



# HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR

## NISS WEBINAR

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## HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR

### QUESTIONS POSED BY NISS

- 1) What is expected of a good mentor in terms of time, availability, resources, types of support or otherwise?
- 2) What do you need to learn about your mentees in order to form a successful working relationship?
- 3) Should you adapt your mentoring style depending on your mentee's level of education (undergraduate or graduate), goal (research or teaching), or even the number of people you are mentoring (big teams or small teams)? How do you manage this?



# 1) WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A GOOD MENTOR IN TERMS OF TIME, AVAILABILITY, RESOURCES, TYPES OF SUPPORT OR OTHERWISE?

- What is your Role?
- >3 Potential Roles
  - Advisor (academic, thesis, dissertation, RA, TA)
  - Mentor
  - Advocate
- These roles are NOT mutually exclusive



# 1) WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A GOOD MENTOR IN TERMS OF TIME, AVAILABILITY, RESOURCES, TYPES OF SUPPORT OR OTHERWISE?

- Advisor (academic, thesis, dissertation, RA, TA)
  - Clearer guidelines in terms of time, availability, resources
  - There is a deliverable assigned with your role
    - You must get the mentee to the finish line
- Mentor
  - Listens
  - “Gives” Advice, helps student find their direction, find their best fit
- Advocate
  - Cheerleader for student when they are not in the room
  - Creates opportunities, finds resources
  - Creates a Network so that the student can have a mentoring team of advisors, mentors, and advocates
- These roles are NOT mutually exclusive



1) WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A GOOD MENTOR IN TERMS OF TIME, AVAILABILITY, RESOURCES, TYPES OF SUPPORT OR OTHERWISE?

Example: Students comes requesting a signature to drop a course

*(modified from story shared by Patience Ajoff-Foster, Executive Director of Diversity and Inclusive Culture, Office of Equality and Diversity, Drexel University)*

- **Advisor** (academic)
  - Signs the form
  - Result: students drops the course



1) WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A GOOD MENTOR IN TERMS OF TIME, AVAILABILITY, RESOURCES, TYPES OF SUPPORT OR OTHERWISE?

Example: Students comes requesting a signature to drop a course

○ ***Mentor***

- Asks the student “Why do you want to drop the course?”
- Student: “I’m doing poorly”
- Mentor: “How do you know you’re doing poorly?”
- Student: “It just feels like it”
- Mentor: “Go talk to the professor”
  
- Result: student stays in the course with renewed confidence and does well



# EXAMPLE: STUDENTS COMES REQUESTING A SIGNATURE TO DROP A COURSE

## *Advocate*

### *Mentor +*

- Asks the student “Why do you want to drop the course?”
- Student: “I’m doing poorly”
- Mentor: “How do you know you’re doing poorly?”
- Student: “It just feels like it”
- Mentor: “Go talk to the professor”
  
- Advocate: talks to the professor for insight and shares pointers with the student
- Advocate: connects the student with senior student who has taken the course before and did well so the senior student can share insight and pointers
- Advocate: provides resources and networks that may enable student to
  - build confidence
  - talk to someone about any mental health concerns
  - connect with a larger community (e.g. ENAR Diversity Workshop, ENAR CENS, ASA Committee or working group)
  
- Result: student stays in the course with renewed confidence, does well, and has a wealth of resources and a network that will be beneficial beyond this class



## HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR?

- What is your Role?
- >3 Potential Roles
  - Advisor (academic, thesis, dissertation, RA, TA)
  - Mentor
  - Advocate
- These roles are NOT mutually exclusive
- Can we and should we be an Advocate for every student that walks in our door?
  - NO
    - I do not have unlimited time and resources
    - The student may not want it or be in a place to receive it
    - I may not be the person who can be the advocate (e.g. different field)





## 2) WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR MENTEES IN ORDER TO FORM A SUCCESSFUL WORKING RELATIONSHIP?

- What is your Role?
  - Mentor and/or Advocate (also could be advisor)
- What is the GOAL of this mentor-mentee relationship?
  - The goal should come from the mentee
    - Help me choose a graduate program/school
    - Help me navigate through graduate school
    - Help choose dissertation advisor, help change dissertation advisor
    - Provide collaborative research experience or teaching experience



## 2) WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR MENTEES IN ORDER TO FORM A SUCCESSFUL WORKING RELATIONSHIP?

