Mentoring plan aid

Introduction
This aid is intended to help faculty craft a good mentoring plan for research trainees. Many funding agencies are asking for mentoring plans as part of fellowship, training grants, and research grant applications. This template addresses areas that reviewers typically evaluate.

A good mentoring plan should be based on the needs of the mentee. To identify those, mentees should generate an individual development plan. A tool such as myIDP will take the mentee through a four-part process that will allow them to identify their strengths and gaps as well as goals for the upcoming year. Once the mentor is familiar with the goals (short-term and long-term), the mentor can identify what they can contribute and determine if additional mentors or resources are required. Research trainees need to develop six core competencies and thus the plan needs to address:

1. Discipline-specific conceptual knowledge
2. Research skill development
3. Communication skills
4. Professionalism
5. Leadership and management skills
6. Responsible conduct of research

Template
Mentoring Philosophy
Your mentoring philosophy explains how you approach mentoring relationships and should help guide both you and your mentee through the mentoring relationship. This should be specific to the level of the trainee (undergraduate, graduate student, or postdoctoral scholar).

Mentoring philosophies commonly address how you would do the following:

- Identify mentee goals
- Identify what motivates the mentee
- Identify an effective communication style
- Develop a relationship founded on mutual respect
- Create a safe environment in which honesty and free exchange of feedback can occur
- Instill ownership of goals/projects in the mentee
- Share your own experience
- Evaluate the mentee’s learning
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the relationship

Aligning Expectations
Describe how you will create a mutual understanding of the expectations for this mentoring relationship. For example, create a mentorship compact or written agreement that provides a structure for mentors to outline expectations from, and commitments to, mentees, and vice versa.
Mentee Career Goals
2-3 sentences if mentee has been identified. Otherwise describe in this section the process you and the mentee will use to identify them (e.g. IDP). The following sections should address the needs of the mentee to achieve their career goals.

Research Skill Development
Brief description of mentee’s planned project(s). Describe proficiency in current research skills, and skills that need to be developed to accomplish the goals of the project(s). Describe expectations about number of times each year, and dates, if known, the mentee will present at works-in-progress sessions, lab or research group meetings, conferences, etc. Mentor should plan to attend each to provide feedback. Describe expectations about number of manuscripts to be written during the first year of the funded period, if applicable in your discipline specify if these are first-author publications with mentor as senior author, or collaborations with colleagues; outline potential target publications. Outline planned mentored grant submissions during funded period if applicable; these could include federal grants/fellowships, small professional society grants, internal grants, foundation awards, etc. If relevant in the nominee’s discipline and appropriate for the career stage of the nominee, outline planned mentored grant submissions during this period. Examples are: individual NIH K Awards, institutional NIH K awards, and “plus funding” including small professional society grants, etc. Timeline for nominees’ development of a cohesive, articulable research identity.

Project 1
Planned Research Presentations
Planned Publications

Project 2
Planned Research Presentations
Planned Publications

Project 3
Planned Research Presentations
Planned Publications

Planned Grant/Fellowship submissions

Timeline for nominees’ development of a cohesive, articulable research identity

Career Development
Briefly describe plans for how the mentor will provide instruction in professional practices to the mentee on a regular basis. This will likely include role modeling and open discussion of the importance of professionalism and ethical conduct through one-on-one and group meetings; attendance at core ethics conferences, protection of human subjects, interactions with Internal Review Boards, laboratory safety, standards of professional practice; attendance at relevant programming offered by the department, college, and/or university etc.
Briefly describe plans for how the mentor will aid in the mentees’ development of mentorship and leadership skills - expected to be an increasing focus as the training progresses. For example: 1) Supervised mentorship by mentee of undergraduate or graduate students, 2) Participation in mentorship training 3) Participation in mentorship/leadership training outside Ohio State

Briefly describe plans for how the mentor will aid in the mentees’ development of communication, time management, and related skills – Leverage institutional resources

Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research
Briefly describe plan for training in specific topic areas to include: 1) conflict of interest, 2) data acquisition and ownership, 3) peer review, 4) responsible authorship, 5) research misconduct, 6) researcher/trainee responsibilities, 7) collaborative science.) Leverage institutional courses and workshops available on this topic.

Mentoring Network
Describe the use of a mentoring map and how the mentor will facilitate or connect the mentee to additional mentors and expand their network. Include opportunities for career exploration and network with people with career paths compatible with the mentee’s career goals. Leverage institutional and other resources such as virtual mentoring programs like NRMN and Mentornet.