

# Mentoring

- Critical relationship for:
  - Students and fellows: completing first research project, finding a job
  - Junior faculty: Getting first grant, learning local culture and expectations (e.g., promotion and tenure)
  - New leaders: Trusted confidant
- Relationships are dynamic and change over time
- Not every mentoring relationship is the same
  - Ways of communication
  - Structure of meetings
  - Informal relationships

# Mentoring

Healthy mentoring relationships benefit mentors and mentees, but there are expectations for each role:

- Mentor
  - Understand context in which mentee operates
  - Provide research and career advice
  - Orient to local culture/expectations for success
  - Create opportunities/overcome barriers
  - Protect from “opportunities” not in best interest
  - Encourage success
- Mentee
  - Respect mentors’ time
  - Prepare for meetings—be organized and responsive
  - Complete tasks on time
  - Be proactive
  - Have reasonable expectations

# Primary Mentor

- Communication and trust are essential
- Overall responsibility for keeping mentee on track to achieve goals and overcome barriers
- Always give advice with the mentee's best interests in mind
- Match in terms of research interests and personality
- Provide moral and emotional support, career counseling
- Help define goals with achievable milestones
- Provide opportunity to develop ideas and lead projects (not only work on mentor's project)
- Model appropriate behaviors

# Things Often Not Discussed

- Unequal power
  - Hard for mentee to say “no”
  - How mentors say something is important; mentees should be careful about not over-reading tone
- Senior mentors may not appreciate junior faculty needs and pressures
  - How mentors succeeded may not work today—team science
  - Writing a grant from scratch in two months not feasible for junior faculty
- Mentors should help mentees grow up and become independent
- May require delivering hard messages
  - Research may not be best career choice
  - Mentoring relationship is not working