

MENTORS AND MENTEES: UNDERGRADUATES IN RESEARCH

Expectations

Mentor/Mentee relationships work best when everyone understands the expectations. Start each relationship/project with an honest discussion about these types of expectations:

Relational Expectations



Who is the mentor and who is the mentee?
This is static; you will not likely swap roles in this particular setting.

Functional Expectations



How do you work together so that both of you are at your best?
This fluid; ground rules will change over time as the mentee becomes more experience and the team gains familiarity.

Project Expectations



What work is done, when will it be done, and who will do it?
This is fluid; as goals are realized, new goals and projects will need to be outlined.

Not sure how to approach a conversation?

*Talk to ICRU!
We will help!*

? "Functional Expectations" ?

Yes, that term sounds vague. Here are some examples:

Mentor, how will you...

Mentee, how will you...

Model work values and ethics?

Use your strengths/weaknesses?

Teach desired competencies?

Come to work prepared?

Treat mentee as a collaborator?

Ask productive questions?

Offer advice and guidance?

Be flexible and innovative?

Provide feedback or critique?

Build trust?

Advocate for mentee success?

Employ professional behaviors?

Offer encouragement?

Absorb/listen to information, advice or critique?

How to Align Expectations

- Prepare to have an honest and direct conversation. Find time to devote just to this topic.
- Discuss the overall goal of the project and relationship. What does each party hope to learn or gain?
- Determine achievable steps needed to reach your goals.
- Develop a plan:
 - Who does which steps, and when should each step be done?
 - How often will you meet to asses progress and questions?
 - How will problems or conflicts be addressed?
- Use ICRU's Mentorship Agreement Form as a template.
- Revisit and revise your collaboration pact on a routine basis.

Communication is a key part of research collaboartion. If your expectations aren't being met, it is likely due to miscommunication.

Signs of Misaligned Expectations

These are indicators of misaligned expectations. A conversation may be helpful if you notice that...

The mentor:

- Prevents mentee advancement, despite successful work
- Does not find time to meet as agreed
- Does all the talking or direction-setting in meetings
- Lags in response to written correspondence

The mentee:

- Feels marginalized professionally
- Misses deadlines
- Avoids independence

Either mentor/mentee:

- Dread/avoid meetings
- Change use of eye contact
- Lack shared curiosity and teamwork