



Policy on Mentoring Commitments for PhD Students and Faculty Advisors

Johns Hopkins University has a commitment to quality mentoring of PhD students, in support of the mission of excellence in PhD education at Johns Hopkins. As such, the university requires every PhD-granting school to undertake **ALL** of the following:

1. Distribute “*JHU Mentorship Commitments of Faculty Advisors and PhD Students*” to all PhD students and all PhD-advising faculty at least annually;
2. Identify when and by whom (role) the “*JHU Mentorship Commitments of Faculty Advisors and PhD Students*” will be distributed annually to students and to faculty advisors;
3. Ensure that the “*JHU Mentorship Commitments of Faculty Advisors and PhD Students*” are included in student handbooks
4. Ensure that the “*JHU Mentorship Commitments of Faculty Advisors and PhD Students*” are included in both new student orientation and new faculty orientation materials and/or sessions;
5. Identify a point person within each PhD program or department, as well as at the school level, to whom students can go if they have questions or concerns related to their own PhD advisor. This should include:
 - a. A description of how it is communicated to students that they may go to this named person with questions or concerns about advising;
 - b. A description of the functions the person may perform to assist with the advising situation (e.g., mediation, coaching, training, co-mentoring, switching advisors).
 - c. A description of the back-up procedure should the primary person be involved in the situation him/her/themselves or be temporarily unavailable.

In addition, it is the responsibility of the school’s dean’s office to ensure, either within the school as a whole or within each PhD program (or through a combination thereof), that **at least two strategies** (e.g., from list below, or others) will be used to enhance and support an effective mentoring environment. Examples of mentoring supports are listed below. Additional supports, and additional innovative ideas to support effective mentoring, are encouraged.

- 1. Dean’s or chair’s communication about the importance of good PhD advising and mentoring with supporting description of where to go with any concerns;**
- 2. Workshops, lunches, or discussions about PhD mentoring** (could include external guests with experience with mentoring, case discussions among faculty, best practice discussions, discussions of hard cases, etc.);

3. Mentoring awards:

- a. Smaller vs. larger number given annually within a school
- b. With or without financial award
- c. High visibility and celebration around awardees

4. Training on how to be a great mentor:

- a. Length, format, target audience, topics, etc. to be determined by program and/or school

5. Robust thesis committee structure

- a. Required 1-2x annually
- b. Goal: Broader intellectual input to student's work; also can diffuse singular power of mentor
- c. May choose to allow time in each meeting when i) the advisor leaves the room; and ii) the student leaves the room.
- d. Letter generated after meeting with consensus of where things stand and goals for upcoming year. Distributed to student and all committee members

6. Mechanism to provide feedback on advisor's and student's adherence to commitments:

- a. Option: More formal survey/evaluation of each commitment
 - i. Returned to advisor/student?
 - ii. Collected by program head or department chair?
 - iii. Collected centrally by an institutional research office within school?
- b. Option: Ask student to identify three mentoring commitments the advisor is meeting the best and three commitments to work on for coming year. Faculty advisor does same for student.
- c. Option: Advisor asks student: "What is the one thing I should work on in the coming year?" Student asks advisor the same.

7. Mentoring mavens

- a. Each school identifies a few highly-effective faculty mentors to be master mentors, able to chat with or coach others, able to counsel students, able to serve on panels providing tips for effective mentoring; also serves as important recognition

8. Any other strategy suggested by the program or school that is also designed to support a culture of excellence in mentoring

JHU Mentorship Commitments of Faculty Advisors and PhD Students

This document outlines mentoring expectations of faculty advisors and of PhD students at Johns Hopkins University. These expectations should be discussed together.

Faculty advisors should commit to the following responsibilities:

Training:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to mentor the PhD student.** This responsibility includes committing to the training of their PhD student, building on the PhD student's individual professional background and in support of their individual professional aspirations.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to participate in ongoing and regular meetings with their advisees to discuss academic and research progress.** The advisor and student should agree on expected frequency of and preparation for meetings and use meetings to brainstorm ideas, troubleshoot challenges, and outline next steps. The advisor should identify a co-advisor/mentor should the primary advisor be unavailable for an extended period (sabbatical, leave, etc.).
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to participate in a formal annual meeting with the student to discuss academic progress and next steps in the academic program.** This responsibility includes helping to ensure that the document summarizing this annual discussion is completed and submitted in accordance with program requirements.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to encourage their advisees to reach out, as relevant, to additional co-advisors or informal mentors.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility clarify the student's funding package and to clarify any work and/or teaching expectations associate with the package.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to contribute to a training environment that fosters independent, scholarly research, and professional growth.**

Research

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to provide guidance in scholarly research.** This responsibility includes helping to identify a workable research project and helping to set reasonable goals and timelines for research completion. The advisor should encourage the student to expand their skill sets and share ideas with others at Johns Hopkins and externally.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to monitor research progress.** The advisor should encourage effective use of time. The advisor should meet regularly with the PhD student to hear updates on progress, results, and challenges in activities and research.

Professional development:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to discuss career development with the PhD student, including in any number of sectors of interest to the student.** PhD advisors should assist in identifying resources to further the student's professional goals.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to participate in a formal annual meeting with the PhD student to discuss professional development goals.** The advisor should help to ensure that the document summarizing this discussion is completed and submitted in accordance with program requirements.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to nominate the student for relevant professional opportunities and try to connect their advisees to relevant professional contacts and networks.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to allow time outside of research for student engagement in professional development activities** including, for example, skill building workshops, professional conferences, additional research collaborations, or other informational sessions.

