

Training Ourselves: Improving Mentoring of Doctoral Students

Stephanie Robert, PhD, MSW
Professor and Director, School
of Social Work
University of Wisconsin-
Madison
sarobert@wisc.edu



What is a mentor?





Mentor Training for Social Science Faculty – 7 Modules

- Maintaining Effective Communication
- Aligning Expectations
- Addressing Equity and Inclusion
- Improving Mentee Research Self-Efficacy
- Fostering Independence
- Promoting Professional Development
- Articulating Your Mentoring Plan

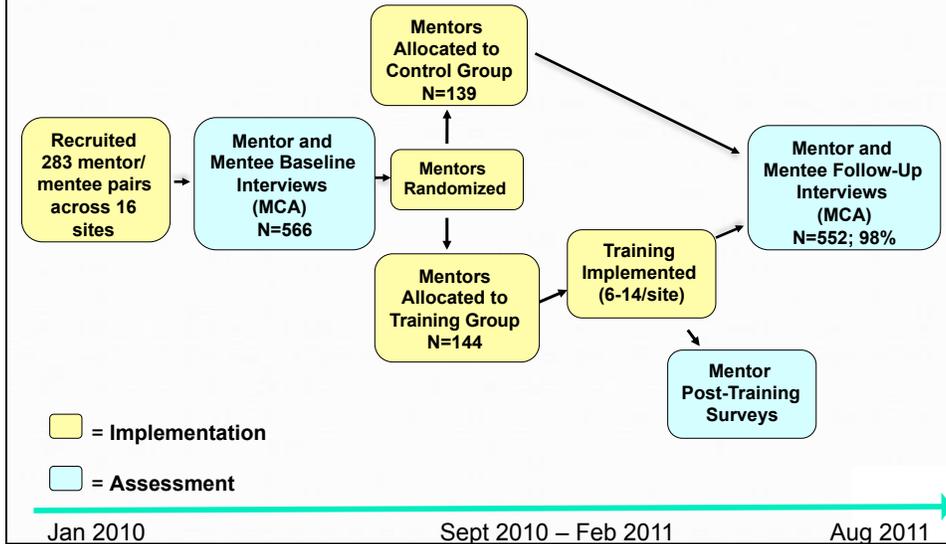
Key Elements of Mentor Training

- Process-based using case studies and group problem-solving
- Aimed at awareness-raising among peers (highlighting the “intentionality” of mentoring)
- Provides a forum to share the collective experience of mentors across a range of experiences
- Links to resources to improve mentoring

Can training actually improve mentoring?

- Yes.
- Pfund C, House SC, Asquith P, Fleming MF, Buhr KA, Burnham EL, Eichenberger Gilmore JM, Huskins WC, McGee R, Schurr K, Shapiro ED, Spencer KC, Sorkness CA. **Training mentors of clinical and translational research scholars: A randomized controlled trial.** *Acad Med.* 2014;89(5):774-782.

Training Implementation and Evaluation: Flowchart of Research Mentor Training Trial



Mentor Training for Social Science Faculty – 7 Modules

- Maintaining Effective Communication
- **Aligning Expectations**
- Addressing Equity and Inclusion
- **Improving Mentee Research Self-Efficacy**
- Fostering Independence
- Promoting Professional Development
- Articulating Your Mentoring Plan

Today

- Consider: Do you think your colleagues could benefit from mentor training?
- Do some exercises together – sample of training
- Groundrules:
 - Remember that this is usually done in a small seminar
 - Not everyone will have a chance to talk in group discussion since we are a large group
 - Exercises are abbreviated
 - Given time constraints, try to stay on task

Improving mentee research self-efficacy

Improving mentee research self-efficacy -- Exercise

- Read Handout #1: “What is self-efficacy?” focusing on the **four sources**
- **Pair off** and do activity in Handout #2: Anatomy of a Research Success Experience
- 10 minutes

Group Discussion



Applying the Self-Efficacy Tool Box

- Do the activity on Handout #3
 - Think of one of your own mentees who currently or in the past has shown signs of lower self-efficacy around research.
- Read Handout #4
- Get back in a pair, and discuss the questions on Handout #3 (15 minutes)

Aligning Expectations

- Introduction
- Read handout #5
- Discuss as one large group

Aligning Expectations

- Mentor/mentee compacts

Spend 10 minutes

- Skim the two sample compacts/expectations docs
- Think: If you were to create a mentor-mentee compact for yourself and your doctoral students, consider what you would include.
- What is in these example that you like?
- What is missing that you would add for yourself?

