

UC DAVIS GRADUATE STUDIES PRESENTS



# GRADUATE STUDENT MENTORING

**Jean-Pierre Delplanque**

Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies  
Professor of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering

---

# DEFINITION

Mentoring is defined as a close relationship between a graduate student and a faculty member who provides guidance, support and research advice in an individualized manner.

Basic mentoring practices include guiding students through program expectations, protocols of academic conduct, degree requirements, research and teaching, capstone work (such as thesis or dissertation research), and professional development.

[\[Mentoring Guidelines\]](#)

---

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY MENTOR

- Serve as a role model and student advocate
- Help students identify and achieve their individual short and long-term educational goals
- Provide ongoing feedback and guidance
- Assist students to build support networks
- Encourage and help students prepare for their chosen career path

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT

- Build a mentor network
- Articulate to mentors their mentoring needs and individual goals
- Communicate with mentor regularly
- Participate in program/lab/community activities
- Seek feedback



---

# BENEFITS OF MENTORSHIP

Positive mentorship experiences result in more mentee:

- Productivity and satisfaction
- Academic persistence
- Enhanced skill development
- Diversity; increased of recruitment of underrepresented mentees
- Publications of research
- Confidence, less imposter syndrome
- Less anxiety and depression

---

# CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MENTORING

Culturally responsive mentoring understands power dynamics and oppression and acknowledge the unique identities, experiences, and values of their mentees.

Students who receive culturally responsive mentoring:

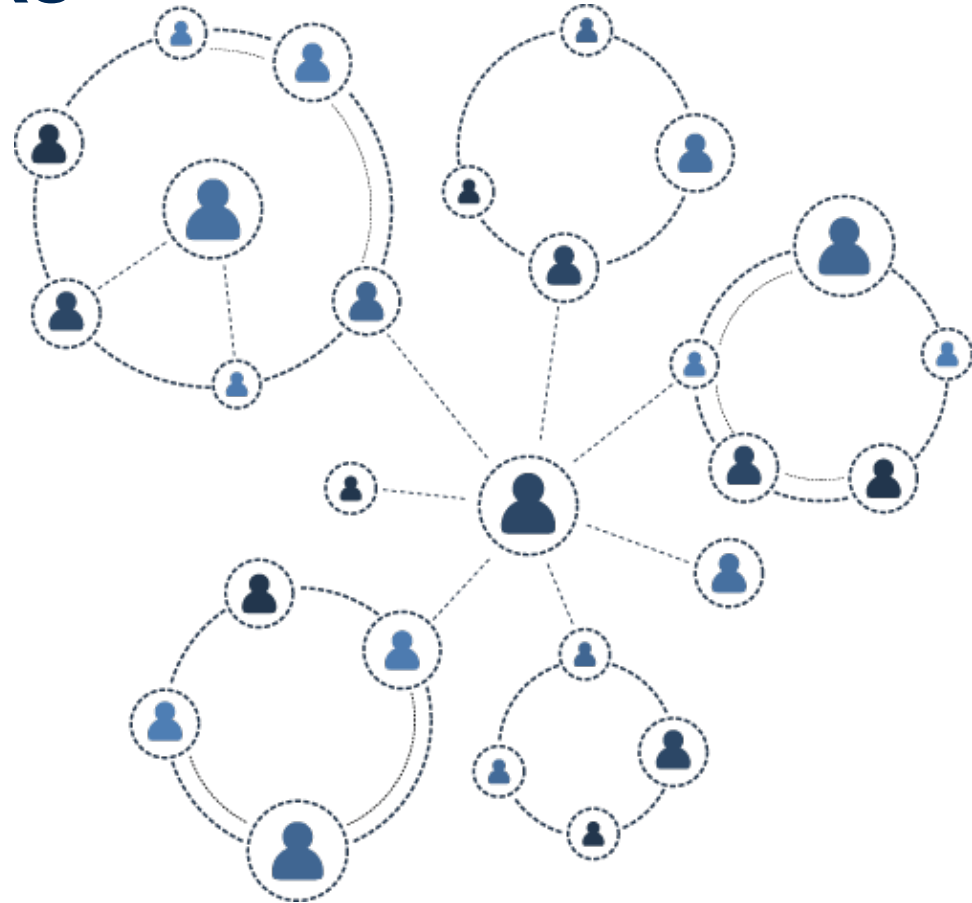
- Feel more connected to their field of study and research
- Have increased self-efficacy
- Experience increased confidence

# MENTORSHIP NETWORKS

Encourage your mentee to seek additional sources of mentoring support.

