

The Penn Bioengineering Mentorship Compact Between PhD Candidates and their Research Mentors

The purpose of this document is to facilitate discussion between mentors and mentees and to help to align expectations and clarify responsibilities for both.

The mentee, in working to earn a PhD, will undertake scholarship and research that together provide training essential for their career. Research mentors will prioritize the needs of the mentee as they work together to answer important questions and prepare the mentee for success.

By signing this compact, faculty mentor(s) and mentees indicate that they have read it, discussed it, and will freely abide by it. If there are co-mentors, both should sign it. If there are any questions or concerns from either the mentee or the faculty mentor(s), please discuss them with the graduate group chair before proceeding further. This form will need to be completed for all existing pairings and before new mentor/mentee pairings can be approved.

As a mentee, I will:

1. Work with my thesis mentor from the beginning to establish expectations for this very important relationship.
2. Take ownership of my thesis project with the input and approval of my mentor(s), including my thesis advisor and the members of my thesis committee.
3. Take ownership of my professional development, through completion of an IDP annually and with guidance from my thesis advisor, my thesis committee, other mentors, graduate group resources, and career counseling services.
4. Have open and timely discussions with my mentor(s) about my research progress, access to resources and milestone achievements, but also understand that resources have limits.
5. Arrange regular and focused individual meetings with my thesis mentor(s).
6. Maintain a work schedule and work ethic of a dedicated professional.
7. Arrange meetings with my thesis committee each year or at time intervals indicated by my thesis committee once I have completed my thesis proposal.
8. Stay abreast of the latest developments in my field through reading the literature, speaking with experts and colleagues, and attendance at relevant seminars and scientific meetings.
9. Build a professional network of other investigators within Penn and outside of Penn for mutual support and collaboration.
10. Respect all ethical and institutional standards when conducting my research and ask for guidance when presented with ethical or compliance uncertainties.
11. Maintain a relationship with my mentor(s) that is based on trust and respect.
12. Work with my mentor and other members of our research team to maintain a safe, respectful, inclusive, and secure working environment.
13. Comply with all institutional policies, including safe laboratory practices, responsible conduct of research, experimental design, and transparency, such as the SEAS RCR workshop and other training as appropriate (e.g., IRB and IACUC trainings).
14. Understand that all data as well as materials acquired or generated are University property to be maintained and kept at the University.

As a research mentor, I will:

1. Ensure my mentee's thesis project has every reasonable prospect of being feasible.
2. Ensure that a mutually agreed upon set of expectations and goals for my mentee's research project is established at the beginning of the relationship and is updated regularly.
3. Familiarize myself with the requirements of the student's graduate program and speak with the program directors if I have any questions or concerns.
4. Provide my mentee with feedback on course selection.
5. Ensure that my mentee and I have regularly scheduled meetings.
6. Work with my mentee in developing appropriate membership of their qualifying and thesis committees.
7. Ensure that my mentee will meet with their thesis committee each year or at time intervals indicated by my thesis committee once the thesis proposal has been completed. I will attend those meetings.
8. Support my mentee's efforts to build necessary professional skills, including writing, presentations at conferences and applications for fellowships, such as NIH F30 and F31 grants and internal Penn fellowships and internships.
9. Strive for regular, open, and effective channels of communication with my mentee.
10. Provide my mentee with timely guidance as they encounter hurdles, facilitate their interactions with other scientists, help them build a professional network at Penn and beyond, and encourage their attendance at scientific meetings.
11. Work collaboratively with co-mentors and thesis-committee members to further benefit my mentee.
12. Support my mentee as they build a professional network of other investigators within Penn and outside of Penn for mutual support and collaboration.
13. Work with my mentee and other members of our research team to establish and maintain a safe, respectful, inclusive, and secure working environment.
14. Commit to my mentee submitting their thesis project for publication in a timely manner with my mentee receiving appropriate credit for the work they performed.
15. Promote all ethical and institutional standards when overseeing my mentee's research conduct and encourage them to ask for guidance when presented with ethical or compliance uncertainties.
16. Maintain a relationship with my mentee that is based on trust, mutual respect and aligned expectations.
17. Support my mentee and facilitate their transition to the next stages of their career.

Trainee's name: _____

Trainee's signature: _____

Mentor's name: _____

Mentor's signature: _____

Co-Mentor's name: _____

Co-Mentor's signature: _____

Any additional, elective points of mutual agreement should be listed below and initialed by trainee and mentor(s).

When completed, send a pdf of the signed form to [Kate Venit](#).

Revised 2May2023