

Mentor Training for Clinical and Translational Researchers

Christine Pfund

*University of Wisconsin–Madison, the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, Center for the
Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning and Wisconsin Center for Education Research*


Stephanie House, Pamela Asquith, Kimberly Spencer,
Karin Silet, and Christine Sorkness

University of Wisconsin–Madison and the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research

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Curricular materials from this book and other mentoring resources are available online at:
<https://mentoringresources.ictr.wisc.edu>

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Curriculum Overview

The resources in this section will help you implement research mentor training in your own educational setting.

Content

The content of each session in this curriculum is designed to address the key concerns and challenges identified by research mentors. The sample syllabus shown here presents the topics in the recommended order. However, the sessions can easily be mixed and matched to create customized workshops.

Sample Syllabus

Each session meets for 2 hours; sessions can be broken into two, one-hour blocks

Sessions	Topics
Session 1	Introductions Maintaining Effective Communication
Session 2	Aligning Expectations Assessing Understanding
Session 3	Addressing Equity and Inclusion Fostering Independence
Session 4	Promoting Professional Development Articulating Your Mentoring Philosophy and Plan

Each of these topics is critical for mentoring, yet these divisions are, at some level, artificial and overlapping. However, focusing on one topic in each session allows mentors to delve more deeply into each. In addition to general content about research mentoring, all of the case studies and some of the discussion questions draw specific attention to the unique circumstances and challenges related to mentoring scholars working in the diverse areas of clinical and translational science. Those who use these training materials are encouraged to read through all of the materials ahead of time so they can highlight linkages between topics throughout the training. Additional materials for the topics areas

above as well as for other topics, including ethics, are available at:

<https://mentoringresources.ICTR.wisc.edu> .

This curriculum is part of the *Entering Mentoring Series* and much of the content was adapted from *Entering Mentoring: A Seminar to Train a New Generation of Scientists*; created by Jo Handelsman, Christine Pfund, Sarah Miller Lauffer, and Christine Pribbenow. A PDF version of the book is available at www.hhmi.org/grants/pdf/labmanagement/entering_mentoring.pdf.

Audience

This curriculum was designed for those who wish to implement mentorship development programs for academic research mentors in clinical and translational science. It was originally developed for the primary research mentors of senior post-docs and junior faculty engaged in some aspect of clinical and translational research ranging from basic research to translational research to clinical research. While the individual activities included in the curriculum may focus on a specific type of research or a specific aspect of a mentoring relationship, the curriculum as a whole is designed to include activities relevant to a broad range of mentors across diverse areas of research and varied stages of their mentoring relationships. Curricula which target the specific areas of lab-based research, clinical research, behavioral health research and community-engaged research are available at <https://mentoringresources.ICTR.wisc.edu>.

Format

The structure of this research mentor training program is based on the experience of faculty and staff who implemented the *Entering Mentoring* curriculum at UW-Madison. These facilitators have learned that the best results come from keeping an open discussion format to allow for participants' diverse experiences to be integrated into the training. Simply asking the mentors a few guiding questions typically leads to vigorous discussion. The case studies and reading materials can provide a tangible starting point, and the mentors will often move quickly from the hypothetical examples to their own experiences with trainees and students. In fact, facilitators are encouraged to use the mentoring challenges expressed by participants in place of the provided case studies, when appropriate. The training is most effective with mentors who are currently working with scholars.

The short duration of such training intensifies the urgency of dealing successfully with challenges that arise. Likewise, frequent contact with trainees provides mentors opportunities to immediately implement ideas generated by the discussions. You may want to encourage participants to reflect on any changes they have made in their mentoring practices at the start of each training session.

Learning Objectives

Below are measurable learning objectives for each mentor training topic.

Introduction to Mentor Training

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Learn about other mentors in the group and begin building a learning community
2. Reflect on group dynamics and ways to make the group functional
3. Establish ground rules for participation

Maintaining Effective Communication

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Provide constructive feedback
2. Communicate effectively across diverse dimensions including varied backgrounds, disciplines, ethnicities, positions of power, etc.
3. Identify different communication styles
4. Engage in active listening
5. Use multiple strategies for improving communication (in person, at a distance, across multiple mentors, and within proper personal boundaries)

Aligning Expectations

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Effectively establish mutually beneficial expectations for the mentoring relationship
2. Clearly communicate expectations for the mentoring relationship
3. Align mentee and mentor expectations
4. Consider how personal and professional differences may impact expectations, including differences across disciplines when working in multidisciplinary teams

Assessing Understanding

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Assess their mentee's understanding of core concepts and processes
2. Identify various reasons for a lack of understanding, including expert/novice differences
3. Use diverse strategies to enhance mentee understanding across diverse disciplinary perspectives

Addressing Equity and Inclusion

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Improve and expand understanding of equity and inclusion, and how diversity influences mentor-mentee interactions
2. Recognize the impact that conscious and unconscious assumptions, preconceptions, biases, and prejudices bring to the mentor-mentee relationship and how to manage them
3. Identify concrete strategies for learning about, recognizing, and addressing issues of equity and inclusion, in order to engage in conversations about diversity with their mentees and foster a sense of belonging

Fostering Independence

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Define independence, its core elements, and how those elements change over the course of a mentoring relationship
2. Employ various strategies to build their mentee's confidence, establish trust, and foster independence
3. Identify the benefits and challenges of fostering independence, including the sometimes conflicting goals of fostering independence and achieving grant-funded research objectives

Promoting Professional Development

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Identify the roles mentors play in the overall professional development of their mentees
2. Develop a strategy for guiding professional development using some form of written format
3. Initiate and sustain periodic conversations with mentees on professional goals and career development objectives and strategies
4. Recognize and engage in open dialogue on balancing the competing demands, needs, and interests of mentors and mentees, e.g., research productivity, grant funding, creativity and independence, career preference decisions, non-research activities, personal development, work-family balance, etc.

Articulating Your Mentoring Philosophy and Plan

Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:

1. Reflect on the mentor-training experience
2. Reflect on any behavioral or philosophical changes they intend to make across the mentoring competencies
3. Articulate an approach for working with new mentees in the future