These include networks for:

- Academic feedback
- Emotional support
- Professional development
- Safe spaces



---

# ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS

- One critical element of an effective mentor-mentee relationship is a shared understanding of what each person expects from the relationship.
- Problems between mentors and mentees often arise from misunderstandings about expectations.
- Importantly, expectations change over time, so frequent reflection and clear communication about expectations is needed on a regular basis.



# QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How do you want to communicate? How often?
- When and how often will you meet?
- Who schedules the meetings?
- How does your mentee wish to receive feedback?
- How much do you expect your mentee to work or do research?
- How should your mentee raise issues?



# SETTING EXPECTATIONS TOOLS

## Questionnaire for Aligning Expectations in Research Mentoring Relationships

Mentor / Supervisor:		Mentee / Student:	
Time Period:		Dept / Program:	

For each pair of statements, determine your preference. For example with statement pair #1, if you believe the ideal mentoring relationship focuses on common research interests, select 1, 2, or 3. Or if you think the ideal relationship focuses on effective working and communication styles, select 4, 5, or 6. Avoid filling in "3.5" for your responses.

Early Stages of the Mentoring Relationship and Choosing Mentors/Mentees				
1	In an ideal mentoring relationship, the mentor and mentee should have similar research interests	1 2 3 4 5 6	In an ideal mentoring relationship, both should have similar working and communication styles	
2	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide close supervision and guidance	1 2 3 4 5 6	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide much freedom and independence for the mentees to explore and learn themselves	
3	Mentors should only accept mentees when they have specific & deep knowledge of the mentee's research topic	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentors can provide overall guidance, and so should feel free to accept mentees from a broad range of disciplines	
4	A personal and friendly relationship between mentor and mentee is important for a successful relationship	1 2 3 4 5 6	A professional relationship is advisable to maintain objectivity for both mentee and mentor during their work	
5	The mentor is responsible for providing emotional support & encouragement to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the mentor	
6	The mentor should play a significant role in deciding on the research focus for the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The research focus should be selected by the mentee	
7	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects with potential for high payoffs, even if it involves high risk	1 2 3 4 5 6	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects that have a strong & safe chance of success, even if the payoff is low	
8	The mentor should decide how frequently to meet with the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should decide when she/he wants to meet with the mentor	

## Setting Expectation Tools

- Questionnaires
- Advising statements
- Contracts/agreements

---

# WARNING SIGNS

- You or your mentee do not find the time to meet as agreed upon.
- You or your mentee do not respond to emails and tasks in a timely manner.
- Your mentee's work is successful, but is not evolving toward independence.
- Your mentee does not exhibit a sense of shared curiosity and collaborative teamwork is not present.
- Mentoring meetings are not dialogues. Mentee does not contribute to the conversation, asks few or no questions.



# PROGRAM SUPPORT RESOURCES

## Graduate Program List

[<https://grad.ucdavis.edu/graduate-programs>]

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying [grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gapm](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gapm). The page has a dark blue header with the text "UC Davis Graduate Studies". Below the header, the main content area is titled "Program Contact Information" in blue. Under this title, there is a section "Primary Program Contacts" which is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Graduate Program Coordinator" and lists Vanessa Bravo as the Program Coordinator with the email [gradadvisor@math.ucdavis.edu](mailto:gradadvisor@math.ucdavis.edu). The right column is titled "Graduate Program Chair" and lists Javier Arsuaga as the Graduate Group Chair with the email [jarsuaga@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jarsuaga@ucdavis.edu). Below this, there is another section titled "Additional Contacts" which is also divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Program Contacts" and lists two advisors: General Advisor Krishnakumar Balasubramanian (Statistics, [kbala@ucdavis.edu](mailto:kbala@ucdavis.edu)) and General Advisor Joseph Biello (Mathematics, (530) 554-1209 | [biello@math.ucdavis.edu](mailto:biello@math.ucdavis.edu)). The right column is titled "Graduate Studies Contacts" and lists two fellowship analysts: Internal Fellowship Analyst Heidi West ((530) 754-9473 | [hewest@ucdavis.edu](mailto:hewest@ucdavis.edu)) and External Fellowship Analyst Yvette Garcia ([ycgarcia@ucdavis.edu](mailto:ycgarcia@ucdavis.edu)).

