

# Develop Your Mentoring Philosophy:

A workshop for graduate students and postdocs to create individualized mentoring statements



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# Icebreaker/Introductions

- Name
- Role
- Why are you here today?

# Learning objectives

- Identify different roles of mentors in mentoring relationships
- Identify effective mentoring behaviors
- Discuss the role of a mentorship statement in a mentoring relationship
- Create an individualized mentoring philosophy based on your role, approach, and expectations

# Workshop assumptions...

- There is **no one way to be a good mentor** as mentoring styles and activities can be as varied as people and their relationships.
- However... **mentorship is a skillset** that can be **learned and improved upon** with practice and reflection.
- And... **many resources exist** to facilitate good mentorship practices... continually more that are **evidence-based**.
- Today's workshop will be focused on your mentorship roles within the large framework of **academic medicine**.

Go to page 1 of your handout and spend ~5 min to complete questions 1-3 individually

# What is a mentor?

- Person who helps guide mentees in the pursuit of shared goals
- Guiding mentees to identify strengths and develop skills
- Science parents (disciplinarian, cheerleader, confidante)
- Resource provider
- Targeted and customized to mentee (personalized)
- Prioritizing needs of mentee (guiding the protagonist of a story i.e., mentee on professional journey)

\*\*list curated from group discussion

# What is a mentor?

- In academics – synonymous with faculty adviser
- More than advising – often blends personal & professional support
- Usually develops (and changes) over an extended period of time

# What is mentorship?

- Process by which (mentor roles) get communicated to mentee
- Relationship (instead of process)
- Two-way interaction (shared goals?)
- Mentorship is a relationship owned by the mentee but supported by the mentor

\*\*list curated from large group discussion



# What is mentorship?

- Mentorship is a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of the relational partners through the provisions of career and psychosocial support.

# What are things that we might value in a good mentor?

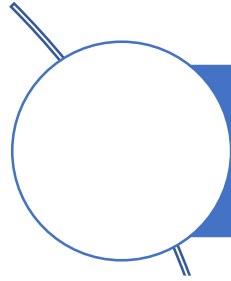
- Honesty (both directions)
- Patience (both directions)
- Approachable
- Room for growth (career exploration)
- Non-judgmental
- Positive (focusing on strengths)
- Do not promote self-interests over mentees
- Active listener
- Advice of timing is important
- Cares about you as a person
- Shared ethical values
- Dedicated time (focused and uninterrupted)

\*\*list curated from large group discussion

# What are things that we might value in a good mentor?

- Confidentiality, promptness (respecting time), enthusiasm, openness (especially to feedback), shared career path, etc.

