

Department of Psychology Guidelines for Graduate Student Advisement, Mentorship, and Development

The Department of Psychology faculty strive to provide excellent advising and mentoring of graduate students. Faculty members' effective advising and mentoring is critical to the advancement of graduate students' training and research. These guidelines were informed by national recommendations for supporting and guiding graduate students during their academic and professional training. In addition, these guidelines recognize that the Department administrators, the faculty members, and the graduate students have some unique and some shared responsibilities for maintaining relationships grounded in respect, open dialogue, and fairness. In defining advising and mentoring, advising predominantly consists of providing assistance regarding degree requirements and academic progress; whereas, mentoring expands the advising relationship to include modeling and supporting professional and ethical behavior, and assisting in professional networking and opportunities.

Additional details regarding professionalism, appropriate conduct, and other issues related to mentoring (e.g., resolving conflict, changing labs) are found in the Psychology Graduate Handbook.

Responsibilities of the Department:

Provide a graduate handbook that includes requirements for degree completion, a timeline for expected progress within the program, relevant deadlines and policies, and consequences for failure to meet these expectations and milestones. The handbook will be updated annually and made available to students and faculty.

Ensure that students have a designated advisor/mentor.

Communicate the roles and responsibilities of all administrators associated with the graduate program, including their contact information and availability for meeting and advising.

Conduct annual written evaluations of student progress and performance that incorporate, where necessary, constructive recommendations for improvement and clearly stated consequences if recommendations are not met. These evaluations should be discussed with students.

Solicit student feedback regarding their experiences with faculty mentoring.

The Graduate Handbook provides guidelines for resolving grievances and conflicts between students and faculty, as well as between students. Ensure that guidelines are consistent with college and university guidelines for handling student grievances. Maintain a mechanism that allows students to express concerns without fear of retribution.

Communicate in writing the responsibilities, terms, and expectations associated with graduate student assistantships, the requirements for renewal of funding (if applicable), and the number of hours per week students should work fulfilling their assistantship duties. The work assigned to funded students should further their professional development and should not hinder their ability to progress in their degree programs.

Expose students to a range of professional development and career possibilities including opportunities outside the academy.

Responsibilities of the Graduate Faculty:

Know the requirements, policies, and deadlines of the program, the college, and the university, and assist advisees/mentees in meeting them.

Discuss expectations for progress through program. Meet with advisees/mentees on a regular and ongoing basis (e.g., weekly). Provide direct, honest, timely, and constructive feedback regarding students' progress.

Discuss expectations and policies for the sharing of authorship and/or rights to intellectual property

developed in research or in other creative or artistic activity. Explain the standards and norms for authorship in one's own discipline. Clarify who owns and can access data that is being collected and discuss issues of copyright and intellectual property agreements that might occur.

Foster an environment that encourages open discussion to help minimize misunderstanding and conflict. Resolve conflicts in an appropriate manner and provide advisees with resources as necessary.

Model professional behavior/ethics and communicate behavioral expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship.

Create an environment that is free from prejudice, intolerance, intimidation, humiliation and harassment, and one that fosters the support of students across their various needs and identities. This requires pursuit in cultural competency and awareness.

Maintain professional relationships and boundaries between faculty and students at all times (e.g., do not enter into relationships, such as financial or romantic, with students that might compromise professional judgement or student success).

Foster professional development of students by advising on matters of conference presentation, networking, funding (e.g., fellowships, grants), and selection of appropriate publication venues for research and creative efforts.

Understand that students are likely to receive the most well-rounded educational experience by pursuing multiple mentoring relationships throughout the course of one's program.

Understand that mentoring might involve career development and an ongoing relationship beyond graduation.

Responsibilities of the Graduate Students:

Know the requirements, policies and deadlines of the program, the college, and the university and take personal responsibility for meeting them.

Take responsibility for the development of one's own educational, research, and career goals. Develop a timeline and action plan for achieving these goals and review it with advisor and/or committee (depending on the discipline) at least annually.

Help facilitate an environment that encourages open discussion to help minimize misunderstanding and conflict.

Understand that one is likely to receive the most well-rounded educational experience by pursuing multiple mentoring relationships from faculty members throughout the course of one's program.

Communicate with one's advisor or mentor in a professional, consistent, clear, and timely manner. Recognize time constraints of faculty and staff and plan accordingly. Seek regular feedback on performance and be responsive and open to constructive criticism.

Communicate to advisor and other appropriate departmental/university channels personal needs as related to professional development, limitations, and/or grievances.

Maintain ethical standards when conducting research and engaging in scholarly activities. This includes compliance with institutional and federal regulations for human subject and animal research as well as institutional/disciplinary standards for copyright and plagiarism and expectations of granting agencies when working on federal, state or foundation grants.

Be an engaged member of the graduate community. In consultation with a primary mentor, seek opportunities for networking and professionally engaging with peers and faculty in the department as well as the college/university. Attend department, college, and university events and take advantage of professional development offerings to build diverse skills and expand networks.