

Faculty Best Practices for Mentoring MS/PhD Students HSC School of Public Health

Enculturating Students for Careers in Academic Public Health

The faculty advisor will help students acquire a public health identity that is grounded in social justice – the bedrock principle of the field. They will routinely share guidance about academic public health. This will include but not be limited to:

- providing feedback on the student's CV
- having students attend meetings and conferences with the faculty advisor
- introducing the student to distinguished faculty members at other universities
- sharing position announcements of post-doctoral fellowships and assistant professor position openings
- providing opportunities for "practice" job talks
- continuing to work with the student after they graduate from HSC

Assessment of Student Strengths and Weaknesses

The faculty advisor has a responsibility to conduct an ongoing assessment of the student's strengths and weaknesses, and to provide constructive feedback to address the weaknesses. In addition, the faculty advisor shall provide learning opportunities to assist the student with improving their skills. Although the 6-month student evaluations document the formal provision of student feedback, students should receive less formal but targeted performance feedback on a more frequent basis. With most students, faculty advisors should pay particular attention to the issue of dealing with negative feedback and rejection – a common experience for everyone in academia. The faculty advisor will find opportunities to recognize and celebrate their student's successes.

Weekly Meetings

The faculty advisor and student shall meet at least once a week either in person or via video conferencing. The student should create the agenda for the meeting and share it with their faculty advisor at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. If the faculty advisor has multiple MS/PhD students, they may consider meeting with all students at the same time, particularly if they are working on the same project.

Project Management

The faculty advisor is responsible for project management, including determining work processes, assigning tasks, setting expectations, identifying milestones, and establishing deadlines. The faculty advisor will hold themselves accountable by completing their tasks on time and will hold students accountable by setting clear performance expectations.

Student Time Management

The faculty advisor will actively monitor and help Ph.D. students develop time management skills. Ph.D. students are funded to work at least 20 hours a week to support the faculty member's research program as an apprentice and collaborator in the early years of their Ph.D. program. This apprenticeship-type experience is crucial for

developing skills needed to become an independent investigator. However, by the last year of the Ph.D. program, students are expected to develop into a junior colleague. The faculty advisor will find ways to accommodate the academic demands of the student's coursework whenever necessary.

Sufficient Participation for Authorship

Before work begins on drafting a paper for peer review, the faculty advisor and student will discuss principles and guidelines for research collaboration and authorship.

Sufficient participation for student authorship will be based on the criteria found in the SPH governance document titled: *Principles and Guidelines for Research Collaboration and Authorship*. This document can be retrieved at: <https://www.unthsc.edu/school-of-public-health/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/SPH-Faculty-Authorship-Guidelines.pdf>

Professional Behavior

The faculty advisor and student will model professional behavior at all times.

Specific Best Practices for First-Year MS and PhD Students

- Guiding them on conducting a comprehensive literature review
- Teaching them how to use statistical software
- Enlisting them to contribute to the preparation of an IRB application
- Assisting with data collection
- Providing them opportunities to prepare drafts of small sections or sub-sections of a paper being prepared for peer review or small parts of a grant application
- Providing them opportunities to learn about the components of different types of grants
- Reviewing active grant-funded projects with them
- Connecting them to other students and find ways for them to work together
- Sharing the experience of being a faculty member in a school of public health

October 2021 - Faculty Meetings on Student Research Mentoring