- What is your Role?
  - Mentor and/or Advocate (also could be advisor)
- Are we a good personality fit? Can I be my “true me”?
  - Renéé: “Jersey girl trained to teach HS math”
    - I tell it like it is: sometimes honest, hard conversations
      - Me: identifying habits or behaviors that need improvement; You can do better! you are not giving your best self! What’s going on? How can I help?
    - I can only be your mentor if we can be transparent and honest
    - I can’t help you if I know what’s going on
      - barring TMI personal details (but I can handle them if you want to share)
    - I’m so busy and I’m bad at email
      - Mentees: It is your job to make sure I’m here for you!

## 2) WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR MENTEES IN ORDER TO FORM A SUCCESSFUL WORKING RELATIONSHIP?

- What is your Role?
  - Mentor and/or Advocate (also could be advisor)
- How can I motivate and inspire my mentee? What makes them click? smile?
  - Provide the right motivation, resources, and experiences during “the lows”
- What is the plan set in place to help my mentee complete the goal we’ve outlined?
  - Set a plan for meetings time, small deliverables that lead up to the final deliverable, etc. this can be adapted as time goes on
- What is the next step for this mentee? How can I help provide the resources and network so that my mentee can successfully complete this step and choose and move on to the next step in their career path?



3) SHOULD YOU ADAPT YOUR MENTORING STYLE DEPENDING ON YOUR MENTEE'S LEVEL OF EDUCATION (UNDERGRADUATE OR GRADUATE), GOAL (RESEARCH OR TEACHING), OR EVEN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE YOU ARE MENTORING (BIG TEAMS OR SMALL TEAMS)? HOW DO YOU MANAGE THIS?

- Not necessarily- in defining your role, determine the goal of this mentor-mentee relationship, and learning about your mentee- we have a tailored plan.
- How do you manage having a large number of mentees?
  - Yes for Team Meetings! Mentees at all the stages
    - Junior can see the senior students and see themselves reaching that next goal
    - Senior students interacting with junior: strengthens teaching/mentoring, builds their confidence and helps them remember how far they've come.
    - Facilitates skillset of sharing, building and working in teams



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- How do you manage having a large number of mentees?
  - Connecting Mentees to each other
    - E.g. current MS student interviewing, connected her with my mentees who have interned or work/worked at the places she is interviewing
    - Ask mentees to pay it forward
  - Sadly, I can't be an advocate for each of them but I can connect them with advocates
  - Sadly, I can't be everyone's mentor/mentee (personality conflict, I'm not the right person for their current goal) but I can connect them with someone else IF the student is really ready



# HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR?

## OTHER THOUGHTS

- Short Term vs Long Term based on Your Role, the Goal
  - It's ok if not sure at the beginning, one mentor/mentee goal at a time
  - Your Role can evolve over time
  - Over time, mentor relationship can be an on and off depending on mentee's new goals, stage, etc
- Each mentee should have a **Mentoring Team**.
  - All team members do not need to be in your field
  - All team member should Not be at your institution
  - As a Mentor be Honest
    - your strengths and weaknesses
    - which goals you can help with at full capacity
    - which goals would be better for another mentoring team member



# HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR?

## OTHER THOUGHTS

- Balance the constructive feedback: Positive and Room for Improvement
- Peer Mentorship is so Valuable!
  - We grow and learn together. We vent and celebrate together.
- Mentoring when you are Not an Advisor is so Rewarding!
  - Play a role behind the scenes with “no strings attached”
  - Mentee does not have to wonder if you have their best interest at heart as opposed to your research program, your center, the things you need to achieve as a leader (e.g. chair, director)
  - Authenticity in guiding student through their milestones and as they navigate relationships with their advisors, leadership, etc. when none of their goals, other than the greater good for all, are attached to you

Amanda Golbeck *Editor*

# Leadership in Statistics and Data Science

Planning for Inclusive Excellence

 Springer

## HOW TO BE A GOOD MENTOR

- My Journey to Leadership: 21 Lessons Learned
  - Highlights about some of my mentors
    - what made them good mentors
    - the inspiration, resources, and comfortable learning environments they provided for me and others
  
- The Other Chapters in this Book-OMG!!!





## CLOSING REMARKS

- How to Be a Good Mentor!
  - It takes time, it takes resources, it takes calm and poise getting through difficult situations with the mentee and for the mentee, it's not all rosy

BUT

- It is an HONOR to be a mentor
- It is a PRIVILEGE to watch my mentees grow and blossom
- It is so AWESOME for me to grow with my mentees and to learn from my mentees! My mentees are my colleagues!

