A Mentor?

Homer: “wise and trusted counselor”

A Mentor = someone who takes a special interest in helping another person develop into a successful professional.

Mentoring = professional + personal relationship
QUIZ: TRUE or FALSE

1. There is no such thing as an ideal mentor.
2. Success depends on mentor & mentee
3. Every research advisor is a mentor
4. A role model is a mentor
5. Every academic advisor is a mentor
6. A department chair is always a mentor
7. You are in good hands if you have one good mentor.
8. Thank goodness, there is a well established mentoring plan that will work for all students.
Research on Mentoring

Research shows that those who are mentored achieve greater career advancement and higher work satisfaction than those who are not mentored.
Who’s Most at Risk?

- Students
- People working in jobs considered atypical for their gender
- First generational professionals
- ... and others
You can be a Mentor at various levels

As an undergraduate
    As a graduate student
        As a faculty member
            As a professional
                In formal mentoring programs
The Topic: Mentoring in Academia
Prioritize Your Questions

(5 minutes)

1. Choose your top highest priority questions to be answered with respect to:

   "Being a Mentor in academia"

2. For each, be ready to justify.
Report Out & Discussion

Most Important Questions on Being a Mentor in Academia
# Giving and Receiving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Mentor</strong></th>
<th><strong>Mentee</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Confidence, security</td>
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<td>Regular contact</td>
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<td>Listening</td>
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<td>Self confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Professional reputation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Prioritize Your Questions

(5 minutes)

1. Choose your top highest priority questions to be answered with respect to:

   “Being a Mentee in academia”

2. For each, be ready to justify.
Report Out & Discussion

Most Important Questions on Being a Mentee in Academia
Build a TEAM of mentors with varying expertise/experience
Be sure to thank your Mentors
Recommended Reading

National Academy of Sciences
National Academy of Engineering
Institute of Medicine
National Academy Press
Washington, D.C. 1997
More Information for Your Reading Pleasure
Benefits of being Mentored

+ Knowledge of your discipline’s expectations
+ Solid foundation of skills and knowledge in your discipline
+ Self confidence
+ Independent problem solving skills
+ A good start on a professional reputation
+ Access to a professional network
Benefits of being a Mentor

+ Facilitate another’s accomplishments: parenthood

+ Most likely to recruit/retain good students

+ Stay at the forefront of discipline

+ Continually hone own mentoring skills

+ Increase confidence

+ Strengthen your own network

+ Give back
Imposter Syndrome

www.impostersyndrome.com

Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects.
Woodrow Wilson
At various times in your life, you can benefit from Mentors

As an undergraduate
   As a graduate student
   As a faculty member
   As a professional
Formal mentoring programs
How to Find Mentors?
Look Everywhere

- In your department at your institution
- Outside your department at your institution
- In your field outside your institution
- Outside your field outside your institution
Consider Your Mentors…

Who are they?
Why do you consider them a mentor?

High School
College
Graduate School
Now…
A Good mentor provides:

- advice on courses, career, personal challenges
- Contacts/connections for networking,
- information
- letters of reference,
- Encouragement
- Opportunities (advocates)
- Coaching
- Help: how to use your strengths;
  overcome your weaknesses
- A role model
- A listening ear
- Powerful/probing questions
- ALL possibilities, w/o judgment
A Good mentor is:

Interested in you
Supportive
Patient
Knowledgeable
Competent
Accessible
Respectful of privacy
Empathetic
Honest
Compassionate
Be a Mentor

Help Them Get There
Be A Mentor
Get Started…

What do you have to offer to others?

What ways can you start small in mentoring?

Start by building a relationship.

Learn by doing.
Mentoring the Individual

+ Get to Know the Person
  - background: context
  - goals: long term/ short term
  - strengths
  - weaknesses

+ Assess the Individual
  - knowledge
  - skills
  - experience
In a New Mentor Relationship

Build trust
Express commitment
Set expectations (e.g., # times to meet/month)
Set limits
Create goals (in writing)

Every mentoring relationship has phases,

Meet frequently

What did you want (need) to know then?
Mentoring Undergraduates

What would you do?

Attention:
Advice:
Information:
Encouragement:
Opportunities:
Mentoring Undergraduates

Attention:
Semesterly meetings, office hours, rec letters

Advice:
Discuss course alternatives, outside classroom activities

Information:
map through requirements, career choices

Encouragement:
Praise successes

Opportunities:
Research, grad school, award nominations, TAs
Mentoring Graduate Students

Attention: Weekly research meetings, individual progress and goal-making, annual review

Advice: Course selection, professional skill building activities, time manage.

Information: Requirements, career choices

Encouragement: Praise successes, challenge

Opportunities: Conferences, reviewing, teaching, mentoring, internships, service, funding
Mentoring Junior Faculty

Attention: Available for short chats/cons.
Work together on proposals and research.

Advice: Time management, pre-tenure focus of activities, teaching methodology, life balance.

Information: Department and university policies and traditions, criteria for promotion, history of department/student issues, grant proposal writing strategies, resource people.

Encouragement: Praise successes, relate own experiences.

Opportunities: Program committees, service, funding agency contacts and programs.
Barriers to GOOD mentoring:
Barriers to GOOD mentoring:

- Faculty member doesn’t have enough time
  - Being too busy is not acceptable
- Faculty member and student in competition with each other
- Faculty member and student lack personal experience with people of different backgrounds
- Trust is not there – different agenda
- Communication problems - listening
- Unrealistic expectations
What NOT to Do as Mentor

Be Inflexible. (treat all the same)

Abuse your authority. (students doing your work)

Be overbearing. (dictating choices)

Do, don’t overdo. (too close)

Clone yourself. (dependent)
Mentee has responsibilities too

Attention: SHOW UP with an open mind and respect

Advice: LISTEN + FOLLOW as appropriate

Information: LISTEN, LEARN, and USE

Encouragement: LISTEN + SAVOR

Opportunities: EXPLOIT
Improving the Mentoring Pool

Through Institutional Support:

+ Workshops on mentoring
  - For different levels
+ Regular informational sessions for mentors
+ Discussions on relevant topics:
  ethical values,
  balancing career and life,
  professional standards
+ Reward good mentoring
  - Awards
  - Promotion and tenure criteria
Credits for Content

Tracy Camp
Mary Lou Soffa
The books listed earlier