BioRISE “Entering Mentoring” Workshop
April 30, 2024
Matt Peck, PhD; Asst Prof, Training Programs, WSU

Excerpts from WSU Land Acknowledgement
https://wsu.edu/about/land-acknowledgement/

• Washington State University acknowledges that its locations statewide are on the homelands of Native peoples, who have lived in this region from time immemorial

• The University expresses its deepest respect for and gratitude towards these original and current caretakers of the region. **As an academic community, we acknowledge our responsibility to establish and maintain relationships with these tribes and Native peoples, in support of tribal sovereignty and the inclusion of their voices in teaching, research and programming.**

• We acknowledge that the dispossession of Indigenous lands was often taken by coercive and violent acts, and the disregard of treaties. For that, we extend our deepest apologies
Suggested objectives for today

1. Enhance the BioRISE mentor community by strengthening connections in a participant-centered facilitation
2. Identify tools and practices for STEM mentoring by exploring “Entering Mentoring” (EM) case studies and competencies
3. Reflect on BioRISE-specific needs for developing empathy for mentees and onboarding mentor teams into this project
   • What kinds of mentoring tools could be useful programmatically?
   • Do we want to modify the EM curriculum to more directly speak to indigenous perspectives?

Facilitation Agreements
Any changes or additions?

We will...
1. Value everyone’s participation and be in choice to participate.
2. “Share the air” to encourage broader participation.
3. Help others take the risk to voice new ideas or raise challenging questions.
4. Listen to understand first, then consider making a response.
5. Trust others intentions, while naming the impacts of their statements.
6. Ground contributions to our own experiences with “I” and “me” pronouns.
7. Keep stories shared confidential, allowing lessons learned to leave the room.
Brief introductions

1. Role in BioRISE project
2. Briefly echo back to:
   • Story told (January event)
   • Values identified (March meeting)
   • Or other reason participating

“Entering Mentoring” by CIMER (Univ. Wisc.)

• Curriculum with online library for customization
• Facilitator training and evaluation support
• Developed and demonstrated to improve outcomes for mentees from underrepresented groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIMER “Competencies”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressing Equity and Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining Effective Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating Ethical Behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY #1: Case study A
“Looking for Harmony” & *Enhancing Work-Life Integration*

Case #1: *Looking for Harmony*
Dr. Feinstein is a 32-year-old Assistant Professor on the tenure track who joined the faculty one year ago at the time she received a NIH Career Development Award. Dr. Feinstein is expecting her first child this year and would like to request a three-month maternity leave, and consider returning to work in a part-time capacity. However, Dr. Feinstein has not raised this issue with her mentor, a 60-year-old Professor, whom she senses is already growing frustrated that she does not put in the number of hours that his generation did. Dr. Feinstein has heard that a newly hired assistant professor is a real “go-getter” working 70-80 hours a week, and she fears this new mentee will make her look as if she is less serious about her research career.

Questions for Discussion
“Looking for Harmony”

Guiding Questions for Discussion (modified from source):
1. What are the main themes raised in this case study?
2. What approaches should Dr. Feinstein use to work through her concerns?
3. As a mentor how do you address generational differences (with respect to work ethic, work-life integration, or other areas) that arise with your younger mentees?
4. How do differences in gender, cultural, and racial identity affect discussions involving work-life balance and integrity?
Would this NCFDD mentoring team organizer help Dr. Feinstein, you, or a mentee?

Elaborations on Work-Life Integration

- ELABORATION QUESTIONS

1. How would you optimize the diagram to the right to demonstrate “work-life balance” and “work-life integration”?
2. How comfortable are you having conversations about work-life integration with mentees?
3. Have you used tools that help folks ground themselves in their experiences & values?
   a) “Who are You?” storytelling (welcome event)
   b) Values sort = identify important values from a list (March 26)
   c) Describe someone that you admire or view as heroic
   d) Describe what you want to be known for as a _____ in five years
   e) Write about important episodes in your life that helped define you

Sources: WSU-LIFT, WSU ADVANCE-Vaults, “Total Leadership” by Stew Friedman
ACTIVITY #2: Important Events & Active Listening
adapted from activity by Dr. Collette Taylor, Seattle University

1. Write about 1–3 important episodes/experiences in your live that helped define who you are now

2. Pick one of these episodes to share with a partner
   1. Partner A is asked to listen to Partner B without speaking
   2. Then partner A retells Partner B’s story as if they are Partner B
   3. Switch partners and repeat the process

   • How did sharing, sharing back, and hearing the share back feel?
   • How does this activity relate to mentoring?

