

## Minutes for Mentoring Sessions Spring 2011

February 8, 2011

Handouts:

Power Point

Mentoring overview

Star Wars and Mentors

“On Being a Scientist, a guide to responsible conduct in research” is a great book.

Power Point from Bill on Mentoring and the responsible conduct of research: how do you learn to mentor? (see Mentoring RCN2011 at <http://www.msb.unm.edu/UnO/Mentoring.htm>)

The main focus is what your responsibilities are as a mentor and mentee.

Bottom line with the “nature article” slide is there is a problem.

The outcomes or reprimand of misconduct may not be bad, but there can be disasters as well.

Plagiarism seems to be one of the largest problems with misconduct.

From the Handouts and provided by the UnO group:

Mentoring Handout:

*What are the characters of a mentor and mentee? What is Mentoring?*

What is a Mentor? – Students brainstorming responses

- Person who guides your learning (in a broad sense)
- Somebody assigned to me, who agrees to work with you on a project and agrees to help you
- Somebody with experience or expertise in your area
- Helps you develop your skills
- Help you think independently
- Important for help with logistic/administrative hurdles
- They critique or review your work
- Somebody you can talk to about other issues as well
- To get advice and guidance
- Somebody you can trust and confide in
- Foster socialization
- Somebody who challenges you
- Micromanage
- Puppet master
- Promote career development and professional guidance
- Supportive (ie letters of rec)
- Give advice on the next career step
- Create a safe environment
- Patience
- Learning environment
- Communication and interaction
- Depend on and trust them

What is a mentee?

- Ask questions
- Open to learning
- Be subservient

- Be responsible for issues and communicating those issues
  - Issues with research or whatever comes up in life and work
- Respond appropriately to criticism
- Work independently
- Work as a team
- Know when to ask for help
- Future planning (i.e. rather than doing research to make money, have career goals)
  - Then check in with the mentor
- Trust your mentor
- Be trusted by your mentor

Some of the real similarities between the two are:

- Have interest in the same subject areas/common interests
- Responsibilities that you take seriously
- Awareness
- Trust each other
- Communications
- Co-authorship on publications when appropriate and talk about that before hand
- Discuss the outcome of all the hard work

Continue power point...

What is meant by fostering socialization? Networking in the field, etc.

End of power point.

For homework:

- 1) Interview your mentor (handout)
- 2) Go to “Responsible conduct of research) and critique the web site.

Next week, mentees will report back on how the interview went. And, bring the mentor to the class and have them talk about their mentoring relationships and how they were successful in science. What they want to and won't bring to the table when they have students.

February 15, 2011  
UnO T-shirts are here!!

We began by introducing ourselves since there were mentors and mentees present.  
Bill begun by summarizing last class.

We then went into what we discovered from the mentee interviews of their mentors.

Alyssa began by speaking about her mentor Ben (who was present). Through the interview, she realized Ben was quite like how Ben described his previous mentor, however has “improved” upon his own mentor. Ben is very open to Alyssa being her own person, rather than a clone of himself.

Ben though this was a good exercise because you don’t really have a chance to talk about mentoring with your mentee. It is interesting in it allowed you to think back on the good and bad parts of being mentored and mentoring. He gained being patient and letting people think for themselves, but improved on keeping the politics out of it.

Jesse spoke about Tyler (who was present). They have similar personalities (grumpy all the time), but they both love fish and have a mutual respect that comes from that and working together. Tyler sets a good example for Jesse because he sets the bar high, to make both of them improve. Their lab is social, so they mingle on an personal level as well. There is a lot of communication in the lab and Tyler always has answers to the questions Jesse has. Jesse can see how Keith (Tyler’s previous mentor) and Tyler interact, which is an interesting experience. HE can see how the relationships trickle down.

This is Tyler’s first time mentoring and didn’t have a direct mentor himself, other than a Masters advisor. He is trying to be to Jesse how his mentors were to him. They expected a lot of him, so he does the same for Jes.

Nicole spoke about Levi (who was present). They always have good discussions about what they are studying, which reflects what Levi said about his previous mentors.

Levi thought this was an interesting experience and had a hard time using just one mentor as he reflected on his past experiences. Each mentor (4-5) had different strengths and weaknesses. Understanding why you are doing what you are doing is essential to his approach to mentoring.

Hiyatsi spoke about Brad (who was present). She found the focus and passion that Brad has reflects his previous advisor. She feels that all the mentors are really trying to get the mentees do well, and Brad shows that with her as well. He makes sure everything is going well and that there is full understanding with the procedures and processes.

Brad had nothing to add, other than that he is motivated by beer.

Ayesha spoke about what she and Matt P. spoke about. She enjoyed sitting down and talking about the “why we are doing this together”, rather than just the logistics. It took her a while to figure out who her mentor was and what aspects she remembered. Matt thought her mentor sounded a lot like her. She found it interesting that she learned so much from her mentor, but hadn’t realized she became similar to it. She hopes Matt will pass on some of that to somebody he will eventually pass things along as well.

Joanna spoke about Sylvia (who was not present and responded via email). Her relationship is similar to what Sylvia had with a previous mentor since Sylvia is now out of town.

Ashley spoke about Natalie (who was not present). Ashley noticed that what Natalie liked about her mentor, she now sees in Natalie. She liked that she tries to make the relationship fairly independent.

MJ spoke about Dr. Marshal and Dr. Sheldahal (from Education), neither of which were present. Her mentor makes herself available, and sends along items and advice to help MJ along.

That concluded this portion of the session. Bill then gave folder to the mentors and covered items that are bad mentoring (“Establishing a Relationship”). He then asked if mentors found that mentoring plays a crucial role in counteracting the sloppy trends in science (either research mis-conduct or bad practices).

Ben came across many mentors that just worried about the product, and didn’t care about how the mentors got the product. They didn’t care about the journey, just the destination. That is not what mentoring should be about. It’s how well you go about getting to that destination.

Ayesha would argue that the product is a new scientist rather than the data or the graph. The students are what we are working for and with.

Levi added that we take what we think the good characteristics of our mentors are and pass them on, the problem then comes in when there is no reason to disregard the “sloppy” portions of an old mentor due to do as you were taught mind set.

Bill then told everyone to visit the Responsible conduct of research web page for Northern Illinois University because there are good check lists for both mentors and mentees.

February 22, 2011

This final session began with Scott Collins' brief presentations about Sevilleta REU opportunities. They take ~12 students to do independent research (art and ecology) over the summer. He wanted to encourage the UnO students to use the Sev as a site for their research, and just as a place to pass along the info, and invite UnO students to interact with SEU students and also pass the info onto their friends, as summer opportunities. He wanted to introduce SEEDS, a program sponsored by ESA with various funding sources. The role is to encourage people to become ecology or environmental scientists and broaden participation by groups who are usually underrepresented in ecological sciences. There are 2 field trips a year that you can apply to go to, the next one is the Florida Everglades. This is a great way to meet students from across the country and become active in networking among undergrads for ecology. He is also looking for students who want to help get a SEEDS chapter more active here at UNM. There are research and travel fellowships as well.

Bill then took over. He started with who wanted to go that didn't have a chance to last week.

Nick spoke about Heidi (not currently present).

Abigail spoke about Chris (not currently present).

Bill handed out "An Important Mentor". There should be somebody eventually in your life that you feel this way about. What will be helpful down the road is to physically write yourself a plan about goals and timelines and expectations. Then, go through this with your mentor to make sure you are on the same page. Much more detail for now is a little pre-mature, but is a good thing to keep in the back of your mind for down the road.

He then presented a BBC News article that came out today.

That wrapped up the Mentoring Sessions.