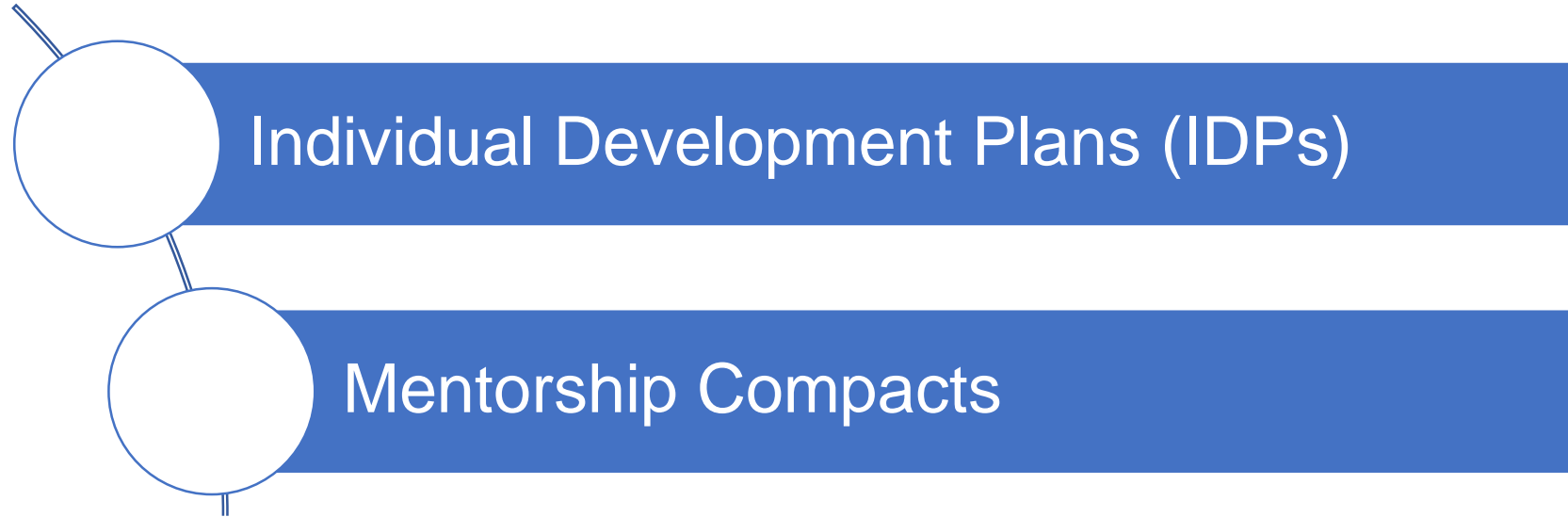
# Mentorship tools



## Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

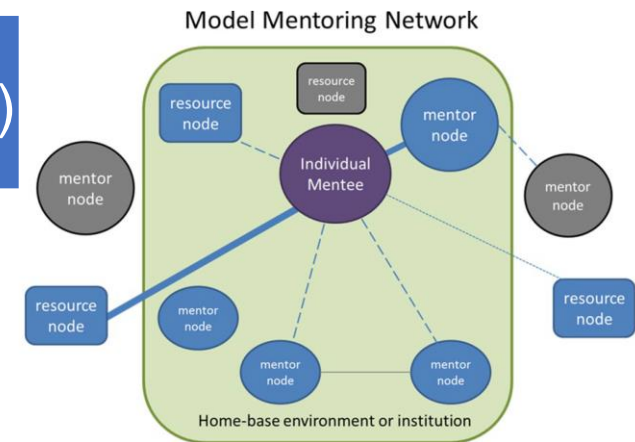
1. Career skills, interests, values
2. Scientific career paths
3. Articles & resources