Moving Forward



Moving forward – issues

- How can we train faculty to be better mentors?
- How do we mentor our mentees in a way that can make them better than us?
- How do we better mentor trans- and inter-disciplinary scientists?
- Team mentoring – best practices?
- Might better mentor training improve the experiences of mentees who are under-represented minorities?

Want more? Go to:
[Researchmentortraining.org](https://www.researchmentortraining.org)



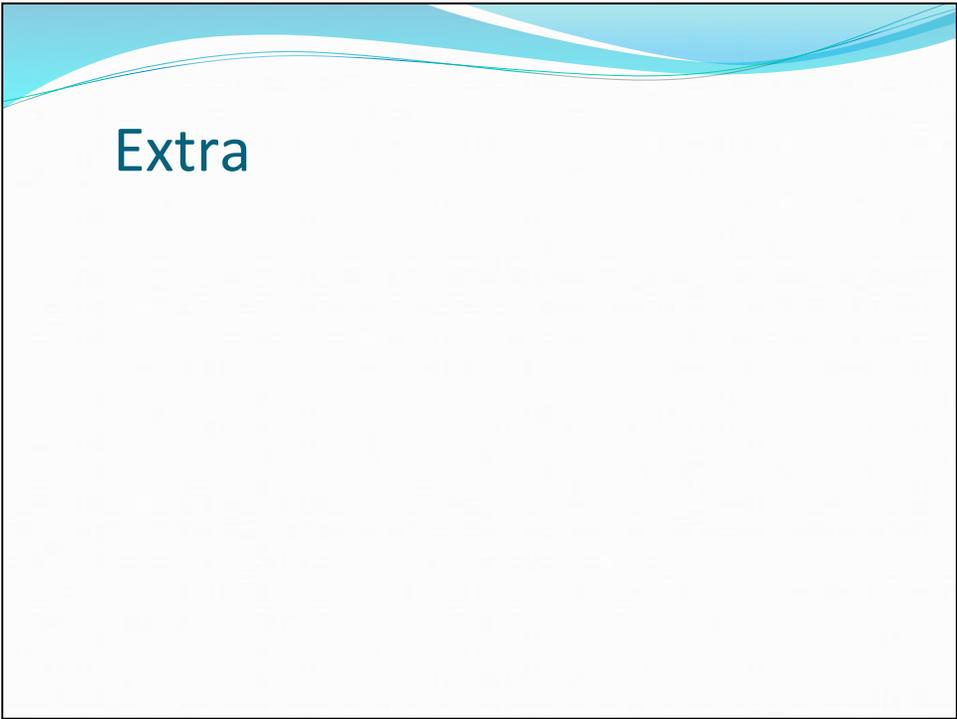
Training Ourselves: Improving Mentoring of Doctoral Students

Stephanie Robert, PhD, MSW
Professor and Director, School
of Social Work
University of Wisconsin-
Madison
sarobert@wisc.edu



My next steps

- Pilot a bit more
- Finalize the curriculum
- Train others to facilitate the curriculum





MENTOR TRAINING CORE

Christine Pfund, PI and Director, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Stephen Thomas, Associate Director, University of Maryland, College Park

Janet Branchaw, Associate Director, University of Wisconsin-Madison



Research Mentoring
<https://mentoringresources.ictr.wisc.edu>

UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research
UW ICTR

Home Resources Training About Us Register Login

Effective mentoring is a key component to the advancement of the scientific research enterprise. This website is designed to provide resources to improve research mentoring relationships. It provides curricula, assessment tools and resources relevant for mentors and mentees, as well as those who would like to implement mentor training.

- Mentor & Mentee Resources**
Find resources to improve mentoring across each phase of the relationship.
- Training Curricula**
Learn about effective approaches to training mentors and how to use our freely available training materials.
- Impact of Training**
View feedback from participants in our research mentor training program.

NIH Office of Research Coordination
The Common Fund

Our UW-Madison team is leading the **Mentor Training Core** of the **National Research Mentoring Network** (NRMN). NRMN is part of a broader NIH consortium serving mentors and mentees that will strive to enhance diversity in the biomedical research workforce.