

The Active Academic Mentor

- The Greek mythology terms mentorship as “wise guide.”
- The term mentor is one that a faculty or advisor will obtain over time if the relationship includes a personal investment in the student success.
- An active mentor is an experienced supervisor who by mutual consent takes an active interest in the student’s professional and academic development.
- He /she is a trusted guide, provider or wise counsel, confidant, advice giver, advocate, advisor, and role model who takes time and demonstrates commitment toward a student’s academic and professional development.

The Mentoring Relationship

• A Mentor

- ✓ can accurately assess the mentee’s abilities
- ✓ believes in the mentee’s strengths
- ✓ is respectful of evolving identity
- ✓ assists the student to have development in areas of growth
- ✓ sets reasonable standards, goals, and expectations for the protégé
- ✓ feels some responsibility for mentee’s success

• Relationship

- ✓ often time-limited and evolving during different timeframes
- ✓ usually entails mutual interests in area of study
- ✓ personal and professional relationship that promotes growth
- ✓ cannot be assigned, dictated, or contrived

Types of Mentorship

- Boss Mentors
- E-Mentors (virtual mentors)
- Group Mentoring
- Inspirational Mentors
- Family Member Mentors
- Peer Mentors

(Ensher & Murphy, 2005)

Characteristics of a Mentor

- Honest, trustworthy, and respectful
- Self-confident and self-motivated
- Good listener and communicator
- Patient and allows for mistakes
- Knowledgeable about organization
- Genuinely invested in students’ goals
- Versatile and flexible
- A Teacher and learner
- Information distributor
- Reads and understands others
- Judges fairly and objectively
- Provides structure and helps develop a vision
- Allows student to learn by application and feedback
- Fosters open communication
- Models leadership qualities

Characteristics of a Mentee

- Possesses a positive and enthusiastic attitude
- Learns from the experience and wisdom of others
- Is receptive to instruction and critical feedback
- Works hard
- Asks questions and indicates when help is needed
- Does not expect mentor to do work that the mentee is capable of completing
- Does not expect an instantaneous relationship
- Does not expect to obtain benefits that have not been earned
- Does not expect perfection from mentor
- Is willing to accept the limitations and strengths of the mentor

(William-Nickelson, 2005)



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Student/Faculty Matching Criteria

The relationship includes . . .

- Time commitment must be clear for both parties
- An overlap in an academic area of interest
- A good working relationship with quality interaction

Student must . . .

- become acquainted with mentor's research
- demonstrate skills and willingness to learn
- show motivation, good attitude and strong work ethic
- be respectful of mentor's time

Faculty must . . .

- Express an interest in working with student individually
- Demonstrate sensitivity to students' needs and goals
- Be invested in student's academic growth
- Have the time to develop a quality mentorship relationship

Extra Tips:

- Seek a mentor early in your academic career
- Have the mentor be familiar with your area of interest to assist with the graduate school transition
- Find multiple mentors to assist you in the various dimensions of your education

Maximizing your Mentorship Relationship – Student Directives

- Pay attention to your inner voice and personal needs
- Explore your research interests exploring your personal, community, and cultural needs
- Learn about faculty's working and mentoring style from other students
- Establish ties with multiple faculty and key university personnel
- Express your professional needs in a respectful way
- Explore and pursue your passion, not allowing your faculty's passion to override your own
- Actively work to establish and maintain a quality relationship
- Value and respect mentor time - come prepared
- Be as open and non-defensive to critical feedback as possible
- Learn from all interactions and experiences
- Be transparent about skills and abilities, strengths and limitations
- Anticipate having to initiate contact
- Don't make every interaction one of need
- Recognize that that not all advisees are mentees and not all mentees are advisees

MENTORING MINORITY STUDENTS: IMPLEMENTATION AND BARRIERS (Joseph L. White, Ph.D., 2002)

