

2008 Mentoring Workshop

Graduate Students and Postdocs
Breakout

March 31, 2008

1. What should the mentee understand about the mentor in order to optimize the relationship?

- They need to understand the mentor's background, their goals, and what areas of expertise they have.
- Need to understand their time commitment, their expectations for the relationship, and how the mentor views the relationship (mentor/advisor)
- Both parties need to understand who the other represents and what they bring to the table
- Mentor should be willing to ask other mentors for their advice in helping out their mentee.
- Mentee understand their own background and goals

2. What are the keys to success in working with a diverse group and do peer or faculty mentoring play a role?

- The group needs to understand that the group is diverse, do not make assumptions or say things that could offend others
- LISTEN and be able to communicate on all levels
- Make sure everyone knows that the group has an open platform to communicate and everyone has a unique “story.”
- Faculty is a great Organizer to bring together diverse groups.
- Peers are a huge support group and make for great mentors for other peers.

3. What are the expectations of the mentee in an ongoing mentor/mentee relationship?

- Mentee initiates contact with mentor
- Mentee is willing to learn from the mentor
- Mentee sets their own goals
- Mentee comes prepared with questions (an agenda)—for what aspects they need mentoring
- Mentee makes a presence
- Mentee learns through observation (i.e. attends professional meeting)
- Mentee is not afraid to ask mentor what they need
- Mentee acknowledges when what they are hearing is not working for them

4. Do you think there is a difference in mentoring students with diverse backgrounds? If so why?

- Yes, however must acknowledge that “diverse” is a loaded term and must be defined (cultural, racial/ethnic, international, situational, experiential differences)
- Mentor must be sensitive to and aware of the diversity
- Mentor must be prepared to be outside of comfort zone
- Mentor must reach out even in the midst of not identifying
- Necessary for mentee to be bold