Applied Mathematics | UC Davis x +

[grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gapm](https://grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gapm)

UC Davis Graduate Studies

## Program Contact Information

### Primary Program Contacts

<b>Graduate Program Coordinator</b> Program Coordinator Vanessa Bravo <a href="mailto:gradadvisor@math.ucdavis.edu">gradadvisor@math.ucdavis.edu</a>	<b>Graduate Program Chair</b> Graduate Group Chair Javier Arsuaga <a href="mailto:jarsuaga@ucdavis.edu">jarsuaga@ucdavis.edu</a>
---	---

### Additional Contacts

<b>Program Contacts</b> <b>Advisor: General</b> Krishnakumar Balasubramanian Statistics <a href="mailto:kbala@ucdavis.edu">kbala@ucdavis.edu</a> <b>Advisor: General</b> Joseph Biello Mathematics (530) 554-1209   <a href="mailto:biello@math.ucdavis.edu">biello@math.ucdavis.edu</a>	<b>Graduate Studies Contacts</b> <b>Internal Fellowship Analyst</b> Heidi West (530) 754-9473   <a href="mailto:hewest@ucdavis.edu">hewest@ucdavis.edu</a> <b>External Fellowship Analyst</b> Yvette Garcia <a href="mailto:ycgarcia@ucdavis.edu">ycgarcia@ucdavis.edu</a>
--	--

# FACULTY ROLES

**Major Professor** – faculty mentor that serves as supervisor of the student's research and thesis/dissertation. They are typically the chair of the thesis/dissertation committee.

**Graduate Advisor** – faculty members who advise on academic requirements and verify that requirements are met.



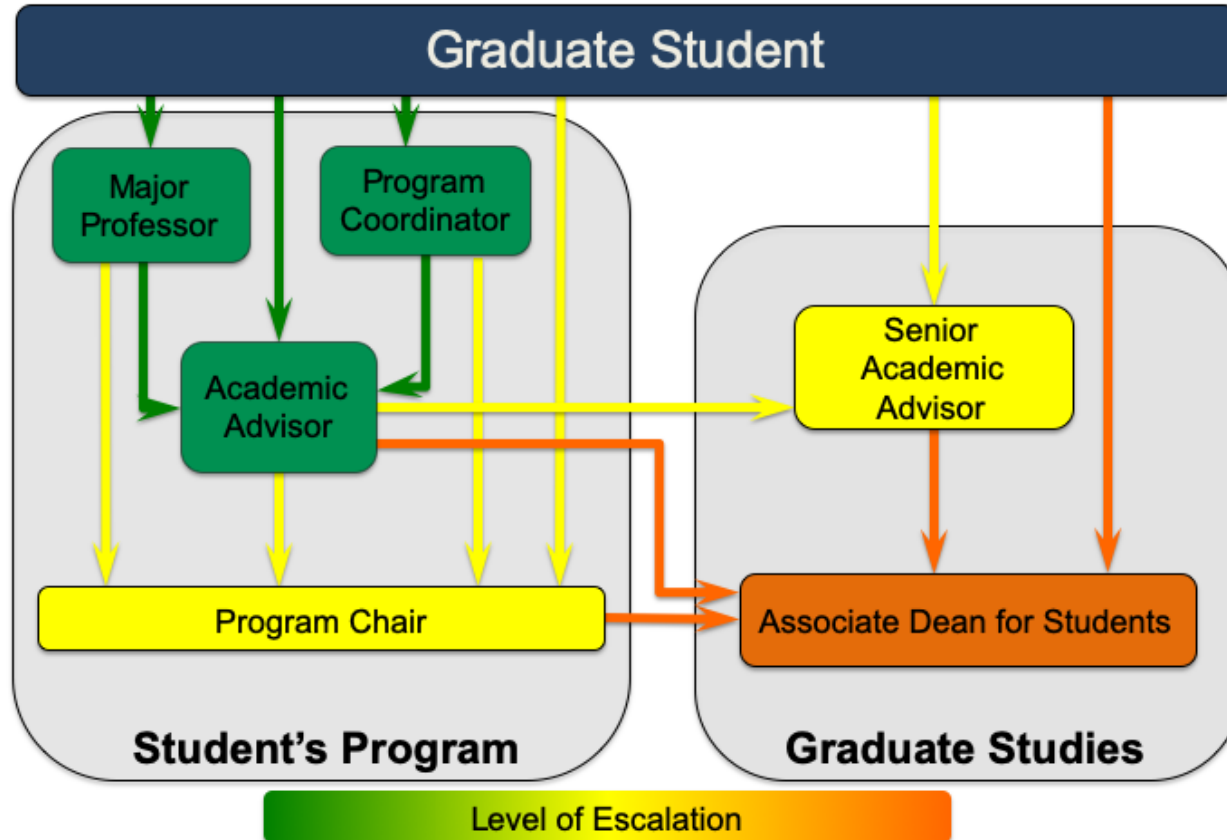
# STAFF ROLES



**Graduate Program Coordinator** in your program serves as primary point of contact for students, day to day practices, policy, and paperwork.

