Careers

Mentoring

- How mentoring looks like
- Graduate student/postdoc "contract" with formal advisers; setting mutual expectations
- Recognition that we have (and should have) many mentors for different purposes/areas (teaching, research, step-ahead, …)
- You can and should also all mentor each other

What is mentoring?

- Relationship where a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person (Wikipedia)

What mentoring do you need?

- Specific information
- A connection/introduction
- The advice of an experienced person
  (career decisions, problem solving, etc)
- A brainstorming session
- A little emotional support
- Coaching on a specific topic/new tool
- Feedback on an idea, paper or teaching technique

You can (and should) have different mentors for different needs!

Why mentoring agreement?

- relationship between student and advisor may range from a very structured "master to apprentice" scenario to a very unstructured, "subtle guide of an independent scholar"
- conflict and tension can arise in situations where expectations, roles, and responsibilities are unclear or mismatched

What is good mentoring?

- Clear and frequent communication
- Agreement on mutual expectations
- Mentoring tailored to the needs, attributes and aspirations of each student

Graduate student/postdoc "contract" with formal advisers

- Clarifies responsibilities of the student and the advisor

Example (University of British Columbia):

- Supervisory Meetings (1 lab meeting + 1 hour-long individual meeting per week)
- How will base level funding be provided
- Teaching responsibilities
- Research/Publication conditions
- Authorship Policies
- Work hours

Graduate student/postdoc "contract" with formal advisers

Advisor's responsibilities
(Canadian Association of Graduate Studies):

- Ensure the project is manageable
- Ensure the project has an appropriate hypothesis/question/achievable goals
- Assist the student in developing their research interests and help the student modify the program when unforeseeable problems arise
- Provide the student with suitable resources/work space
- Provide supervision in a way which leaves the student with room for autonomy
- Provide timely feedback to thesis drafts/writings
- Be open, honest and fair with the student when academic performance is not meeting expectations;
- Establish a collaboration/study plan

My experiences with mentoring

DISCUSSION: What are YOUR mentoring experiences?