How are we doing?
ACTIVITY #3: Small group work on other Entering Mentoring case studies

1. Identify a spokesperson, timekeeper, and facilitator
2. You’ll have 15 minutes to work through the case and questions in small groups
3. They share out on key elements for about five minutes with the rest of the group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case label</th>
<th>Mentorship theme</th>
<th>Case Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Aligning Expectations</td>
<td>Sulk Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Promoting Research Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>Family Ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Managing Effective Communication</td>
<td>Absent Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Managing Effective Communication</td>
<td>Putting in Enough Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Managing Effective Communication</td>
<td>The Slob</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learning Objective:
Listen to and consider the expectations of their mentee in the mentoring relationship and consider how personal and professional differences may impact expectations.

Case B

The Sulk Undergraduate

I mentored an undergraduate student who came from another university for the summer. I explained the project to him and taught him some basic techniques and approaches needed for the project. Because my professor and I did not think he had sufficient background for a more complicated project, we chose to have him work on a more basic one.

He was very quiet for the first 10 days of the project, and then he went to my adviser and complained about the project. He said he wanted a project “like Mark’s.” Mark was a student with a strong disciplinary background and his project was much more advanced. My adviser insisted that my mentee keep the project I had designed for him, but the student became sulky. As the summer went on and he didn’t get much of his work done, I began to wonder if he understood what we were doing or even cared about it.

Guiding Questions for Discussion:

1. What are the main themes raised in this case study?
2. What kind of conversations regarding expectations might have been helpful early in this relationship?
3. What kind of conversations would be helpful once the student asked for a different project? Who should be involved in these conversations?
Case C

Handout #6 Case

Study: Family Ties
As part of the departmental honors program at her small liberal arts college, Professor Rebecca Temin has been mentoring a very bright and motivated undergraduate student researcher, Winona Davis. Winona's high quality data have contributed to several projects and her results have even opened a new line of investigation, positioning Professor Temin to compete for federal funding. Winona is well suited for research and is very engaged in the lab, both when performing experiments and also when planning and discussing the experiments. Given her talent for research, Professor Temin has been encouraging her to pursue a PhD and Winona has expressed great interest in doing so. However, she feels conflicted about leaving the local area where her tribe is based and her extended family lives. She is an integral contributor to the care of her aging grandparents and feels a strong sense of responsibility to her family and her tribe. Even getting her to agree to attend a 2-day undergraduate research conference to present her findings involved a difficult decision making process. Professor Temin knows that in order for Winona to pursue a PhD, she must train at a university.

Guiding Questions for Discussion:
1. What are the main themes raised in this case study?
2. What are some of the potential threats to self-efficacy that Winona is experiencing here?
3. What are some of the questions that Professor Temin could ask to better understand Winona’s self-efficacy and the personal/cultural factors that may be influencing her beliefs about her capability to pursue a PhD?
4. What source (or sources) of self-efficacy might you use to boost Winona's self-efficacy for pursuing a PhD program?
5. What story from your own academic experience (or the experiences of previous mentees) could you convey to Winona that would demonstrate empathy and provide an example of ways to adjust or cope?

Learning Objective:
Articulate the ethical issues they need to discuss with their mentees. Manage the power dynamic inherent in the mentoring relationship.

