The Relationship between Advisors/Mentors and their Advisees

The heart of our graduate education and training and research work is a healthy relationship between advisors and advisees. We see this ideally as a mentorship process with mutual obligations.

Goals:
- Professional academic training
- Socialization to the academic enterprise
- Pursuit of excellence in mutual projects
- Open dialogue regarding expectations of the relationship
- Support and compassion in the relationship
- Confidentiality and trust
- Recognition of each other's needs, goals, and time constraints

Norms:
- Advisors should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations of the relationship
  - support student efforts to become involved in research projects immediately
  - recognize that they are role models for students
  - guide students rather than control them
  - be an advocate for their students
  - recognize students' particular goals and needs
  - have regular meetings every semester with students
  - give students regular and timely feedback on their work
  - monitor and assist students in making progress toward the degree
  - encourage students to express themselves in the relationship
  - be sensitive to the power differential in the relationship
- Advisees should:
  - discuss the objectives and expectations of the relationship
  - keep adviser up to date about their own progress
  - be motivated to become involved in research early and seek out opportunities pro-actively
  - recognize that adviser has many other professional commitments
  - seek mentoring and support from other faculty in addition to the adviser
  - recognize that academic commitment and hard work are fundamental to a positive advising relationship
  - feel comfortable changing advisors at any time
  - review advising options at the time of major benchmarks in the program (e.g. after A-exams)

Situations that May Signal a Problem:
- Participants perceiving that academic freedom and personal choice are limited in the advising relationship
- Participants experiencing retaliation in the advising relationship
- Participants feeling their privacy is invaded in the advising relationship
- Participants feeling frightened or threatened in the advising relationship
- Participants feeling like they are being taken advantage of in the advising relationship
relationship

• Participants having difficulty contacting and/or meeting with each other
• Participants allowing personal lives to overlap into and jeopardize professional relationship
• Advisors involving advisees in departmental conflicts
• Advisors using the allocation of resources to control advisees