



Fox Lab PhD Student Mentoring Agreement

Welcome to graduate school and the University of Denver! I am so excited to welcome you to our team. Within this document, I outline what you can expect from me as your advisor, and what I expect from you as a student. Ideally, this will be a living document that we update and change as you progress through the program, and as our relationship grows and changes.

What you can expect from me as your research mentor/supervisor

As your graduate mentor, I see my role as scaffolding your growth across domains (e.g., academic, professional, research, personal domains). I will do my best to provide you with the tools to become a strong researcher who understands and contributes to the research that our lab is conducting and to become a strong clinical psychologist who contributes to the field more broadly. Toward these aims, I will try to tailor opportunities, tasks, and experiences to you to help you reach your longer-term goals. I will be responsive, provide constructive feedback, and will be an advocate for you.

More concretely, you can expect the following from me:

- 1. Thoughtful and individualized mentorship.** I recognize that not all graduate students will have the same short- and long-term goals. I will plan to meet with you at the start of each academic year to discuss your **current** vision for your long-term goals. During this meeting, we'll also talk through shorter-term goals to help you achieve your longer-term vision. I do not expect that your long-term goals will stay the same as you progress through the program! It's normal and expected that they will shift and change across time. For this reason, I'll check in about your current long-term goals yearly so we can adjust accordingly.
- 2. Responsivity.** I strongly value and prioritize responsivity. When you send me drafts of lab projects + tasks, I will get them back to you with feedback (edits, comments) as quickly as possible. I know you will have spent significant time and energy on these projects, and I want to keep the ball rolling. You can expect me to respond to you (email, call, text, Teams channel) within 48 hours, provided I am not out of town. **If you don't hear back from me in 48 hours, PLEASE ping me again.** I do not perceive this as rude, annoying, or anything other than you caring about the work. I might have just overlooked your note and need a reminder!

3. **Provide critical feedback.** I will do my best to provide critical and constructive feedback on all projects sent to me with a single goal: to improve the quality of the work. I care deeply about the work you and our lab produce. Sometimes that means I'll provide critical feedback. I know that this may sometimes feel discouraging, but that is never my goal. Please remember, feedback is in direct service of improving your work (and believe me: I am still constantly incorporating collaborator's edits, feedback, thoughts into my work!). In this way, I will (respectfully) challenge ideas (what we read, what other people talk about, my own, and yours) with an effort to make yours and our work better.

An essential skill to succeeding in the lab is the ability to constructively respond to feedback. But this is a skill, meaning I expect it will take time for you to build and grow in that regard.

- **Grant Feedback.** Please send me a draft of any grants you plan to submit at least 2 weeks before they are due. I will do my very best to get initial feedback to you within one week. Having two weeks will ensure we have time for at least 2 rounds of edits before submission.

- **Manuscript Feedback.** I will do my best to get manuscript feedback to you within 1 week. However, please be patient with me, and allow for 2 weeks for revisions.

- **Lab Citizen/Researcher Feedback.** I will do my best to provide you with feedback regularly throughout the year about your participation in lab as it relates to the below expectations.

4. **Respond constructively to feedback.** I will work to respond constructively to any and all of your feedback. I promise to not be defensive. I will think about and respond to any/all feedback you give me. Feedback you give to me will not impact our relationship in the long-term, the degree to which I advocate for you, or the quality of future recommendations that I write for you. *(Related note: I want and need your feedback! I am a new professor, and I only recently finished graduate school myself! I care a lot about mentorship, and I want to help you learn, grow, and contribute to our research team. If I'm doing something that gets in the way of those goals, please tell me.)*

5. **Work with integrity and honesty.** I will be transparent, open, and honest with you.

6. **Accessibility + Meetings.** I am here to support you. Aside from holidays, I will meet with you once/week. If you'd prefer to meet less, that's ok too! Just let me know and we will plan an alternative meeting frequency.

Ideally, we will take notes to keep track of what we discuss during our regular meetings. I've learned that my memory is fallible in the best of times, and notes can help ensure we stay on track.

