HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF BEING A MENTEE

KELLY JORDAN-SCIUTTO, PHD
ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION, PSOM, UPENN
MENTORING IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

MENTOR
MENTEE
PEERS
THESIS COMMITTEE
ENVIRONMENT/COMMUNITY

TRADITIONAL MENTORING

GROUP MENTORING

PEER MENTORING
GOALS OF MENTORING

SHOULD BE DEFINED BY MENTEE: MENTOR INTERACTION

IN GENERAL

• EVALUATE CAREER GOALS
• ATTAIN TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED FOR YOUR CAREER GOALS
• GAIN EXPERIENCES NEEDED FOR FUTURE CAREER
• DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR CHOSEN CAREER

REVISTED AND ASSESSED REGULARLY
KEYS TO BEING EFFECTIVELY MENTORED

- EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
- ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS
- ACHIEVE WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION
- BUILD RESEARCH SELF-EFFICACY
- ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE
- ADDRESS EQUITY AND INCLUSION
- SEEK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS HAVE DIFFERENT STYLES

ACCEPT AND IMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

USE MULTIPLE MODES OF COMMUNICATION

DIRECT
DISTANT
WRITTEN
VERBAL

AFFECTED BY BACKGROUND, POWER DYNAMICS, OUTSIDE INFLUENCES,
ALIGN EXPECTATIONS – INDIVIDUALIZED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- UP FRONT ASSESSMENT:
  - WHAT IS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL?
  - WHAT ARE YOUR UNIQUE NEEDS AS A MENTEE?
    - SCIENTIFIC SKILLS
    - PROFESSIONAL SKILLS
    - CAREER SKILLS
    - SUPPORT
- ESTABLISH MUTUALLY AGREEABLE AND BENEFICIAL EXPECTATIONS
- COMMUNICATE THE EXPECTATIONS
- ALIGN EXPECTATIONS BETWEEN MENTOR AND MENTEE
- REVISIT EXPECTATIONS AND ADJUST WITH MENTEE GROWTH
ACHIEVE WORK/LIFE INTEGRATION

- METHOD:
  - BE REAL
  - BE WHOLE
  - BE INNOVATIVE
BUILD SELF-EFFICACY

SELF-PERCEIVED CONFIDENCE THAT A GOAL IS ACHIEVABLE

SOURCES OF SELF-EFFICACY

- MASTERY – BY EXPERIENCE – “I'VE DONE THIS BEFORE”
- SOCIAL – BY SUPPORT – “YOU CAN DO THIS”
- VICARIOUS – BY EXAMPLE – “I'VE SEEN THIS DONE BEFORE”
- EMOTIONAL/PHYSIOLOGICAL – BY EXCITEMENT – “DISCOVERY IN MY FIELD MAKES ME HAPPY”

MENTORS SHOULD USE ALL OF THESE SOURCES TO INSTILL SELF-EFFICACY.

BUILD YOUR OWN SELF-EFFICACY

BUILD THE SELF-EFFICACY OF THOSE AROUND YOU
ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE

EACH MENTSEE IS ON A DYNAMIC CONTINUUM THROUGHOUT THEIR TRAINING
BEING A MENTEE - BGS GUIDELINES

- Pursues scientific goals with intensity, motivation and creativity, working with integrity in all aspects of graduate training.
- Takes ownership of her or his training, with guidance from the thesis advisor, thesis advisory committee, and relevant graduate group and BGS resources.
- Reads relevant scientific literature.
- Thinks intentionally and often about short-, mid-, and long-term training and development goals.
- Meets regularly with the thesis advisor to provide updates on the results of activities, experiments, and progress in general.
- Initiates meetings on a regular basis with her or his thesis advisory committee in accordance with graduate group policy, and will initiate meetings as needed or desired with members of this committee individually for guidance regarding research and other professional activities.
- Strives to be a good lab citizen, for example by taking part in shared laboratory responsibilities, using laboratory resources carefully and frugally, and working collegially and respectfully with all laboratory personnel.
- Attends and participates in laboratory meetings, and recognizes that seminars, journal clubs, and other professional activities encouraged or required by the thesis advisor, graduate group, or BGS are important to training.
- Maintains a detailed, organized, and accurate laboratory notebook.
- Complies with all institutional policies, including safe laboratory practices, responsible conduct of research, experimental design and transparency as it relates to reproducibility, and individual development plans.
- Discusses policies on work hours, sick leave, and vacation with the thesis advisor.
- Takes ownership of professional development, through completion of an IDP annually and with guidance from the thesis advisor, the thesis advisory committee, other mentors, BGS resources, and career counseling services.
BEING A MENTOR – BGS GUIDELINES

- Encourages independence in the student in terms of scientific thought and process.
- Is supportive, accessible, encouraging, respectful, and fosters open communication.
- Ensures that the research environment is safe, equitable, and free from harassment and discrimination.
- Models ethical behavior, and discusses ethical approaches in conducting the research.
- Communicates expectations regarding work habits and behavior in the laboratory.
- Works closely with the student to design a meaningful thesis project.
- Provides consistent and constructive feedback about laboratory skills, writing, and presentations, being honest when performance does not meet expectations.
- Encourages student presentations at local, national, and international conferences.
- Acknowledges student contributions.
- Facilitates timely publication of student research.
- Pursues opportunities to secure resources necessary to provide stable financial support.
- Prepares the student for her or his chosen career path by discussing goals and plans for achieving them.
- Consults with the student in identifying a position upon graduation, and provides letters of recommendation that fully represent the student’s experience and accomplishments.
BEING A THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER

- Critical evaluation of the student’s scientific progress, and of the competencies that relate to scientific pursuit in general.
- Feedback to the thesis mentor and/or student regarding feasibility of research goals and plans, especially when the proposed plan is incompatible with timely completion of the thesis.
- Cross-checks on training in responsible conduct of research and experimental design as it relates to reproducibility, verifying that the lab notebook is complete and well-managed.
- An active interest in the student’s professional development, using the student’s IDP as one point of discussion.
- Interactions that promote open dialog on science, skills, interests, and aspirations.
- A willingness to step in should problems in the dynamics between the student
RESOURCES

- **BGS**
  - [https://www.med.upenn.edu/bgs/documents/Responsibilitiesofthesismentorsthesisstudentsandthesisadvisorycommitteemembers_7-20-16_000.pdf](https://www.med.upenn.edu/bgs/documents/Responsibilitiesofthesismentorsthesisstudentsandthesisadvisorycommitteemembers_7-20-16_000.pdf)

- **PENN VICE PROVIST FOR EDUCATION – ADVISING AND MENTORING PHD STUDENTS**
  - [https://catalog.upenn.edu/graduate/academic-resources/advising-mentoring/](https://catalog.upenn.edu/graduate/academic-resources/advising-mentoring/)

- **EVIDENCE BASED MENTORING**
  - [https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/strategicplanimplementationblueprint/pages/EvidenceBasedMentoring.aspx](https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/strategicplanimplementationblueprint/pages/EvidenceBasedMentoring.aspx)

- **CENTER FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MENTORED EXPERIENCES IN RESEARCH (CIMER)**
  - [https://cimerproject.org/#/](https://cimerproject.org/#/)

- **NATIONAL RESEARCH MENTORING NETWORK**
  - [https://nrmnet.net/#undergradPopup](https://nrmnet.net/#undergradPopup)

- **ENTERING MENTORING**
WISHING YOU A JOURNEY FULL OF LEARNING, EXPLORATION, ACTUALIZATION, DISCOVERY AND SCIENCE