Sharpening Your Research Mentoring Skills

Facilitated by:
Isaac JT Strong, PhD
Director, Graduate Faculty Development

We will begin at 6:05 P.M.

While you wait, learn about
Grad 210: DEI Academic Leadership

https://graduate.ucsf.edu/grad-210-dei-leadership

Student applications are due November 1st
Learning objectives

Faculty will be able to …

• use the operational definition of a research mentor to better understand how to skillfully navigate the nuances of their role

• identify at least one strategy to improve their research mentoring skills

• describe the set of programs available to help them sharpen their research mentoring skills
The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM (2019)

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM)

~ 190 page report detailing multiple facets of mentorship

Online Guide for easier browsing and engagement
Major Recommendations:

1. Adopt an Operational Definition of Mentorship
2. Use an Evidence-Based Approach to Support Mentorship
3. Establish and Use Structured Feedback Systems to Improve Mentorship at All Levels
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5. Support Multiple Mentorship Structures
6. Reward Effective Mentorship
7. Mitigate Negative Mentorship Experiences

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Adapted from TRAIN-UP, course for students and postdocs who mentor other trainees:

The challenge for every PI: *Balancing multiple roles, wearing multiple hats*

- secure funding
- publish
- keep up with scientific literature
- career advancement
- supervise lab members
- hire new lab members
- manage conflicts
- run the lab

- guiding trainees
  - rotation projects
  - thesis project
  - critical thinking
  - independence
  - navigating academia
  - career planning
  - role model / advisor
  - sponsor

- teaching courses
- training lab members
- serving on quals/thesis committees
- admissions committees

You are a special kind of mentor: a Research Mentor
(A super mentor, combining mentor, educational and supervisory tasks)
All three roles have different goals, responsibilities, and expectations. These roles are, at times, in conflict with one another. PIs haven’t always received training and support in how to execute these roles effectively and inclusively.

Adapted from Manage Up: Managing Your Relationship with Your Research Mentor, an OCPD course for students and postdocs.
Thinking of yourself as only a mentor may not be helpful when navigating the nuanced situations and conflicts that you encounter.

Research Mentor

A unique combination of mentor, supervisor, and educator roles.

Our operational definition can help you:

1. Identify and prioritize skill development opportunities
2. Receive more targeted support
3. Be a clear, transparent and consistent leader

Research Mentor Skill #1: Clearly communicate your expectations

Be clear and intentional when needing to wear different hats

As your mentor …
As your supervisor …
As a faculty of X graduate program …

As your mentor, I know that doing [activity] will help you reach your goal. However, as your supervisor, I need you to finish these experiments by [date]. Let’s see if we can find a mutually agreeable solution.

Adapted from Manage Up: Managing Your Relationship with Your Research Mentor, an OCPD course for students and postdocs.
Takeaway:

Thinking of yourself as only a mentor may not be helpful when navigating the nuanced situations and conflicts that you encounter.

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- Mentor

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Research Mentor Skill #1: Clearly communicate your expectations

Be clear and intentional when needing to wear different hats

"As a research faculty and the PI of this lab, I have several roles: mentor, supervisor, and educator. The expectations that I have of you, and in turn the expectations you have of me, will be impacted by these roles in different ways. Importantly, there may be times when these role-specific expectations are at odds with one another and cause conflict. My hope is that we can avoid as much conflict as possible by explicitly writing these expectations out. If/when conflict arises, we will use these expectations as a starting point to engage in dialogue and find a mutually agreeable solution."

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Case Study

What we’re going to do:

1. I’m going to read through the case study. You can also read it by clicking on the Google Doc link in the chat panel.

2. You will go off to breakout rooms (10 minutes)
   a. Introduce yourselves
   b. Discuss the questions (in Google Doc and chat panel)

a. Come back together, and discuss your thoughts (10 minutes)
Case Study:

One of your postdocs makes an appointment to share her annual IDP with you. She sends her IDP to you ahead of the meeting, a two-page list of tasks and goals mapped out monthly for the next year. After a 1-minute scan, you are generally pleased with the progress she has predicted for near-term experiments, time for data analysis, and generating manuscript sections for her paper. However, you notice that during the summer months, she has one vague goal related to improving her teaching skills:

“Improve teaching skills: By May 15, confirm offer to teach Bio102 at CCSF during Summer quarter. Weekly night time lecture.”