**Senior Academic Advisors** in Graduate Studies advise on degree milestones, Graduate Council & campus policies, graduation requirements and mentorship issues.

# RESOLUTION FLOW PATHS



---

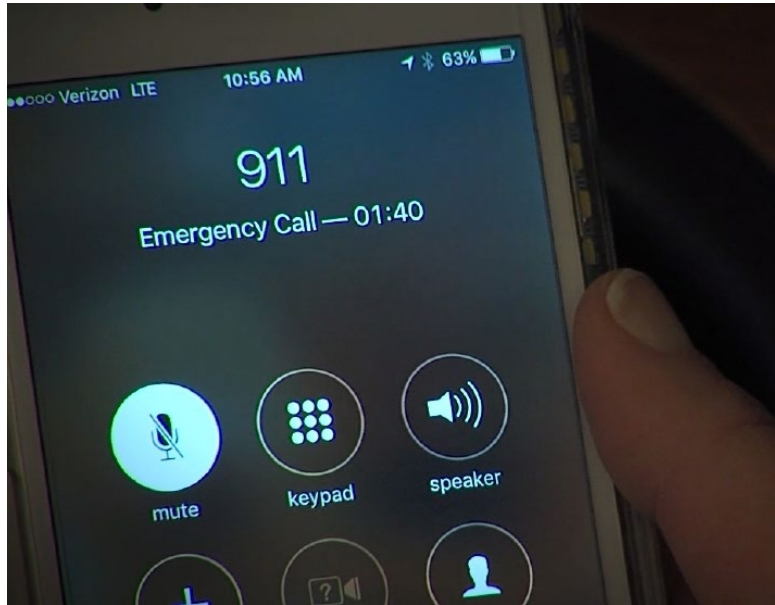
# GRADUATE STUDENT WELL-BEING

UC Graduate Student Experience Survey (Spring Quarter 2021)

- Graduate students reported frequently experiencing:
  - Moving more slowly
  - Trouble focusing
  - Tired all the time
  - Restless sleep
  - Unable to shake off the blues
  - Sad
- 56% of graduate students frequently felt depressed.



# STUDENTS IN DISTRESS



- Call Police/911: Welfare check
- Acute Care and Crisis Consultation
- Reach out to Graduate Program Coordinator
- Contact Case Manager at OSSJA
- HDAPP/Care

---

# MENTORING RESOURCES

- [Mentoring Guidelines](#)
- [Graduate Studies Mentoring Resources](#)
- Program Coordinators & [SAAs in Graduate Studies](#)
- [Director of Mentoring](#) - Elizabeth Sturdy
- [Associate Dean of Graduate Students](#) – Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor
- [Graduate Diversity Officers](#) – Devin Horton & Josephine Moreno
- [GradPathways Institute](#) – Teresa Dillinger & David Blancha
- [Counseling Services](#) – Bai-Yin Chen
- [Student Disability Services](#) – Abby Tilden
- [Office of the Ombuds](#)
- [Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs](#)
- [Harassment & Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program](#)  
(HDAPP)

---

## **FURTHER READING: CASE STUDIES**

---

# CASE STUDY

## Mentor's Point of View

A first-year master's degree student has not responded to the mentor's recent emails. In group meetings, she has expressed some negativity about her research project that the mentor has assigned her. The mentor feels the student is avoiding working on the project and lacks enthusiasm. The mentor decides to meet with the student for the first time. The student hasn't made expected progress on the project. The mentor feels frustrated with how little the student has accomplished this quarter and her lack of motivation. She also seems not to understand some of the basic research methods needed. The mentor was hoping this project could get published in the next year or two but is now worried that will not happen.

