

# Mentoring Relationships

## Ten Questions to Ask a Potential Mentor at Your First Meeting

1. What are your professional interests in research, teaching, industry, and service?
2. Given my goals and interests, what courses, projects, or organizations should I become involved with and explore?
3. What other people or experiences does the university offer to help me develop professionally?
4. What are your other commitments? How much time do you normally give to students?
5. What do you consider to be a normal workload and how much time do you expect me to devote to research and teaching?
6. What strengths, skills, and interests are you looking for in your mentees?
7. How often do you like to meet one on one with mentees?
8. Can I develop a dissertation topic from the research I may do with you?
9. How many other mentees do you have? How many mentees have you graduated and how long did it take them to graduate?
10. Will you be at the university for the entire year? If not, can we maintain regular communication?

## The Ideal Students

- Choose their mentors thoughtfully and wisely by becoming familiar with the professor's research and professional interests.
- Have developed short and long term professional and research goals and share these goals with their mentors.
- Are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Submit work promptly and come to meetings prepared with specific goals, questions, and tasks they would like to accomplish in that meeting.
- Communicate regularly with their mentors about their progress, changes, or professional needs.
- Clarify their mentors' expectations and policies.
- Respect their mentors' time and reputation.
- Are proactive in their own mentoring relationships, asking mentors for information and advice on workshops that will enhance their professional development.
- Know the requirements for the degree program and explicitly ask mentors for help in successfully meeting those requirements.
- Follow their mentors' advice and follow up with their mentor about any advice and suggestions.

## The Ideal Mentors

- Read and return work promptly with constructive comments.
- Develop, with their students, a list of short- and long-term research and professional goals.
- Clarify expectations and policies.
- Communicate regularly about research progress, scheduling changes, and workshops or seminars that will aid in the students' professional development.
- Provide students with opportunities to develop and practice professional skills required for research, teaching, and service.
- Help students develop innovative dissertation topics.
- Help students develop marketable job dossiers.
- Support the variety of professional interests students may have in research, industry, teaching, and service.
- Facilitate networking.
- Know course and milestone requirements of students' degree programs.
- Treat students respectfully as future colleagues.
- Encourage students and provide emotional and moral support.
- Acknowledge that students have responsibilities outside the academy.