Mentee-Mentor Commitments

*From the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT).

Committed of Graduate Student Mentee

• I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree. I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom and the research laboratory. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards.

• I will meet regularly with my research advisor and provide them with updates on the progress and results of my activities and experiments.

• I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to meet the established deadlines.

• I will work with my research advisor to select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will commit to meeting with this committee at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will be responsive to the advice of and constructive criticism from my committee.

• I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my graduate program, graduate school, and institution. I will commit to meeting these requirements, including teaching responsibilities.

• I will attend and participate in laboratory meetings, seminars and journal clubs that are part of my educational program.

• I will comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones. I will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional safe laboratory practices and animal-use and human-research policies at my institution.

• I will participate in my institution’s Responsible Conduct of Research Training Program and practice those guidelines in conducting my thesis/dissertation research.

• I will be a good lab citizen. I will agree to take part in shared laboratory responsibilities and will use laboratory resources carefully and frugally. I will maintain a safe and clean laboratory space.

• I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all laboratory personnel.

• I will maintain detailed, organized, and accurate laboratory protocols, notes, data, and summaries in the shared laboratory drive. I am aware that all research products are the property of my institution, but that I am able to take copies with me after I complete my thesis/dissertation. I am aware that my research advisor may use these research products as part of their training, presentations, manuscripts, grant applications, or teaching and outreach materials.

• I will discuss policies on work hours, sick leave and vacation with my research advisor. I will consult with my advisor and notify fellow lab members in advance of any planned absences.

• I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor. I will work with my advisor to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication in a timely manner prior to my graduation.

• I acknowledge that it is primarily my responsibility to develop my career following the completion of my doctoral degree. I will seek guidance from my research advisor, career counseling services, thesis/dissertation committee, other mentors, and any other resources available for advice on career plans.
Commitments of Graduate Student Mentor

• I will be committed to mentoring my graduate student to be a future member of the scientific community.

• I will be committed to the research project of my graduate student. I will help to plan and direct my graduate student’s project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project. I recognize the possibility of conflicts between the interests of externally funded research programs and those of the graduate student and will not let these interfere with the student’s pursuit of their thesis/dissertation research.

• I will be committed to meeting one-on-one with my graduate student on a regular basis.

• I will be committed to providing financial resources for my graduate student as appropriate or according to my institution’s guidelines, in order for them to conduct thesis/dissertation research.

• I will be knowledgeable of, and guide my graduate student through, the requirements and deadlines of their graduate program as well as those of the institution, including teaching requirements and human resources guidelines.

• I will help my graduate student select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will assure that this committee meets at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines) to review my graduate student’s progress.

• I will lead by example and facilitate the training of my graduate student in complementary skills needed to be a successful scientist, such as oral and written communication skills, grant writing, lab management, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism. I will encourage my student to seek opportunities in teaching, if not required by my student’s program.

• I will expect my graduate student to share common laboratory responsibilities and utilize resources carefully and frugally.

• I will not require my graduate student to perform tasks that are unrelated to their training program and professional development.

• I will discuss authorship policies regarding papers with my graduate student. I will acknowledge my graduate student’s scientific contributions to the work in my laboratory, and I will work with my graduate student to publish their work in a timely manner.

• I will discuss intellectual policy issues with my student with regard to disclosure, patent rights and publishing research discoveries.

• I will encourage my graduate student to attend scientific/professional meetings and make an effort to secure and facilitate funding for such activities.

• I will provide career advice and assist in finding a position for my graduate student following their graduation. I will provide honest letters of recommendation for their next phase of professional development. I will also be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals.

• I will provide for every graduate student under my supervision an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment.

• Throughout my graduate student’s time in the laboratory, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful. I will foster my graduate student’s professional confidence and encourage critical thinking, skepticism and creativity.