Respectful engagement and well-being:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to treat their advisees, other students, and colleagues with respect at all times.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to commit to being available to meet with the PhD student.** The advisor and the student should agree on expected frequency of and preparation for meetings, and expected timeframe for responding to emails and for providing feedback on work products. The PhD advisor should give their full attention during meetings and should reach out to PhD students who are not making contact.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to be supportive during both successful and discouraging periods of training.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to communicate in a respectful and constructive manner, including if the advisor has concerns that the PhD student is not meeting the expectations outlined in this document.** This responsibility includes using concrete and specific language when providing suggestions or critiquing work.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to take an interest in the student's well-being, to listen to any concerns, and to connect the student, as appropriate, with additional resources.**

Policies:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to become familiar with and respect University, school, and program policies for PhD students.** The advisor will acknowledge all PhD student benefits and entitlements, including, as relevant, paid and unpaid leave.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to discuss with the student relevant policies, commitments, and expectations related to funding, work, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, sick leave, or vacation.**

Responsible conduct:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to become familiar with university and professional codes of responsible conduct for PhD students.** This responsibility includes reporting any possible violations as required to relevant parties, including to the relevant Dean's office and to the Office of Institutional Equity.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to discuss and help clarify authorship or intellectual property issues and appropriately recognize the student's contributions to any collaborative work.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to model professional behavior in both interpersonal interactions and in scholarly integrity.**
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to complete Title IX Training regarding sexual misconduct and sexual harassment as required by the University.**
<http://oie.jhu.edu/training/>

Continuous quality improvement as an advisor:

- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to participate in mentor training and best practices discussions.** This responsibility includes striving to be a better mentor and to learn tips and practices that improve their work and skills as an advisor.
- **The PhD advisor has the responsibility to ask advisees for constructive feedback on mentoring.** This responsibility includes doing their best to respond professionally to these suggestions and consider whether or how best to incorporate them into their mentoring interactions.

PhD students should commit to the following responsibilities:

Training:

- **The PhD student has the primary responsibility for the successful completion of their degree.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to familiarize themselves with academic milestones and to strive to meet all milestones within the expected timeframe.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to meet regularly with the PhD advisor.** This responsibility includes providing the advisor with updates on the progress, outcomes, and challenges in coursework, research, and academic or professional activities. The advisor and the student should agree on expected frequency of and preparation for meetings, and will use meetings to brainstorm ideas, troubleshoot challenges, and outline expectations for work and timelines.
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to participate in a formal annual meeting with the advisor to discuss academic progress and next steps in the academic program.** The student should ensure that the document summarizing this discussion is completed and submitted in accordance with program requirements.
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to seek additional mentors to expand their training experience, as appropriate.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to understand their funding package and to clarify any work and/or teaching expectations in line with this funding.**

Research:

- **The PhD student has the responsibility to work with the advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project.** This responsibility includes establishing a timeline for each phase of work and striving to meet established deadlines.
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to seek guidance from their advisor, while also aspiring increasingly for independence.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to engage in activities beyond their primary research responsibilities.** The student should attend and participate in any research-related meetings and seminars relevant to their training area.

Professional development:

- **The PhD student has the primary responsibility to identify their professional goals and to develop their career plan following completion of the PhD degree.** This responsibility includes familiarizing themselves with professional development opportunities within Johns Hopkins and externally. Students should identify specific activities to pursue that will advance their professional development and networking.
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to prepare a Professional Development Plan annually that outlines their research and career objectives.** This responsibility includes discussing this plan annually with the advisor. The student should ensure that the document summarizing this discussion is completed and submitted in accordance with program requirements.

Respectful engagement and well-being:

- **The PhD student has the responsibility to treat the advisor, other mentors, and colleagues with respect at all times.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to make themselves available, within reason, to meet with the advisor upon request.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to communicate in a respectful and constructive manner if they have concerns that the advisor is not meeting the expectations outlined in this document.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to be open to constructive criticism by the advisor, other mentors, and colleagues.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility, as possible, for their well-being, should consider discussing any concerns with the advisor or other mentor(s), and should connect with available resources when needed.**

Policies:

- **The PhD student has the responsibility to familiarize themselves and comply with University, school, and program-specific policies and requirements for PhD students.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to discuss with the advisor relevant policies, commitments, and expectations related to funding, work, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, sick leave, or vacation.** As needed, the student will provide any documentation relevant to stated policies on leave and other requirements to the student's program, school, or the University.

Responsible conduct:

- **The PhD student has the responsibility to conduct themselves in a responsible and ethical manner at all times.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to familiarize themselves with University codes of responsible conduct for PhD students.**
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to engage in responsible research conduct.** This responsibility includes completing the responsible conduct of research training requirements of their specific school and program, and any specific discipline training requirements (e.g., animal and human subject work). The student will maintain accurate and contemporaneous records of research activities in accordance with the norms of best practices in their own discipline. The student should discuss authorship and intellectual property issues with the advisor.
- **The PhD student has the responsibility to complete Title IX Training regarding sexual misconduct and sexual harassment as required by the University.**
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