



THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENRICHMENT MENTEE GUIDE (UPDATED 10/2016)

The Office of Academic Development and Enrichment (OADE) provides this guide as a way to help you navigate the beginning stage of a mentoring relationship. Effective faculty mentoring is vital to career success at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. A good mentor can help a junior faculty member, as a mentee, navigate the complexities of the promotion process, identify skillsets that need development, and help provide guidance on work-life balance issues.

If you have any questions about finding a mentor or getting the most from the mentoring relationship as a mentee, please feel free to reach out to the Office of Academic Development and Enrichment by emailing ramaa.chitale@mssm.edu.

I. INITIATING THE MENTOR/MENTEE PROCESS

This section will introduce you to the beginning stage of a mentoring relationship, including finding your mentor, defining your goals, and preparing a Personal Development Plan (PDP).

A. Building Your Mentoring Committee

Junior faculty are encouraged to build a mentoring committee consisting of two to four senior faculty members. Your mentors' qualifications may vary and be:

- Inside your department/division/institute
- Outside your department/division/institute, but at your institution
- Someone who shares your scientific expertise, either in another department or at another institution
- Someone who has maintained a work-life balance you aim to achieve

You may meet with your mentors on a one-to-one basis, and in addition, have an annual or bi-annual meeting with your entire committee. You should discuss with your mentors the time commitment they can make, and decide together on arrangements that make sense and work for you and for them.

If you are having difficulty getting started, seek input from your department mentoring leader. Refer to the OADE website for a current list of your department mentoring leaders and division mentoring champions. The mentoring leader or champion is a senior faculty member responsible

for helping junior faculty find mentors and provide information about career development programs that exist within the department.

Once you have selected your mentoring committee, reach out to them to set up your first official meeting with each individual mentor.

B. Tips on Initiating a Mentoring Relationship

Initial contact

Decide whether email or a phone call is best. You may want to send an email rather than call, if you do not know your potential mentor very well. If you do not get a response, follow up in a week with another email or phone call.

- The subject line of email should indicate that this is a mentorship request.
- By way of introduction, explain why you are emailing, or calling, and how you were referred to them (e.g., through your department mentoring leader, or recommended by another faculty member).
- Be specific and brief in the purpose of your message whether by email or phone.
- Ask directly if being your mentor is, or is not, a possibility.
- Proofread your email message before you send it.
- You may want to include a delivery receipt on your e-mail if possible.
- Provide your complete contact information and the best times you are available to talk, in case your potential mentor chooses to call you.
- If you are requesting an in-person meeting, suggest days and times when you are available.
- Consider attaching a CV (the School CV Format or NIH biosketch, if that will suffice) and/or other relevant documents.

Short-term, or a one-time request

If you are contacting a mentor for a specific piece of advice and are not seeking a long-term relationship, clarify in advance that you anticipate that your request is for a limited time commitment, not a long-term time mentoring relationship.

Examples: Critiquing and reading specific aims of a grant or study section critique

Adapted from document prepared by A. Gore, Ph.D., M. Grace, Ph.D., K. Kaplan, Ph.D., and A. Wang, M.D.

C. Mentee Guidelines

General concepts and guidelines to keep in mind about the mentoring relationship:

- **Skills and Time: Realistic Expectations**
You should recognize that one mentor may not be able to help you with all of your mentoring needs. You may need to find multiple mentors to cover all of the issues/areas you're interested in.

- **Structure, Terms, Understanding, Style**
In conjunction with the mentor, establish the nature of your mentoring relationship that will work for both of you. Will your meetings be formal or informal? What do you hope to get out of the relationship? How often will you meet?
- **Feedback and Advice: Be Open**
Constructive feedback and criticism are vital to the mentoring relationship. Even if it is not always easy, encourage your mentor to provide earnest, honest feedback.
- **Second Opinions**
If you do not agree with your mentor, be polite and constructive in your disagreement. Feel free to get a second opinion on an issue.
- **Evaluating Your Mentor**
You need to ensure that your mentoring relationship works for you. Is it difficult to contact the mentor? Do they routinely cancel meetings and re-schedule at the last minute? Easy access and open lines of communication are critical to successful mentoring. Your relationship with your mentor may change over time, and be prepared to make changes if necessary.
- **Keep In Touch**
Be sure to communicate with your mentor. Give your mentor progress reports by email, over coffee, or at medical school functions.
- **Be Respectful**
Be on time to meetings. If you need to reschedule, give your mentor plenty of advance notice (at least 24 hours). Recognize that your mentor is busy, and respect his/her time.
- **Confidentiality**
Your mentorship relationship is a personal one. You need to establish with your mentor the degree to which the advice you are given should be kept confidential.
- **Appreciation**
Let your mentor know when they have helped you and express appreciation.