2. **Graduate and lab citizen.** I will be an engaged and active participant in the Fox Lab, Clinical Area, and Department of Psychology throughout my doctoral training. I will commit to being a good lab, area, and department member through service commitments, TA/RA responsibilities, active engagement, and practicing kindness and respect (see: golden rule).

If I am asked to complete a task (e.g., reading an article before lab meeting, presenting to lab, sharing an idea with my advisor), I will come prepared with it completed. When I agree to complete a task, I will get it done, and I will ask for help and/or an extension when I need it, after I've already tried to problem-solve on my own (because everyone needs help sometimes!).

I will be honest and respect all ethical standards when I conduct my research and engage in scholarly activity. This includes compliance with all institutional and federal regulations for human subjects research as well as responsibility for copyright, permissions, and plagiarism.

I will strive to create a collaborative, inclusive, and welcoming environment in my interactions with lab members, DU students, and faculty.

I will take interest in the future generation of scientists via my engagement with student mentees.

3. **Professional development.** It is primarily my responsibility to guide my development as a clinical psychologist. This means that I will guide my own education and path to learn the content and skills I need. For example, I will regularly read scientific articles that are published in my area of research, I will actively seek out opportunities to learn outside of the classroom (e.g., attend relevant seminars/brown-bags/workshops; attend scientific meetings), and I will volunteer to help on a project using techniques that I want to learn.

I will be resourceful and attempt to learn independently and/or consult with other faculty in instances in which my advisor lacks relevant experience.

I will strive to become independent in my training activities including writing for publication, designing and conducting research, mentoring undergraduate and less experienced doctoral students, etc. At the same time, I do not expect to be independent from day 1! I will ask for help and support as I need it to help me to develop these competencies.

I will be knowledgeable of the policies, deadlines, and requirements of the PhD program. It is **my responsibility**, not my advisors, that I meet program requirements. She will help me to succeed, but she will not be my personal planner.

4. **Communication.** My advisors' expectations are based on her understanding of how I'm doing mentally, physically, and academically (in that order), and based on her understanding of my longer-term career goals. I will strive to keep open communication with my advisor regarding my well-being and my career goals.

I will seek regular feedback on my performance, including any challenges that I am facing, through open and timely discussions with my mentor. I will be responsive to advice and constructive criticism. I acknowledge that feedback is intended to improve my scientific work.

I will give honest and constructive feedback to all members of the research team, including my mentor.

I will admit when I make mistakes, and I will learn from them. It is my responsibility to acknowledge and communicate my mistake as quickly as possible to all team members that need to know about the mistake to course-correct.

5. **Mental and Physical Illness.** Graduate school is hard and can be very isolating, confidence crushing, and emotionally difficult at times (it can also be great, but that's for another conversation...). Our lab also studies emotionally difficult topics, that may be personally relevant and/or relevant to my friends/family.

I will do my best to take care of my mental and physical health by planning time off, taking vacations, and engaging in other self-care activities (e.g., attend regular physicals/doctor visits, exercise, regular sleep, cooking, therapy when needed). I will communicate with my advisor when I am struggling with my mental/physical health (I am welcome to share as much as I am comfortable with. I do not have to share in what ways I am struggling explicitly if I do not want to; however, I will let her know in a broad sense what is going on). *Note: all students are eligible to receive services at the DU Health & Counseling Center (<https://www.du.edu/health-and-counseling-center/>). To schedule an appointment, call (303) 871-2205.*

I will also stay home and take care of myself when I'm sick. If I'm scheduled to run a participant or have something on my plate that day, I will find a replacement and notify the folks who need to know ASAP (preferably the night before when possible).

And now, onto the fun stuff . . .

Mentee current career goals and plan for the academic year.

Describe your long-term career goals in the space below.

Think through and write a plan for the coming academic year. Plan to add to this when you meet with your advisor, including personalized agreements and concrete expectations that you discuss.