Have a preliminary meeting
 - Preliminary expectations
 - Working styles and boundaries
 - Possible mutual goals and outcome you are working towards
 - Requirements that must be met
- Talk to other people about whether this mentor/mentee is a good choice
- Gather information
- Try them out (rotations or other short term arrangements)

Establish concrete and transparent expectations and accountability

Tools can help with this:

- Laboratory Handbooks
- Worksheets followed by discussion
- Questionnaires followed by discussion
- Written agreements or compacts or plans

Recurring evaluation

- Needs/skills etc (i.e IDP)
- Accomplishments, meeting notes
- Data and Project tracking
- Well Being

Mentor / Supervisor:		Mentee / Student:	
Time Period:		Dept / Program:	

For each pair of statements, determine your preference. For example with statement pair #1, if you believe the ideal mentoring relationship focuses on common research interests, select 1, 2, or 3. Or if you think the ideal relationship focuses on effective working and communication styles, select 4, 5, or 6. Avoid filling in "3.5" for your responses.

Early Stages of the Mentoring Relationship and Choosing Mentors/Mentees			
1	In an ideal mentoring relationship, the mentor and mentee should have similar research interests	1 2 3 4 5 6	In an ideal mentoring relationship, both should have similar working and communication styles
2	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide close supervision and guidance	1 2 3 4 5 6	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide much freedom and independence for the mentees to explore and learn themselves
3	Mentors should only accept mentees when they have specific & deep knowledge of the mentee's research topic	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentors can provide overall guidance, and so should feel free to accept mentees from a broad range of disciplines
4	A personal and friendly relationship between mentor and mentee is important for a successful relationship	1 2 3 4 5 6	A professional relationship is advisable to maintain objectivity for both mentee and mentor during their work
5	The mentor is responsible for providing emotional support & encouragement to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the mentor
6	The mentor should play a significant role in deciding on the research focus for the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The research focus should be selected by the mentee
7	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects with potential for high payoffs, even if it involves high risk	1 2 3 4 5 6	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects that have a strong & safe chance of success, even if the payoff is low
8	The mentor should decide how frequently to meet with the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should decide when she/he wants to meet with the mentor
9	The mentor should provide the rules and guidelines for the program or dept to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	It is the mentee's responsibility to gather and learn the rules and guidelines of the program or dept
10	The mentor is responsible for finding funding until the mentee graduates or completes the program	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentees are responsible for finding their own sources of funding
Middle Stages of the Mentoring Relationship			
11	The mentor should be the primary guide for the mentee in their academic and professional goals	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should gather multiple mentors as they work toward their academic and professional goals
12	The mentor should be the first place to turn when the mentee has problems with the research project	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentees should try to resolve problems on their own, including seeking input from others, before bringing a research problem to the mentor
13	The mentor should check regularly that the mentee is working consistently and finishing tasks	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should work independently and productively, and ask for help when needed
14	The mentor should develop an appropriate plan and timetable of research and study for the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should develop their own plan and timetable of research and study, and seek input from the mentor only as needed
Advanced Stages of the Mentoring Relationship			
15	The mentor should initiate the preparation of presentations, papers, and reports	1 2 3 4 5 6	Presentations, papers, and reports should be started with a first draft by the mentee
	The mentor should insist on seeing all drafts of work		Mentees should submit drafts of work

Topics for Expectations Discussions



- **Research productivity:** research plans, experiment design, writing, conferences, presentations, notebooks, timelines
- **Authorship:** policies, timing of decisions, raising questions
- **Employment:** employment hours, absences, visa regulations, funding, time off
- **Communication:** frequency of meetings, preparation for and follow-up for meetings, method of communication (form, style), annual reviews, timing
- **Respect:** responsiveness, collegiality, teamwork, shared spaces, learning styles and identities
- **Professional development and networking:** conferences, department/campus seminars, IDPs, career fairs, exploration of diverse careers
- **Resolving conflicts:** contacts and resources, address power

Mentee/Mentor needs change over time

- **Have a “check in”** at least annually to see if you are meeting each others needs and to conduct a more in depth discussion of status
- **WWW/EBY** both for the mentor and the mentee
- **Define new needs** or new goals
- **Consider peer to peer or peer to near peer mentoring**
- **Mentees aren't the only ones learning**, mentors learn too. Keep your mentoring skills sharp by attending training sessions and be open to new opportunities brought up by mentees (and vice versa)
- **Maintain effective communication-** consider standing individual meetings in addition to lab meetings, create common understanding of mode of communication.
- **Create a mentorship network**
 - SOT Mentor Match, Mentoring Breakfast, Chat with an expert, Regional Chapter and Specialty Section Mentoring Initiatives

Elements of a Successful Mentoring Relationship



- Fosters confidentiality and trust
- Includes timely updating and responsiveness
- Creates structures for learning and engagement
- Progresses toward shared goals and values
- Builds skills
- Constant re-evaluation of above

The most important element..... COMMUNICATION

Resources

- There is a science to mentoring and the NAS addressed it with some recommendations in this report and related podcasts: the Science of Effective Mentoring in STEMM, NAS 2019. New podcast coming up...
- Many mentoring programs use resources from The Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experience in Research (CIMER)
- Most universities have resources for mentoring with many integrating information from the two resources above and others
- Information I use:
 - I used concepts from mentoring courses I have taken at UC Davis through “*Mentoring at Critical Transitions*” and one I am currently taking “*Graduate Mentoring Initiative*”
 - And information/workshops/coursework from *UC Davis GradPathways Institute for Professional Development*
 - I am a fan of Hugh Kearns and his workshops/info at *THINKWELL*