

# "Mentoring" Students

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## What mentoring provides

- professionally useful information
- help accomplishing tasks and reaching goals
- psychosocial support
- advocacy

## Different conceptions of mentoring (not all mutually exclusive)

- single mentor model
- multiple (also called composite or mosaic) mentor
- circle of advisors
- workshops

## Circle of advisor model

- no single person can provide all the information, constructive criticism, emotional support, and challenges that people need in order to become as effective as they can be in reaching their goals
- a circle of advisors changes as needs change; no one ever outgrows a need for advisors
- students play an active role in determining what they need, given a possible menu (see Menu, p 2)
- students work with their main advisor to think about who can fulfill their needs
- students work with their main advisor to work out how to approach others
- students can help and receive help from other students

## Mentoring challenges

- helping students set realistic goals and monitor those goals
- anticipating student problems (see p 2)
- creating go-to list for different problem types
- developing workshops for issues of general interest
- avoiding over- or underinvestment in student
  - establish mechanism for changing advisors (after first year?)
- analyzing one's strengths and limitations (see p 2)
- developing sense of community for students
- working with students of different gender or ethnicity
- portraying your position as rewarding and desirable
- presenting students with demographically varied models of success

## Activities

### 1. Menu of student needs

#### a. choose from menu or add to menu

#### b. format

##### i. break-out groups

##### ii. main group discussion

- setting goals and tracking progress
- information about how higher education works
- constructive criticism of written work
- information about prizes, awards, fellowships, and other benefits they might be eligible for
- information about career trajectories
- suggestions for and information about further education (e.g., grad school) or training (e.g., helpful background course)
- speaking in public
- attending conferences
- performing research; working with a team
- sympathetic critiques of self-presentational style
- help with time-management and procrastination problems
- recommendation of specific courses of action for various problems
- challenges to do better
- reassurance that they can be successful when they doubt themselves
- information about how different people integrate work and personal lives
- help with personal problems (family, friends, money, love, substance abuse)
- advocacy
- allies for changes they would like to make

### 2. Student problems

#### a. list examples of difficult problems students have had

#### b. format

##### i. break-out groups

##### ii. main group discussion

### 3. Analyze own strengths and limitations

#### a. individually and anonymously, list 3 examples of each

#### b. format

##### i. break-out groups discuss common examples of strengths and limitations

##### ii. main group summarizes and makes suggestions for work-arounds