

713. GUIDELINES FOR ADVISOR-GRADUATE STUDENT INTERACTIONS IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

The success of every graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences depends in part upon the role of the student's advisor. Whether they work together in a lab or a research team, meet in a seminar, or consult periodically in office hours or online, the advisor and the student together establish a plan for the graduate student's research, work to identify and remove obstacles to success, and ensure that the student has opportunities to develop professional experience. Most of these interactions take place outside the classroom, often in informal interactions. To ensure that these interactions are as productive as possible, the College offers these guidelines.

These guidelines embody many of the best practices used by other institutions and professional societies. They are intended to provide principles for establishing an effective and productive advisor-student relationship that relies on trust, courtesy, clear communications, and shared expectations. These College guidelines provide a general framework for interactions; departments and programs are expected to establish and document more detailed implementation in departmental handbooks and procedures. These guidelines supplement the IU Student Code, which addresses primarily formal academic matters, by attending to the faculty's role in the student's research process.

Faculty Research Advisors should:

- promote an environment that is intellectually stimulating and free of harassment;
- be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful;
- recognize and respect the cultural backgrounds of students;
- be sensitive to the power imbalance in the student–advisor relationship;
- set clear expectations and goals for students regarding their academic performance, research activities and progress;
- discuss policies and expectations for work, either as teaching assistants or research assistants, including work hours, vacation time, and health contingencies;
- help RAs and GAs develop and deepen research and professional skills during their employment with faculty
- meet regularly and often with students to provide clear feedback on research activities, performance, and progress;
- promote and manage productive and collaborative relationships for students working in large research groups and collaborations;
- provide students with training and oversight in all relevant aspects of research, including the design of research projects, the development of necessary skills, and the use of rigorous research techniques or procedures;
- provide and discuss clear criteria for authorship at the beginning of all collaborative projects;
- encourage participation in professional meetings and try to secure funding for such activities;
- ensure students receive training in the skills needed for a successful career in their discipline, including oral and written communication and grant preparation as appropriate;
- acknowledge that some students will pursue careers outside of academia and/or outside their research discipline and assist them in achieving their chosen career goals;
- be a role model by acting in an ethical, professional, and courteous manner toward other students, staff, and faculty.
- be familiar with IU policies and procedures for accommodating students with disabilities, following the guidelines and expertise offered by disability services. On a case by case basis, consider extending accommodations to other students experiencing personal or physical conditions that may temporarily impact their academic performance.
- be sensitive to the privacy concerns of students who require accommodations and ensure that any necessary accommodations are provided in a discreet and confidential manner.

Faculty members should provide mentoring to graduate students who are taking courses with them. This includes:

- offering opportunities for one-on-one discussions during office hours to help students better understand course content and assignments.
- providing timely and constructive feedback on assignments.
- indicating ways that students can further engage with course topics.
- being transparent about expectations for student participation.
- fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.
- helping build relationships with students that may lead to opportunities for research partnerships.

Graduate Students should:

- recognize that they bear the primary responsibility for the successful completion of their degree.
- complete all tasks assigned by the department, including teaching, grading, and other assistantship responsibilities.
- know the policies governing graduate studies in the department and the graduate school and take responsibility for meeting departmental and graduate school deadlines.
- be proactive in communicating with the advisor and research committee.
- interact with faculty and staff in a professional manner, respecting norms for deadlines and requests, especially those that are time sensitive;
- recognize that in addition to their role as a student, they have rights and responsibilities as employees of the university, and expect that these are clearly conveyed to them.
- clearly communicate with their advisor(s) regarding their career preferences.
- be proactive about improving their research skills, including written and oral presentation skills.
- seek and be provided mentoring and support resources beyond their faculty advisor(s), including other faculty members and peers.
- inform faculty advisors of potential and/or existing conflicts and work toward their resolution, following departmental guidelines.
- obtain outside help from graduate chairs, or other faculty if conflicts arise with their advisor.
- consult the Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) as a resource and advocate for addressing any aspect of the mentoring relationship; GSAC provides a platform for communication and collaboration between graduate students and faculty.
- be aware that if they feel compelled to change advisors or research direction, they have options and should consult with their advisor, other mentors, or department officers, recognizing that such options may include changing programs.
- always act in an ethical, professional, and courteous manner toward other students, staff, and faculty.

Department and Programs will:

- provide students with up-to-date information that includes policies, practices, resources, degree requirements, and expectations for progress.
- assign each incoming graduate student to a faculty member who will mentor them for at least the duration of their coursework leading up to the master's degree exams.
- assist students with selection of their advisors as needed, providing general guidance on expectations for effective mentoring.
- ensure that all students have a faculty member with responsibility for advising them.
- proactively monitor graduate student progress toward their degrees and professional development, including mentoring meetings, committee meetings, exam completions, and other benchmarks toward the degree. The Annual Progress Reports (APR) and annual meetings should

provide an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the student-advisor relationship and offer advice on ways to address any issues arising.

- provide students and faculty with contacts, resources, and a clear process for potential conflict resolution (e.g., director of graduate studies, or department head). Interdisciplinary programs are responsible for coordinating among the home departments of faculty and students.
- assist students who wish to change advisors or research groups in identifying new advisors within the department or program who are receptive to accepting the student, and advising the student on options should no placement be found.
- provide appropriate infrastructure to allow students to complete their education and research in a timely and productive manner.
- provide opportunities for professional development that will be relevant to students seeking careers outside academia and/or their research discipline.
- incorporate these guidelines and recommendations into their departmental policies or handbooks and actively promote their observance.

Supplementary materials:

- [Span/Port Annual Progress Report Form](#)
- [Departmental Mentoring Plan & Timeline](#)
- [Administrative Manual](#)