Managing and Mentoring Graduate Students

FAST – ADVANCE

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Recruiting the Best Graduate Student

- Contact early, often and directly – invite for visit if possible

- Recruit on a continual basis

- Check references closely

- Recruit from diverse sources

- Set a deadline and review packages when information is complete

Set Expectations Early and in Writing
What to Cover in Initial Meetings

- Roles and Responsibilities – Grad School Brochures

- Goals, Professional Development

- Strengths and weaknesses

- Work Style

- Work Plan

- Meetings

- Feedback and Drafts

- Intellectual Property, Human Subjects, Ethics

- Confidentiality

- Recommendation letters, Travel expectations

Mentoring and Graduate Education

- Most important factor to continue or withdraw from graduate school is the relationship with an advisor or mentor

- Having a mentor helps maximize the educational experience through guidance and support

- Helps in the retention of women and minorities who face unique barriers

Graduate Students' Perspectives of a Quality Mentoring Relationship

1. Professional development opportunities

2. Advice on post-degree plans

3. Effective communication

4. Trust and mutual respect

5. Regularly scheduled meetings

6. Interactions outside of school

7. Genuine interest

What Can Go Wrong

1. Attention to Detail – missed deadlines
2. Fabrication/Falsification/Plagiarism
3. Funding issues
4. Publication/authorship
5. Career choice/expectation
6. Professional Development – how they spend their time outside the research arena

Elements of Quality Mentoring Relationships

- Instrumental Support
  - Professional development
  - Networking
  - Gaining knowledge of field
  - Gaining skills needed to succeed
- Psychosocial Support
  - Counseling (e.g., remedy for stress)
  - Empathy
  - Friendship
  - Socialization related to norms of discipline

Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

- Coaching that is developmental
  - Skill enhancement
  - Confidence
- Opportunities for non-academic interactions
  - Genuine interest in the total person
- Consistency
  - Within and across gender and race/ethnicity
- Encouragement to identify other mentors

Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

- Groom graduate students to be colleagues

- Bi-directional relationship

- Don't force assimilation to majority culture/norms/behaviors to be successful in STEM

  – Encourage students to embrace their racial/ethnic identity while still functioning in STEM circles (e.g., conferences, lab groups)

- Be an advocate, esp. for females and URMs

- Avoid microaggressions

  – Microinsults, microassaults and micro-invalidations

Strategies to Help Develop and Maintain a Quality Mentoring Relationship

- Attentive listening

- Mutual respect

- Honesty and transparency

- Address academic and professional weaknesses directly but with tact

- Fostering of academic and social integration

- Encourage peer to peer mentoring

- Recognize it takes time

Values and Benefits of Mentoring for Faculty

- Personal satisfaction and professional growth
- Professional and career opportunities
- Rejuvenating and motivating during mid or late career stages
- Enhance technical skills
- Networking, collaboration and sharing of ideas with others
- Increase in the number of graduate students
- Increased productivity
- Serve as an example to other colleagues

Questions?

References

- http://www.grad.washington.edu/mentoring/faculty/how-to-mentor-graduate-students.shtml
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