You know that her desired career outcome is a tenure track teaching/research position at a state college setting. This teaching experience is probably needed for her to be competitive for jobs. However, you’re concerned about her ability to get everything done in the lab AND prepare and deliver a three-hour night lecture/lab once every week. And with funding running short, you need her to finish up her current project and publish the data so you can use that for grant proposals.
Case Study: Balancing mentor and supervisory roles

Is there anything you want to share with everyone from your small group discussion?

Did you hear something from a colleague that helped you think about this case study differently?

Do you have questions for your colleagues?
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What do we mean by identities?

Identity refers to the way one thinks about oneself, the way one is viewed by the world, and the characteristics that one uses to define oneself, including:

- Heritage/family/ethnicity
- Physical appearance
- Age
- Ability
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Socioeconomic status
- Worldview/belief system

How do identities play a role in trainee success?

In addition to the technical skills required to fulfill someone’s duties, factors that influence how someone works and interacts with others:

- their personality
- how they were socialized
- their values
- sense of familiarity and commonality with people in their community
- the differential impact of historical, structural, and institutional inequities

In order to foster success, it is important to acknowledge their various identities and understand that these identities shape what they do and how they do it.

Despite good intentions, if you don’t do this you risk causing harm, alienating, or demeaning the people you probably wish to respect, include, and serve.

Adapted from materials from Carlos Hoyt, PhD, LICSW
Are you having conversations about identities different than your own?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is motivating you?</th>
<th>What might be holding you back?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>• I don’t want to be misunderstood</td>
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<td>• To better connect with people different than me</td>
<td>• I know I am not supposed to be, but I am afraid of ‘cancel culture’</td>
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<td>• To foster a lab culture that supports the success of diverse trainees</td>
<td>• I am afraid of saying something wrong</td>
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<td>• I feel that I have a moral obligation to do so</td>
<td>• I feel like I don’t know enough to talk about it</td>
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<td>• Aren’t people supposed to leave their personal baggage at the door?</td>
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Research Mentor Skill #2: Reflect on your own identities, privileges, and biases

It’s okay to not have come to know*, but it can’t be okay to refuse to grow.

Are there times/situations when your identities are more apparent or more keenly felt?
How do your identities impact the way others perceive you or treat you?
How familiar are you with the lived experiences of those with identities different than your own?

Learn what you can, on your own, about the identities and cultures of your trainees.
- Read work by people of those identities and cultures

If you do ask people about their experiences, ask yourself why you are asking:
- If it is to listen, validate, and care for them – great!
- If it is for your own learning – don’t put that burden on them (especially if they’re BIPOC)

Model vulnerability by being willing to make mistakes along the way, while acknowledging the impact your mistakes may have on others (and changing behavior)
- Intent vs. impact
- Intent does not negate impact
Research Mentor Skill #2: Reflect on your own identities, privileges, and biases

A couple of ideas of where to start reading:

https://mentoring.ucsf.edu/dei-resources
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Small Group Discussions: (10 minutes)

• What’s motivating you?
• What might be holding you back?
• What next steps are you going to take?
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Graduate Faculty Development Program (GFDP)

Our goals:

- Partner with content experts to build out trainings/workshops for the roles of research mentors
- Use evidence-based approaches that will also foster inclusivity
- Support faculty
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Foundational DEI trainings to set the groundwork, shared language of how we create affirming and inclusive training environments.

Building your foundational understanding of these topics is going to be important for understanding how to be a more inclusive research mentor.
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Our aim is to cultivate a community of research mentors who can share knowledge, give advice, and support one another to transform graduate education.
### What trainings are available?

#### Mentor Role
- The Art and Science of Mentorship
- Effective Strategies for IDPs
- Career Conversations
- Promoting Student Mental Health and Wellness

#### Supervisor Role
- Setting Expectations with a “Welcome to the Lab” Letter
- Optimizing the Efficiency of Your Lab

#### Educator Role
- Holistic Review of Applications
- Tools and Tips for Virtual Learning

#### Foundation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- DEI Champions Training*
- Equity and Inclusion in the Lab – Carlos Hoyt
- Restorative Justice in the Lab (new community-building program)
- Grad 202 for Faculty (in development)

#### Major Resource:
Graduate Division DEI Primer

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### Non-GFDP Trainings
Faculty can have their participation in non-GFDP trainings recorded for program directors to review.
Research Mentor Skill #3: Connect your trainees with supplemental resources

You may not be able to fulfill all functions as their mentor …

… but you can ensure that your trainees have other mentors and resources to fill the gaps.

