Managing and Mentoring Graduate Students

FAST – ADVANCE
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Recruiting the Best Graduate Student

• Contact early, often and directly – invite for visit if possible
• Recruit on a continual basis
• Check references closely
• Recruit from diverse sources
• Set a deadline and review packages when information is complete
Set Expectations Early and in Writing  
What to Cover in Initial Meetings

- Roles and Responsibilities – Grad School Brochures  
- Goals, Professional Development  
- Strengths and weaknesses  
- Work Style  
- Work Plan  
- Meetings  
- Feedback and Drafts  
- Intellectual Property, Human Subjects, Ethics  
- Confidentiality  
- Recommendation letters, Travel expectations
Mentoring and Graduate Education

- Most important factor to continue or withdraw from graduate school is the relationship with an advisor or mentor.
- Having a mentor helps maximize the educational experience through guidance and support.
- Helps in the retention of women and minorities who face unique barriers.
Graduate Students’ Perspectives of a Quality Mentoring Relationship

1. Professional development opportunities
2. Advice on post-degree plans
3. Effective communication
4. Trust and mutual respect
5. Regularly scheduled meetings
6. Interactions outside of school
7. Genuine interest
What Can Go Wrong

1. Attention to Detail – missed deadlines
2. Fabrication/Falsification/Plagiarism
3. Funding issues
4. Publication/authorship
5. Career choice/expectation
6. Professional Development – how they spend their time outside the research arena
Your Experience as a Mentor

1. Describe some of the struggles you have experienced mentoring graduate students.

2. What strategies have you learned to help you become a better mentor to graduate students?
Elements of Quality Mentoring Relationships

• Instrumental Support
  – Professional development
  – Networking
  – Gaining knowledge of field
  – Gaining skills needed to succeed

• Psychosocial Support
  – Counseling (e.g., remedy for stress)
  – Empathy
  – Friendship
  – Socialization related to norms of discipline
Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

• Coaching that is developmental
  – Skill enhancement
  – Confidence

• Opportunities for non-academic interactions
  – Genuine interest in the total person

• Consistency
  – Within and across gender and race/ethnicity

• Encouragement to identify other mentors
Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

• Groom graduate students to be colleagues
• Bi-directional relationship
• Don’t force assimilation to majority culture/norms/behaviors to be successful in STEM
  – Encourage students to embrace their racial/ethnic identity while still functioning in STEM circles (e.g., conferences, lab groups)
• Be an advocate, esp. for females and URMs
• Avoid microaggressions
  – Microinsults, microassaults and micro-invalidations
Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

- Attentive listening
- Mutual respect
- Honesty and transparency
- Address academic and professional weaknesses directly but with tact
- Fostering of academic and social integration
- Encourage peer to peer mentoring
- Recognize it takes time
Values and Benefits of Mentoring for Faculty

- Personal satisfaction and professional growth
- Professional and career opportunities
- Rejuvenating and motivating during mid or late career stages
- Enhance technical skills
- Networking, collaboration and sharing of ideas with others
- Increase in the number of graduate students
- Increased productivity
- Serve as an example to other colleagues
Questions?
References

- http://www.grad.washington.edu/mentoring/faculty/how-to-mentor-graduate-students.shtml
- http://grad.berkeley.edu/policies/guides/appendix-11-best-practices-for-faculty-mentoring-of-graduate-students-approved-by-the-graduate-council-march-6-2006/
- http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/interactions/mentoring-graduate-students/#stages
- http://www.unl.edu/mentoring/introduction
- http://www.ydae.purdue.edu/MAP/