# Mentorship tools

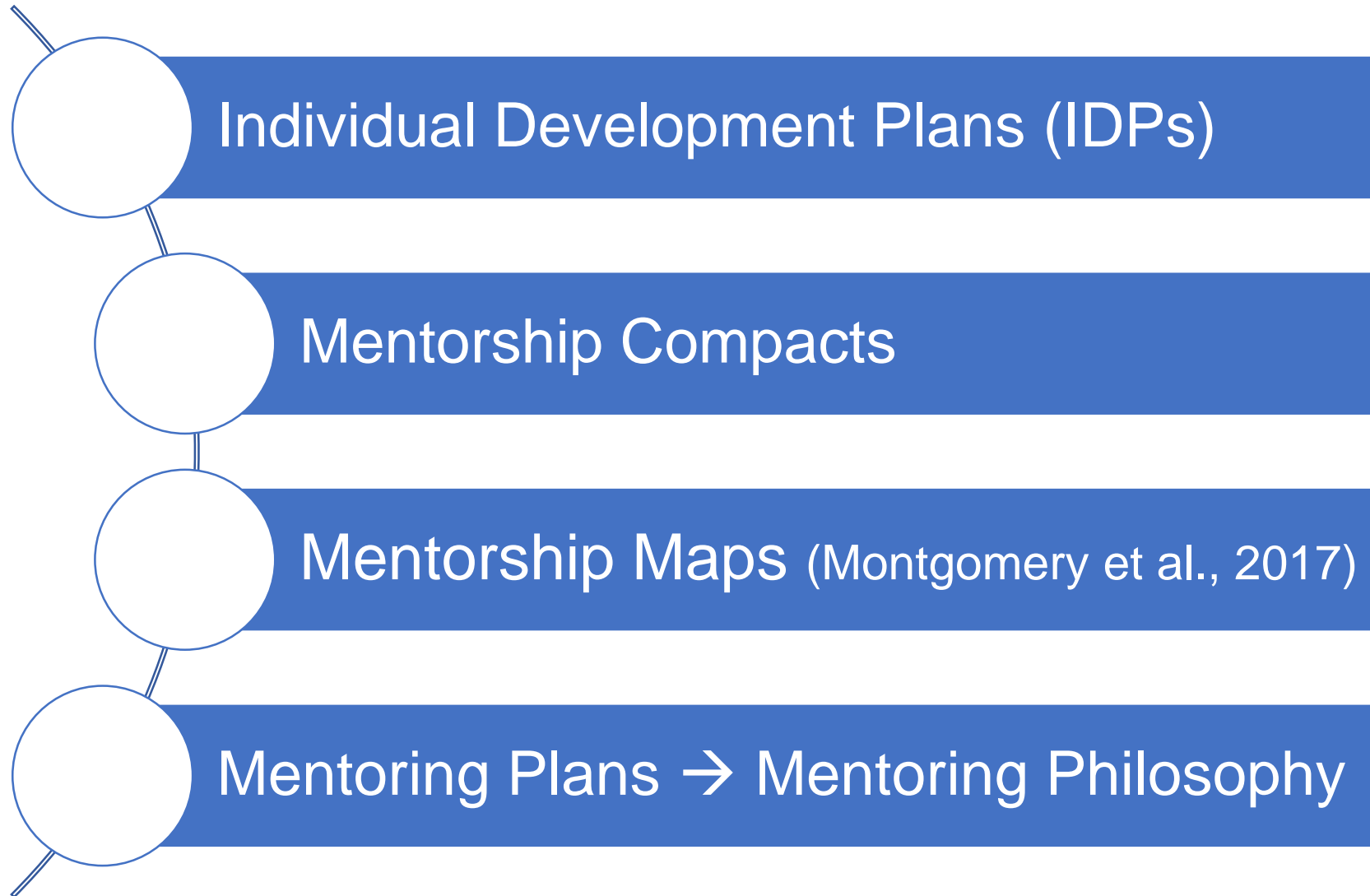


1. Pre-determined list
2. Team-based
3. Individual lab
4. Question-based
5. General purpose

# Mentorship tools



# Mentorship tools



1. Mentoring Compacts
2. Mentor's plan to assess own mentoring skills
3. Mentoring philosophy /statement

# Why choose a mentoring philosophy?

*Specifically for you...*

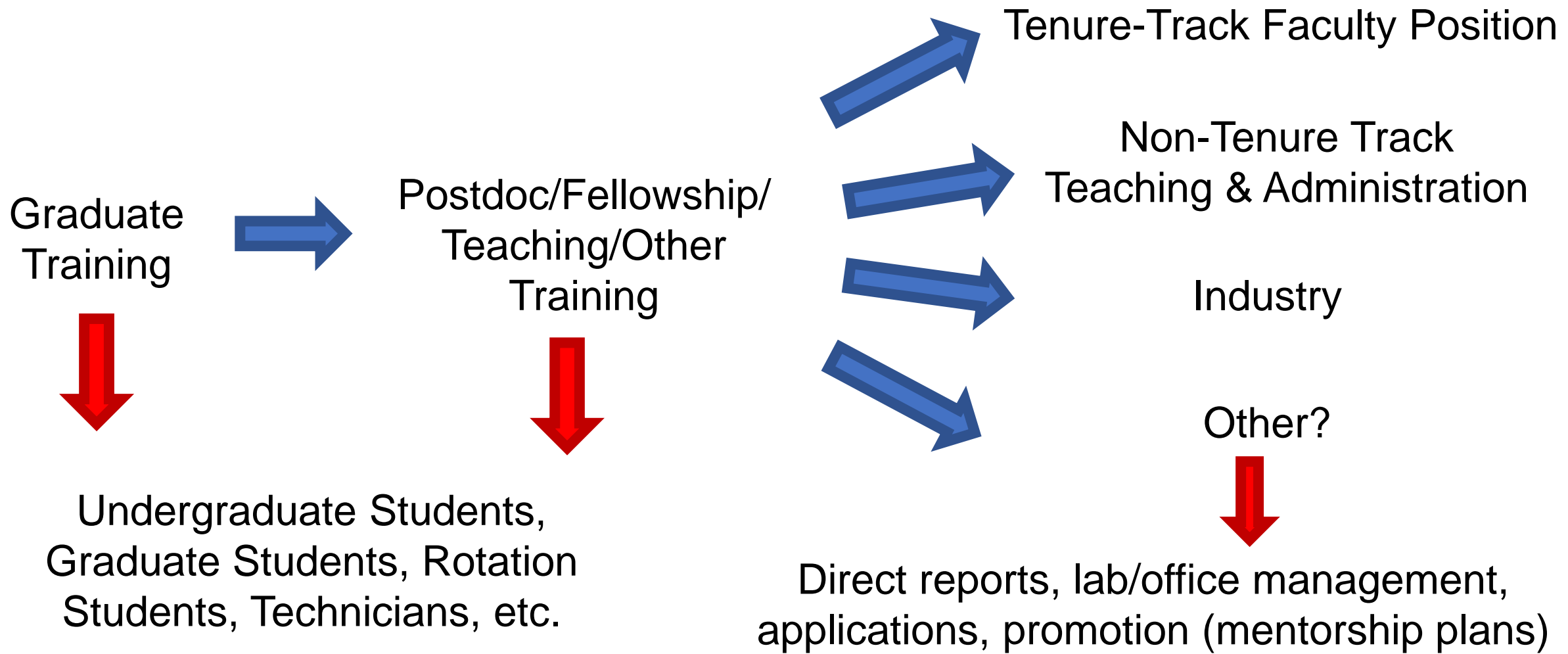
- Purposeful statement about your mentorship beliefs and practices
- Relatively small investment (1-2 page document)