Research Mentor Skill #4: Lean on the resources available to help you with the areas you’re not as skilled at (yet).

Engage in and support community building activities

Can help foster a sense of belonging for lab members.
Can be a great way to learn about each other’s identities.

Managing conflict can be difficult on your own.

The Office of the Ombuds can help!
Do your trainees need help with career planning and preparations?

**Timeline for engaging with OCPD**

as a basic and biomedical science graduate student

Every student gets five free and confidential counseling appointments per academic year. Come talk to us!

- **Rachel Care, PhD**
  - Counseling topics:
    - Choosing your thesis lab
    - Managing your mentorship
    - Difficult conversations
    - Choosing your postdoc

- **Linda Louie, PhD**
  - Counseling topics for MIND/GSICE students:
    - Career exploration
    - Finding internships

- **Laurence Clement, PhD**
  - Counseling topics:
    - Exploring faculty positions
    - Planning an academic career
    - Inclusive mentoring

- **Michael Matrone, PhD**
  - Counseling topics:
    - Exploring diverse careers
    - Designing a job search
    - Applying, interviewing, and negotiating for diverse jobs

**Every Month Series**

- Learn to teach
- Introduction to Evidence-Based Pedagogy
- Inclusive Research Mentor Course
- Developing your Independent Research Program
- GRAD 201
- Planning Your Academic Career
- Practice teaching at USF/SFSU
- Inclusive Mentoring Fellows
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**Recommended for all students**

- Choosing rotation labs
- Choosing a thesis lab
- Managing PI relationship
- Finding your mentors
- Manage Up
- Managing collaborations
- Having a career conversation
- Choosing your postdoc
- Interviewing to avoid a bad fit

Access until 1 year after you graduate

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Do you need help managing conflict with your team?

Office of the Ombuds

Conflicts will arise on every team. Managing that conflict can be difficult on your own. Any individual may confidentially call the Office of the Ombuds at any point in a conflict or difficult situation.

- confidential consultations
- conflict coaching
- mediation
- trainings

Confidential.
Neutral.
Informal.
Independent.
Want some guidance on a specific situation?

Graduate Division
Dean’s Office

Isaac Strong
Director, Graduate Faculty Development

Liz Silva
Interim Dean, Graduate Division
Associate Dean of Graduate Programs

D’Anne Duncan
Assistant Dean for Diversity
and Learner Success

Gabriela Monsalve
Assistant Dean for Postdoctoral Scholars

Student Academic Affairs / Student Life

Alece Alderson
Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Life
First Generation to College Support Services

Maria Jaochico
Director, Student Rights and Responsibilities
*emphasis on building community using
Restorative Justice Practices

Tim Montgomery
Co-Director, Student Disability Services

Clay Littrell
Co-Director, Student Disability Services
Want some guidance on a specific situation?

International Students and Scholars Office

Providing the highest quality of service in areas that support the social, cultural, and immigration needs of the UCSF international community.

https:// isso.ucsf.edu/

Learning Resource Services

Do you feel a bit overwhelmed by your workload? Are you struggling academically? Would you just like to add more study skills to your repertoire? Set up an individual consultation with a Learning Resource Services specialist for guidance and advice geared to your specific needs and interests.

Graduate Division students: https:// ucsflrs.as.me/graduate-division
Thank you for being here!

Questions?

Isaac will send out the slides and provide a link with the resources mentioned in this workshop.

Please complete our evaluation survey to help us understand how we can continue to provide quality trainings and support.
UCSF Resources

Graduate Division Dean’s Office

- Grad Div DEI Primer
- Faculty Guide for Having Important Conversations About Race and Inequity in Science

Office of Career and Professional Development

- Timeline for Engaging with OCPD as a Basic and Biomedical Science Graduate Student