

Graduate Student Mentorship Needs Checklist¹

By identifying your mentorship needs, you can approach faculty with a clear sense of your expectations for them as your mentor. Clearly communicating these needs at the beginning and revisiting them collaboratively over the course of your time working together is integral to the success of the relationship. This checklist can also support you in figuring out if any particular forms of support you are seeking can be met by cultivating a larger network of mentors, from within or outside of your field.

Rank the below items in terms of personal importance.

I am seeking mentors who will...

Academic Support

- help me navigate departmental program requirements.
- institute deadlines for programmatic milestones.
- help me cultivate effective time management skills for meeting all my responsibilities.
- advise me on coursework selection.
- help me identify and pursue my research interests.
- show me how to employ ethical research practices in my field.
- meet with me regularly and productively to help me stay on track to meet program requirements.
- review my work and provide feedback in a timely and constructive manner.

Professional Development Support

- educate me about the practices and procedures of professional activities such as conference attendance, grant writing, applying for fellowships, and academic publishing.
- keep me apprised of professional development opportunities (including calls for papers [CFPs], grants, fellowships, publication opportunities related to my work, etc.)
- teach me about / model for me networking practices in my field.
- connect me with other faculty members or scholars doing work related to mine.
- help me identify and pursue my career goals (whether inside or outside of academia).

Psychosocial Support

- make me feel recognized and supported.
- make me feel as though I have worth as a researcher and teacher.
- advocate for me in the department and in other research and disciplinary spaces.
- make me feel comfortable voicing my ideas.
- listen to my needs and take my ideas seriously.

Other Needs?

¹ This worksheet adapted from Council of Graduate School's "[Great mentoring in graduate school: A quick start guide for protégés.](#)"

Seek out mentors who can meet your top-ranked needs. Remember that no one person will be able to fulfill all of your mentorship needs. It is likely that you will need to work with multiple people (faculty members, fellow graduate students, scholars on other campuses, etc.) to receive the support you need to succeed in graduate school and pursue your career interests.