*Specifically for your mentees...*

- A living document
  - Continually updated with your beliefs, roles, approaches
- Promotes equity and inclusion for all your mentees
  - Foundation for all mentees
  - Point of discussion to facilitate communication and expectations
  - Mentoring compacts, maps, IDPs, etc. can be designed more uniquely for specific mentees as needed



# Where and how is the mentorship philosophy useful in your training and career?



# Outcomes and impacts of effective mentorship

|   |  |
|---|--|
| When relationships are positive & effective...  |  |
| Overall positive effect on (1) academic achievement, (2) retention, (3) degree attainment, (4) career success, (5) career satisfaction, and (6) career commitment |  |
| Mentees' perceptions of the quality of their mentored experiences are key drivers in positive outcomes  |  |
| Positive mentor-mentee relationships and effective mentorship are particularly important for integrating women and UR students into the STEMM academic community  |  |

# Consequences of negative mentorship

| When relationships are positive & effective...  | When relationships are negative & ineffective...   |
|---|--|
| Overall positive effect on (1) academic achievement, (2) retention, (3) degree attainment, (4) career success, (5) career satisfaction, and (6) career commitment | Mentees who experience negative mentorship in the workplace report (1) lower job satisfaction, (2) higher likelihood of leaving their employer, and (3) increased stress |
| Mentees' perceptions of the quality of their mentored experiences are key drivers in positive outcomes  | These undesirable outcomes may result from mentee perceptions that the job, the organization, or the career may not be the right fit                                     |
| Positive mentor-mentee relationships and effective mentorship are particularly important for integrating women and UR students into the STEMM academic community  | One study found that workplace negative mentorship may be so damaging that mentees who experience it may be worse off than if they had no mentor at all                  |

Because mentorship is not one-size fits all, it's sometimes difficult to figure out and uncomfortable...

Tools like mentoring philosophies will help assess your practices (as a mentor) and open dialogue for feedback from your mentees.

If we broke mentorship up into individual roles, what kind of roles can we assign to different mentors?

| Mentor Roles                               | Role Definitions                              |
|--|---|
| Accountability                             |   |
| Coach (directing mentee advancement)       |   |
| Source of feedback                         | Technical feedback for your career            |
| Career advisor                             |   |
| Resource/connector                         |   |
| Advocate                                   | Professional (future) or currently (training) |
| Emotional support                          |   |
| Additional context                         |   |
| Confidante                                 |   |
| Good questioner                            | Timing, approach are important                |
| **list curated from large group discussion |   |

| Mentor Roles             | Role Definitions  |
|--------------------------|---|
| Intellectual Feedback    | People who provide critical feedback that helps you to improve your work.   |
| Intellectual Community   | People with whom you can brainstorm ideas and discuss your work.  |
| Sponsorship              | People who use their power and influence on your behalf to shape the story about who you are and the importance of your work.                               |
| Access to Opportunities  | People who provide access to opportunities that will advance your work and career.  |
| Accountability           | People who check to make sure that you are making quality and timely progress in your work.   |
| Role Models              | People who exhibit the values, attitudes, and behaviors that you aspire to emulate as a person and a professional.  |
| Professional Development | People (or organizations) who provide professional development training to advance your work and your career.   |
| Emotional Support        | People who provide support to help you maintain personal well-being (psychological and physical) as you navigate the ups and downs of your work and career. |
| Safe Space               | People with whom you can talk about anything and everything who will not judge or share the information.  |
| Financial Support        | People who you could go to in hard situations for financial support.  |