Case D

Case Study Absent Mentor

A professor often mentors three or four students over the course of a summer, each one working on a different field project. Unfortunately, the professor was so busy with all of her projects that she rarely stayed at the field station, leaving her undergrads to "fend for themselves" in her absence. Her students often had to borrow items from other projects, broke equipment, or generally relied on other graduate students for support. One day, a few of us got fed up with the responsibility of dealing with her students, so we called a meeting with the students and explained some common courtesy rules for living and working at a field station. Of course, their mentor was not around at that time, but we were polite and tried to be effective and straightforward with the students. Later, we got an angry phone message from their mentor saying that we should focus on our own projects and leave her students alone.

Guiding Questions:
1. What are the main themes raised in this case study?
2. How does this situation affect the research group environment?
3. If you were the mentor, how would you feel? If you were the graduate students, how would you feel?
4. If you were the undergraduates, how would you feel?
5. List three concrete strategies for dealing with this issue.
Learning Objective:
Provide constructive feedback

Case Study Putting in Enough Time

An undergraduate was working hard at her first semester of research, but nobody seemed to notice. Her mentor said she could come in whenever she had time available; at the start of the semester she was spending about ten hours per week in the lab, but after a few weeks of solo work with little feedback, her motivation declined and she started to cut her weekly hours progressively shorter. Unlike the other undergraduates in the lab, she also had a part-time job to juggle. Nobody commented to her about the change, so she assumed that everything was going okay.

One day toward the end of the semester, a fellow mentee approached the undergraduate to tell her about a conversation she’d overheard at lunch between their mentor and a postdoc. According to the student, the mentor was complaining that nothing seemed to have gotten done in the lab this semester. “She made a really snide comment about part-time jobs getting in the way of research,” the other mentee said. “I think you’d better start trying to look busy.”

Guiding Questions:
1. What strategies have you used to assure that your mentee’s time is adequately protected? How do you ensure your mentee feels useful?
2. How does this situation affect the research group environment?
3. What could have been done to avoid this situation? What should the mentee do now? Should she approach their mentor about this? If so, how?

Learning Objective:
Provide constructive feedback.

Case Study The Slob

A graduate student mentor was frustrated because her student was not running successful experiments. While the undergraduate had great enthusiasm for the project, each experiment failed because of some sloppy error—forgetting to pH the gel buffer, forgetting to add a reagent to a reaction, or forgetting to turn down the voltage on a gel box.

After a month of discussions, and careful attempts to teach the student habits that would compensate for his forgetfulness, the graduate student was ready to give up. She spoke with her adviser and asked for advice, hoping that she could fix the problem and start getting useful data from her undergraduate. The adviser offered to work with the undergraduate mentee. When the undergraduate walked into his office, the faculty member said, “I hear you’re a slob in the lab. You gotta clean up your act if we’re going to get any data out of you.” Seeing the crushed and humiliated look on the undergraduate’s face, he quickly added, “I’m a slob too—that’s why I’m in here pushing papers around and not in the lab doing the hard stuff like you guys!”

Guiding Questions:
1. If you were the mentee, how would you feel?
2. If you were the mentor, how would you feel?
3. If you were the faculty adviser, how would you feel?
4. If you were the adviser, how would you have handled this situation?
How are we doing?

Some mentoring tools to consider

• Practice active listening and develop empathy > sympathy
• Grounding yourself and your mentees in their stories, experiences, and values (e.g., storytelling, values sort, important episodes, etc.)
  • Tool for **work-life balance/integration** discussions
• Tap sources of self-efficacy to **promote research self-efficacy** (Bandura handout)
  1. Mastery Experiences (success builds on success)
  2. Social Modeling (others like you made it)
  3. Social Persuasion (positive encouragement; 5 positives = 1 negative)
  4. Emotional and Physiological Responses (minimize stress, elevate mood)
• Mentoring Tools (a.k.a. compacts, see next) can help to **align expectations** and **maintain effective communication**
  • “Developing Shared Expectations” = onboarding tool
  • “Reflecting on Your Mentoring Relationship” = midterm evaluation
  • “Bhatt Lab Guidelines” = lab/program manual example
Brené Brown on Empathy vs. Sympathy
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw