

Information for Scholarly Activity Mentors

Mentoring in the Scholarly Activity component of the medical education curriculum is defined as supporting and assisting the student (mentee) in the completion of his/her scholarly project. The mentor possesses the expertise that will facilitate the mentee's academic and professional development through a one-on-one, committed relationship between the mentor and mentee.

The mentor:

- Serves both as a teacher and as a supervisor. The mentor provides instruction, helps establish short-term goals and timelines for the mentee, critiques and edits written work of the mentee, reviews and tracks the mentee's progress, provides feedback, and challenges the mentee.
- Serves as a role model. The mentor imparts knowledge, experience, and professionalism both directly and indirectly through his/her behavior, attitudes, and perspectives.
- Is flexible and adaptable to the needs of the mentee. The mentor should be willing to adapt his/her educational approach as the mentee progresses in his/her scholarly project and as the needs of the mentee change. Initially the mentor may need to play an active role in establishing short-term goals and timelines to maintain and reinforce progress. Later, the mentor may serve more as a guide or consultant to the mentee.
- Is available and has regularly scheduled, in person meetings with the mentee. The in-person meetings can be supplemented with communication via telephone, voice mail, or email. However, these forms of communication should not replace regularly scheduled face-to-face meetings.
- The mentor and mentee are required to complete the "**UAB Heersink School of Medicine Scholarly Activity Mentoring Contract**". The mentee is responsible for submitting the signed, mentoring contract to MedMap and for updating the contract when deemed necessary.

Mentor Responsibilities:

- Although students are encouraged to develop their own project under guidance of a faculty mentor, it is recognized that many students will become involved in larger, ongoing research projects of their mentor. The faculty mentor should also encourage the student to be the first author on abstracts and publications that may result from their work.
- The faculty mentor should ensure that the student is not simply used as a technician to accomplish someone's research project.
- The faculty mentor should read, comment on, and approve the project proposal as submitted by the student in MEDMap. **The project proposal must be written by the student. In collaborative/group projects, each student must have a clearly defined role on the project and the student's role must be stated in his/her proposal.**

- The faculty mentor should ensure that the student is trained in all appropriate safety precautions, such as biohazards, recombinant DNA, radioactive materials, laboratory safety, human subjects, and animal care, **BEFORE** the student begins the research.
- The faculty mentor should ensure that IRB protocol numbers are obtained for the use of any human subjects, or a written exemption, and IACUC protocol numbers for animal subjects. These must be obtained **BEFORE** the student begins data collection for the project. **The mentor or a member of his/her research team should assist the student in writing of IRB/IACUC protocols.**
- The faculty mentor is responsible for making available space, equipment, and supplies necessary for completion of the project.
- The faculty mentor should invest sufficient time in supervising the student, including weekly meetings to discuss results and student progress and when required help to focus (or refocus) the direction of the project.
- The faculty mentor is responsible for commenting on progress reports submitted by the student in MEDMap.
- The faculty mentor serves as the first reviewer and gives initial approval of the student's final project report. In cases where the primary advisor is not available to supervise the final written report, such as external mentors, the faculty co-mentor will assume this responsibility.
- The primary mentor must be a faculty member at the Birmingham, Huntsville, Montgomery, or Tuscaloosa campuses. In cases where the primary mentor is external, there must be a co-mentor. The co-mentor must also approve the student's project proposal, and approve the final written project report.