# What are things (behaviors) that good mentors do?

## Effective Mentor Behaviors

Provides structure and boundaries

Communicates & honors expectations in the relationship

Promoting an honest relationship; removing negative consequences or fear → communicating effectively

Having good/honest self-awareness (or trying to practice)

Supporting mentee self-reflection

\*\*list curated from large group discussion



| Effective Mentor Behavior        | Definition  | Concrete example for yourself? |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Align Expectations               | Mentors make expectations explicit and create a safe space for mentees to make their expectations explicit. Together they engage in negotiations to ensure that expectations of all parties can be met.   |                                |
| Assess Understanding             | Mentors work with mentees to understand what the mentees know and are capable of and consider what the mentees can do to further develop and achieve success.   |                                |
| Communicate Effectively          | Mentors engage in active listening with mentees, provide timely and constructive feedback, recognized that communication style differs, and work with mentees to accommodate their personal communication styles.   |                                |
| Address Equity and Inclusion     | Mentors reflect on and account for the biases and assumptions they may bring to a mentoring relationship and acknowledge and account for how their background might differ from the background of their mentees.  |                                |
| Foster Independence              | Mentors work to motivate mentees, build their confidence, stimulate their creativity, acknowledge their contributions, and navigate their path toward independence.   |                                |
| Promote Professional Development | Mentors help mentees to set career goals, develop and refine plans related to career goals, develop a professional network, and access resources that will be helpful in their professional development. Mentors also recognized the influence they have as a professional role model |                                |

# What is a mentoring philosophy?

- 1-2 sentences that explain and justify the way that you approach personal and professional relationships with students as you guide their development into professionals

Helpful question for framing:

- If you were giving advice to a peer on how to be an effective mentor, what would you tell that person?

# Examples – mentoring philosophies

- My mentoring philosophy is based on recognizing, respecting, and investing in the individual, celebrating diversity of thought, and fostering collaborative efforts that allow us to jointly bring our unique experiences to bear in addressing the cell biology of the synapse and behavior. (Colon-Ramos, 2018)
- Mentoring non-science students to conduct and disseminate STEM & STEM-education undergraduate research to increase content knowledge, skill sets, and the overall scientific literacy of our citizenry.  
(<https://sites.psu.edu/drlauraguertin/mentoring-philosophy/>)
- As a mentor, I will not simply lead by example, but instead I will be involved in my mentee's development. I will do this by being mindful of the mentee's future by fostering skill sets that are valuable not only to their present work but also to their future careers. ([http://www.astro.wisc.edu/~kbarger/Mentoring\\_Philosophy.pdf](http://www.astro.wisc.edu/~kbarger/Mentoring_Philosophy.pdf))

Now, try to write your own philosophy...

# (Beginning to) write your mentoring statement

Using your mentoring philosophy as a start, begin drafting your full mentoring statement (1-2 pages) being sure to address key aspects of your mentoring philosophy.

Be sure to demonstrate your approach and support your philosophy by integrating effective behaviors and specific examples that you want to model for your mentees dependent on your roles(s) (i.e., your current approaches or what you want to try going forward).

Helpful questions for framing:

- If you were giving advice to a peer on how to be an effective mentor, what would you tell that person?
- If they ask how to do each item you mention, what would you say?

# Finishing your statement and getting peer feedback

1. Exchange names & contact info with the people at your table
2. Agree on a deadline (January 2020) to have finished drafting your mentorship statements and email them to each other
3. Agree to a date to return all mentoring statements to peers with feedback and/or comments
4. Discuss how and when you plan to disseminate this mentoring statement to your mentees

# Additional resources

- National Research Mentoring Network [<https://nrmnet.net/>]
- Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences on Research (CIMER) [<https://cimerproject.org/>]
- Mentoring Compact examples [<https://ictr.wisc.edu/mentoring/mentoring-compactscontracts-examples/>]
- Free online research mentor certificate modules through University of MN CTSI & NRMN – register as external user using the provided guide [<https://www.ctsi.umn.edu/education-and-training/mentoring/mentor-training>]

# Additional resources

- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. *The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.17226/25568>
- Montgomery, BL. (2017) Mapping a Mentoring Roadmap and Developing a Supportive Network for Strategic Career Advancement.  
[<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244017710288>]
- Colon-Ramos, DA. (2018) Statements of Mentorship.  
[<https://www.eneuro.org/content/5/6/ENEURO.0411-18.2018>]