



Office of Research, Innovation & Scholarly Endeavors



Mentoring MCOM Students to Conduct Scientific Inquiry: Mentor's Responsibilities and Benefits

Goals and General Responsibilities of a USF mentor:

The mentoring relationship at MCOM fosters a multifaceted collaboration between the medical student and the faculty member. The primary goal of this mentoring process is to guide and nurture the medical student's growth as a scholar through the development of a scholarly project. This guidance requires regular counseling of the student in the development of creative thought as well as in terms of execution of scholarly inquiry. As such, the mentor engages the medical student in the process of acquisition, organization, analysis, and interpretation of information. The intent is that the student will develop the knowledge, attitude, and skills essential to become a forward thinking physician and leader.

The mentor/mentee relationship is a meaningful experience for both the student and the faculty. Medical students benefit from the close contact with a faculty member while participating in the discovery process and the faculty member mentors productive, motivated and intelligent future colleagues. Both faculty and students have reported that such experiences are among the most formative they have in their professional lives.

Specific Responsibilities of a Mentor:

The goal is to commit to the student's project and growth as a scholar, for the duration of the project. The relationship typically starts in the fall of the first year, when students contact mentors based on their general area of research interest. During initial meetings, the mentor/mentee should clarify their expectations and what they are trying to accomplish. Upon agreement, the mentor will guide the student to develop a relevant and feasible research project within his/her general area of expertise. The mentor will guide the mentee to formulate a clear hypothesis or objective. The mentor will then help the student write a research protocol containing specific aims and methodologies as well as background and significance of the proposed study. This protocol may become the basis to apply for necessary regulatory oversight approval, such as IRB or to apply for intra- or extramural funding.

USF MCOM allows for an extended summer break during which the rising MSII students have the opportunity to lay the foundation of their scholarly project. USF MCOM offers a competitive funding mechanism to support the student's cost of living during that time. USF MCOM does not provide funding for the cost of the scholarly project, such as equipment or supplies, travel expenses, poster printing, cost of publication etc.

The mentor will provide the training, guidance and feedback necessary for the student to successfully conduct the scholarly project. Under the supervision of the mentor, the student is expected to disseminate the results in discipline appropriate formats such as a submitted abstract, oral presentation, patent, curriculum module or paper. Lastly, the mentor commits to providing an evaluation of the student at the end of the summer or elective period.

Recognition of a Mentor:

In addition to the experience of working with a highly motivated and well-trained student in the SCP, USF MCOM faculty mentors are recognized through the EVU system. Leadership in the Office of RISE will write letters on behalf of mentors to support their promotion and tenure.