

Finding a Mentor Guides

The Finding a Mentor Guides help graduate students find a mentor who will support their individual goals. The guides provide information on assessing fit, mentor/mentee roles and expectations in the program, how to build a mentorship network, and conflict resolution resources. [Sample Finding a Mentor Guides](#)

Student Feedback

A majority of students (68%) surveyed indicated the guide enhanced their understanding of how to find a mentor. Of those that indicated it did not enhance their understanding, they indicated they were not in need of a mentor or had already found a mentor when receiving the guide. A majority surveyed felt the guide helped them successfully find and select a mentor (60%). The guide inspired them to consider a mentor's personality, availability/accessibility, industry experience, and mentoring experience.

"If I were looking for a mentor, I think this guide would encourage me to be more intentional and willing to ask direct questions of my mentor."

"This guide helped me to select rotations based on my research interests. After joining my lab, I can now say that I have a major professor and faculty mentors (previous rotations) that have different focuses but common research interests - which I think will help me in selecting my dissertation committee, as well as in receiving different perspectives in designing my research studies."

The guide also successfully encouraged graduate students to build a network of multiple mentors. Students provided feedback that the guide inspired them to consider additional mentors, future committee members, and seek out career mentors.

"The guide helped push me in the right direction to reach out to more people and consider what possible mentors could bring to the table related to my post-graduate and research interests."

Overall, students provided positive feedback on the guides and even if they did not need the resource at the time, they stressed the importance of the resource for first-year graduate students.

Summary

Selecting mentors can differ greatly across graduate programs and selection can happen at different times (recruitment, first quarter, second/third year) and through different methods (interviews, lab rotations). Given this variance, graduate programs are best equipped to address the approaches to finding mentors within their specific program's culture. Graduate programs should be providing guidance on mentorship just as they provide guidance on coursework or degree requirements. It is clear that this information should be provided early in the graduate program so that graduate students have access to these resources before they select mentors. These guides combat a "hidden curriculum" where students may not all have equal access to what questions to ask faculty or other students in the program. Finding a Mentor Guides also should include conflict resolution resources to provide information that can alleviate conflicts early and encourage graduate students to seek help if experiencing a conflict.