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D. Creating your Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Faculty are strongly encouraged to create and update a Personal Development Plan (PDP) within six months of hire. Based on your skill assessment and self-reflection, a PDP is a written plan to help you achieve your goals. There is no right or wrong way to complete a PDP. Your PDP is your own outline and your own map to success. You should continue to revise your PDP as your career evolves.

The content of your PDP is based on the results of your skills assessment which you can conduct using the chart on page five of this document. For the format of your PDP, you can choose a [chart](#), write out answers in [longhand](#), or have a combination of both. Bring the completed PDP to meetings with your mentor and discuss your strengths, weaknesses, and how you can achieve the benchmarks you set for yourself.

You may have several goals you are trying to accomplish. Be sure to check with your department mentoring leader for any specific criteria set forth in the framework of your department mentoring program. If there are, do not forget to include them in your PDP.

Keep the list realistic and use the outline below to get you started:

1. Define a realistic goal
2. Is the goal short-term (within 12 months) or long-term (years)?
3. List the resources and skills needed to achieve the goal
4. Brainstorm how to obtain the necessary skills
5. How can your mentoring committee help you achieve this goal?
6. Create a timeline for achieving the goal

Supplemental: MyIDP (Individual Development Plan for Graduate Students)

For faculty with graduate students, we encourage you to consider using the American Association for the Advancement of Science's myIDP web-based career planning tool. The tool enables the examination of skills, interests, and values, helps in discovering the scientific career path that fits those skills, and it provides a wealth of resources as a guide through the process. myIDP also has tools for setting goals for the upcoming year with optional reminders to keep on track. Registration for using myIDP is available online at <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org>.

E. ISMMS Required CV format

Keeping your CV up to date will keep you focused on your progress and prepared for meetings with your mentor. Please [click here](#) for the School's required CV format.

F. Skills Assessment

Before you enter into a mentoring relationship, self-evaluation and reflection are imperative. It is important to know which of your skillsets need improvement. Use the chart on the following page to conduct a self-assessment.

This chart is from the 2015 ISMMS Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation conducted by your Department Chair. Assess yourself on the chart's metrics, and present it to your mentor.

Scale Note: 1 = needs improvement 3 = meets expectations 5 = outstanding

SCHOLARSHIP						
Peer-Reviewed Publications— <i>quality and quantity; personal impact factor; H-index</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Invited Presentations— <i>regional/national/int'l; quality and quantity</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Other Evidence of Scholarship— <i>e.g., innovation, web-based materials</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
TEACHING						
Mount Sinai Medical/Graduate Students— <i>lectures, course development/directorship; T dollar generation</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Postdoctoral Fellows, House Staff/Clin.Fellows— <i>#, venues, outcomes</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Regional, National, International Teaching— <i>quantity/quality</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Teaching/Mentoring Excellence— <i>e.g., course evaluations, teaching awards, mentee evaluations/productivity</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
RESEARCH						
Extramural and Internal Funding— <i>type, \$, R dollar generation, renewal prospects, research density, the School pilot funding</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Innovations— <i>patents, patent applications, licenses</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Clinical Trials— <i>scope, patient enrollment, financials</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
CLINICAL						
Patient Care— <i>e.g., quality, malpractice, certification, patient satisfaction</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
wRVUs — <i>performance against MGMA benchmarks</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
FPA Financial Result— <i>clinical receipts, expenses, deficits</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
SERVICE						
Service/Leadership at the School and MSH— <i>e.g., institutional committees</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Service to Primary Dept./Institute— <i>e.g., committees, administration</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Mentoring— <i>Active participation as a mentor or mentee</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Professionalism— <i>towards faculty, trainees, staff. Incidents (positive or negative)?</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
External Service/Leadership— <i>e.g., study sections, professional society committees; editorial boards; public advocacy (e.g. testifying before Congress, lab tours to policy makers, advocating Federal funds for science), public education and talks to lay audiences, and high school science outreach</i>	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

II. DEVELOPING YOUR MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

This section provides tools to ensure that your relationship is on the right track.

A. Leading the Mentoring Relationship

After your initial meeting, it is your responsibility to follow-up with your mentor to establish a schedule of meetings. Each mentor meeting is *your* time, so come prepared with updates based on your previous discussion, and bring questions that you would like answered. For ideas about the types of questions to ask during your meetings, refer this [list](#) as starting point.

