Mentoring
Mentor / Trainee Responsibilities

Fraught with Challenges

Training? No!

Publish or Perish!

Unequal relationship

Responsibilities, Time?

Credit, Ownership?

Competitors?
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities

Expectations and Responsibilities

Establish expectations / responsibilities early.

Trainees need to know:

• How much time and effort?
• How responsibilities will be shared or divided?
• Criteria for evaluation – informal and formal (letters)?
• SOPs (e.g. data recording and interpretation)?
• **How credit / authorship / ownership is assigned?**

Not easy for trainees to bring up – mentor should be proactive.
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities

Expectations and Responsibilities

Establish expectations / responsibilities early.

Mentors need to know trainees will:

• Do assigned work conscientiously
• Respect the authority of others in the research setting
• Follow research regulations and protocols
• Live by agreements established for authorship / ownership

Mentor and trainee must jointly commit to maintaining a productive / supportive / responsible research environment.
Mentor / Trainee Responsibilities

Basic Responsibilities

Put it in writing.

Clarity, consistency, reference

Flexible. Can’t take place of dialog.
Mentor / Trainee Responsibilities

Research Environment

Variations in:
- Personalities, research environments, projects

Mentors must assure:
- Equal treatment, professional practice, RCR training
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities

Supervision and Review

Mentors assume certain responsibilities.

- Assure proper instruction in methodology
- Foster intellectual development of trainee
- Impart an understanding of responsible research practices
- Routinely check to ensure trainee develops into responsible researcher
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities

Supervision and Review

• Review laboratory notebooks and other compilations of data
• Read manuscripts prepared by trainee carefully
  Accuracy, reasoning, appropriate assignment of credit
• Meet with trainee regularly to discuss work
• Encourage trainees to present and discuss data at lab meetings, other venues

Supervision can be shared with postdocs, others.

BUT, ultimate responsibility rests with the mentor.
Mentor and Trainee Responsibilities

**Transition to Independent Researcher**

Ultimate goal – to produce independent researchers.

- Difficult to give up control / ideas, encourage independence
- Most apparent with Postdocs
- Neither students, nor faculty – few rights or protection
- Often supported by mentor’s funding – exploitation?
- Many universities developed a Postdoctoral Policy
- National Postdoctoral Association
  (http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/)
Mentor / Trainee Responsibilities

It Takes Work

Excellent Resource:

ADVISER, TEACHER, ROLE MODEL, FRIEND
ON BEING A MENTOR TO STUDENTS IN
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING
INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE
NATIONAL ACADEMY PRESS
Washington, D.C.
1997

http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/mentor/