---

# CASE STUDY

## Student's Point of View

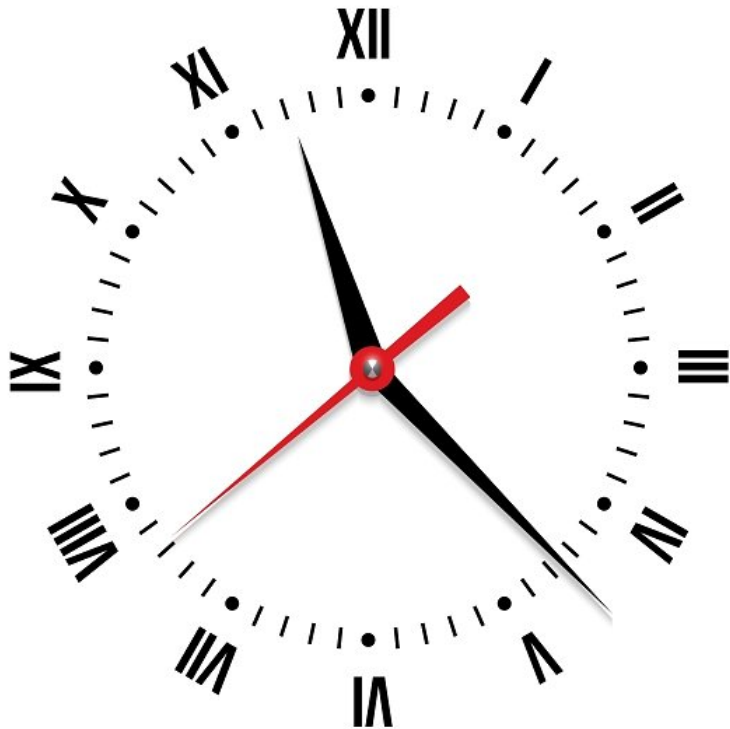
During recruitment, this student got excited about research opportunities in the mentor's lab. When she entered the program, she believed she was admitted to work on a certain research project and that is a major reason why she accepted admission. However, the mentor ended up assigning that research project to a new PhD student and putting her on a project she has no interest in and doesn't have a lot of background in. She has felt like she has been left to teach herself how to run the experiments with little guidance. The student feels misled and isolated. She already wants to leave the program as this research is not related to the job she wants after graduation.

---

# CASE STUDY

- What expectations were not aligned?
- Is there anything you would do differently to set expectations?
- What could the mentor and the student have done to better address some of these issues?
- Who could help the mentor in this situation?

# CASE STUDY

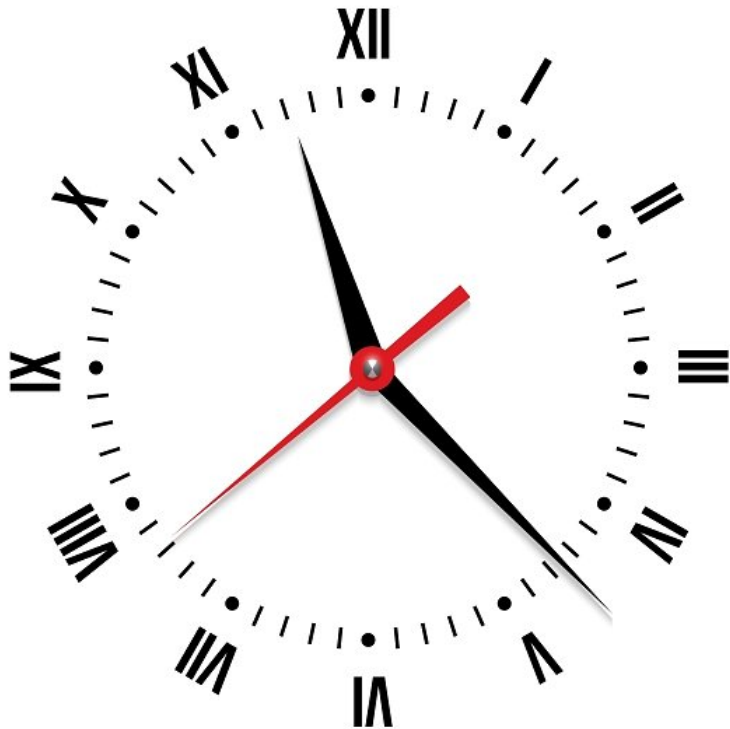


You are concerned about a graduate student, T, in your course.

You have noticed a change in T and T hasn't completed the work you discussed at the beginning of the quarter. Lately T has been coming to the class late, appears tired, has poor hygiene, seems disengaged, and you have noticed T not interacting with other graduate students.

What might you do?

# CASE STUDY



- Ask T how they are doing
- Discuss concerns with Graduate Advisor, Program Coordinator
- Student Health & Counseling Services
- OSSJA