B. Enjoy the Mentoring Process

It is important that you value the mentoring process and get the most from it. Do not think of it as a burden or obligation—it is one of the most valuable resources at your disposal. While you and your mentor will need to invest time in getting to know each other, ultimately, your mentor will help you be more efficient in your work, more empowered in your career planning, increasingly creative in your daily planning, and more satisfied in your work. Think of the common questions you have as a junior faculty member, and find out what your mentor has to say about those thoughts. Below are some examples of questions you may find useful:

- What resources and programs are at ISMMS that I may not be aware of?
- What opportunities are there for me to collaborate with other faculty in other departments and/or divisions?
- How can I learn more about the appointments, promotions, and tenure (APT) process?
- Would leadership training help me achieve my career goals? If so, where can I get the training I need to become an effective leader?

III. ADVANCING THE MENTOR RELATIONSHIP

It is your responsibility to know where you stand in your career. In addition to discussing it with your individual mentors, be sure you take advantage of the tools ISMMS offers.

A. Mentoring Committee Reflection

As your work evolves, you may find that your mentoring needs are also evolving. It is your responsibility to consider if your current mentoring committee continues to provide you with the type of support you require. Keep an open dialogue with your mentor, and do not hesitate to ask for what you feel may be lacking.

B. Appointment & Promotion: Track Specific Requirements

It is crucial to that you know what track you are on and the requirements of advancement within that track. If you are unsure of your current track, look back to your offer letter. The letter lists your track. If you have additional questions on how to find this information, please contact facultydevelopment@mssm.edu.

Each track (Investigator, Research, Clinical Practice, and Clinician and, or Educator) has its own timeline, requirements, and criteria for promotion. To ensure that you and your mentor are aware of the criteria, review the [track summary sheets](#) and discuss the areas you find challenging. Refer to your PDP, and work together with your mentor on strategies to overcome the hurdles you are encountering.

C. Seminars & Workshops

Every year, the Office of Academic Development and Enrichment (OADE) hosts several events designed to address career development within the School. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of these events. Recurring events include the Faculty Resources Fair (summer), Faculty Development Symposium (autumn), bi-monthly Coffee Talks (February, April, June, August, October), and more. Topics apply to all levels of seniority, not just junior faculty. These events also provide a way to network with other faculty members and hear outstanding speakers. [Click here to see events that are available currently.](#)

IV. OADE IS HERE TO HELP

The Office of Academic Development and Enrichment (OADE) is committed and available to help you with your mentoring needs. If you have any questions, suggestions, or general comments that you would like to offer, please contact ramaa.chitale@mssm.edu.

OADE actively works to measure the success of institutional mentoring programs through Pulse Check Surveys, a series of short-questionnaires administered to new junior faculty, as well as through direct outreach to department mentoring leaders to identify needs and areas for program improvement. We appreciate the feedback you share with our office; it helps us fulfill our mission to junior faculty.

Activities conducted by OADE include:

- **Coffee Talk:** This is a bi-monthly, informal event where all ranks of new faculty meet and have coffee with Dean Lakshmi Devi and Associate Dean Elizabeth Howell of OADE. Coffee Talks are the ideal time to get answers to any questions you may have about Mount Sinai Health System. Coffee Talks take place on the fourth Thursday of the months: February, April, June, August and October. We meet in the Starbucks in Annenberg Lobby at 1468 Madison Avenue.
- **Faculty Resources Fair:** This is an annual event. The Resources Fair provides faculty an opportunity to interface with the team members of the administrative offices, educational resources, Centers of Research Excellence (COREs), and other services at Mount Sinai Health System.
- **Faculty Development Symposium:** The Symposium features an address on a subject related to career development with breakout sessions for basic science and clinical science faculty.
- **Faculty First:** This quarterly lunch with ISMMS Dean Dennis Charney gives junior faculty an opportunity to meet with Dean Charney and their peers from other departments and School sites.
- **The Faculty Idea Prize:** The Prize is exclusively for junior faculty engaged in cross-department collaborations.
- **Courses and workshops:** These are opportunities for learning about a variety of subjects, and take place in various formats: lunches with an NIH Program Officer, team management courses, workshops on grant writing, and more.

We also recommend:

- **Junior PI Club (JPIC).** JPIC is a group of junior ISMMS faculty that creates a casual forum for junior primary investigators to network and build a community. JPIC events take place on a monthly basis.

For more information about the mentoring process or OADE events, contact ramaa.chitale@mssm.edu.