



Women IN THE
ACADEMY
MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM



Program Mentor Handbook

Outline of the Program
Resources for Mentors

Acknowledgements

The Women in the Academy (WITA) Mentorship Program emerged out of a collective desire to facilitate mentoring relationships between female faculty and graduate students. Since the emergence of the first Women in the Academy Conference six years ago, the Baylor Graduate School has been a pillar of support for programs that empower graduate student women. This has resulted in six WITA conferences and, with the help of many others, the new WITA Mentorship Program. More specifically, the steadfast guidance of the Graduate School's Associate Dean Laine Scales nurtured the evolution of WITA from a regional conference to the broader Women in the Academy Program, which encompasses both the bi-annual WITA Conference and the WITA Mentorship Program.

The Baylor Women's Colloquium has been a strategic partner in the creation and design of this program. I am grateful for the ongoing support and efforts of its members. In the Fall of 2016, faculty from the Women's Colloquium joined with members of the 2016 WITA Conference Steering Committee to form the WITA Mentorship Program Planning Committee, all of whom provided valuable critique and insightful suggestions: Dr. Laine Scales, Dr. Robyn Driskell, Dr. Adrienne Harris, Dr. Rizalia Klausmeyer, Dr. Lori Kanitz, Dr. Gabrielle Miller, Savannah Landerholm, Elise Leal, and Grace Aquino. I am grateful, too, for the skills of Dr. Christina Chan, who assisted in survey development and implementation, and for the assistance of Alanna Martinez, the assistant to the dean for graduate studies and professional development, who has been invaluable in her coordination with other university departments.

We are also indebted to the many women who contributed to the WITA Conference planning committee over the years, as the WITA Mentorship Program has been built from the fruits of their work.

Finally, we are grateful for the financial and moral support of WITA by Dean Larry Lyon, from the Baylor Graduate School, for his sustained commitment to the development and success of graduate student women.

Katie Robbins
Ph.D. Candidate
Doctoral Administrative Fellow
Higher Education Studies & Leadership
Baylor Graduate School

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Purpose of the Mentorship Program

After six successful years of organizing the Women in the Academy (WITA) Conference, the 2016 Conference Steering Committee sensed that graduate student women at Baylor wanted a more substantial and long-lasting experience in addition to a one-day conference. Year after year, the topic of mentorship at the conference was one of the most frequently cited interests by the graduate student women in attendance.

About the same time, an informal group of women faculty members, called the Women's Colloquium (WC), began researching possibilities of creating a mentoring program for women graduate students interested in academic careers. A sub-group of the WC launched a survey to determine graduate student interest in such a program. In the Fall of 2016, members from WITA's steering committee and the Women's Colloquium joined together to form a planning committee to design the WITA Mentorship Program.

The purpose of Women in the Academy Mentorship Program is to connect female graduate students with accomplished women faculty in the Academy and to facilitate monthly, small-group conversations about a variety of topics pertaining to the experiences of women in academia.

WITA Mentorship Program Vision

The Women in the Academy Mentorship Program empowers women to embrace and develop their identities as *leaders, scholars, and educators*. We seek to fulfill this vision by:

Fostering Friendships and Community

Create deep and lasting friendships and interpersonal networks across disciplines

Encouraging Individuals to Thrive within Academia

Inculcate a "growth" mindset and equip participants with skills to re-envision obstacles as opportunities for growth

Embodying a Holistic Perspective on Professional Development

Developing ways to challenge oneself and expand one's professional network

Program Timeline

For program mentors, the mentorship program officially begins with New Mentor Orientation in the spring, when new and returning mentors will receive their list of mentees. For graduate students, the mentorship program officially begins in August at the Kick-Off Social where they will meet their mentors and other participating graduate students for the first time.

Mentorship groups are expected to meet, on average, once per month throughout the fall and spring semesters, for a total of 7 sessions. However, faculty mentors are free to initiate meeting more frequently with their group or adjust the schedule below based on their group's needs.

FALL SEMESTER	
August	Mentorship Program Kick-Off Social
September	<i>Mentorship Group Session #1</i>
October	<i>Mentorship Group Session #2</i>
November	<i>Mentorship Group Session #3</i>
December	End of the Semester Reception
SPRING SEMESTER	
January	<i>Mentorship Group Session #4</i>
February	<i>Mentorship Group Session #5</i>
March	<i>Mentorship Group Session #6</i>
April	<i>Mentorship Group Session #7</i>
May	End of the Year Reception New mentor orientation and distribution of mentee information

Program Contact Information

Dr. Laine Scales
WITA Mentorship Program Co-Chair
Associate Dean of the Graduate School
Laine_Scales@baylor.edu
(254) 710-4487

Katie Robbins
WITA Mentorship Program Co-Chair
Ph.D. Candidate in Higher Education Studies and Leadership
Katie_Robbins@baylor.edu

Alanna Martinez
Assistant for Graduate Studies and Professional Development
Alanna_Martinez@baylor.edu
(254) 710-3588

5 Steps to Setting Up a Successful Session

- Exchange contact information with your mentees.
- Contact your group members and confirm their availability for specified days and times.
Quick Tip: If you've got a range of times and would like for everyone to select her preference, try using a www.doodle.com scheduling poll (especially if not everyone uses her outlook calendar).
- Based on your groups' availability, select a date and time for your group to meet.
Quick Tip: It's helpful to set all of your dates at the beginning of the semester, that way you and your mentees can get them on your calendars early.
- Figure out where you would like to host your group and reserve a room, if necessary. If you are reserving a room, particularly on campus, make sure to include any preferences about the arrangement of tables and chairs.
Quick Tip: See the next section for tips to reserve a room on campus.
- Send out the date, time, location, and any relevant discussion prompts/ideas/questions/topics to your group members.

Guidelines for Reserving On-Campus Meeting Locations

Where would you like to reserve a room?

- Bill Daniel Student Center (SUB)
- Baylor Sciences Building (BSB)
- Paul Foster Campus for Business & Innovation/Hankamer School of Business
- Cashion Academic Building
- Draper Academic Building
- Sid Richardson Building
- Morrison Hall
- Marris McLean Science Building
- Armstrong Browning Library
- Moody/Jones/Central Libraries

To reserve a room in any of the above locations *except* the Armstrong Browning Library and the Moody/Jones/Central Libraries, visit the Astra Event Scheduling Wizard:

<https://adastra.baylor.edu/ScheduleProd/events/EventReqIntroForm.aspx>

- Select the appropriate event request form for your event:
 - o BDSC Event Request Form = Bill Daniel Student Center
 - o BSB Room Request form = Baylor Sciences Building
 - o Business School Event Request Form = Paul Foster Campus for Business & Innovation/Hankamer School of Business
 - o Education Event Request Form = Marris McLean Science Building
 - o Shared Classroom Request Form = Cashion Academic Building, Morrison Hall, Sid Richardson Building, Draper Academic Building, Marris McLean Science Building
- Fill out and submit the associated event request form

To reserve a room in the Armstrong Browning Library or the Moody/Jones/Central Libraries, visit the relevant links below:

- For the Moody/Jones/Central Libraries, follow the directions and forms associated with this link: <http://www.baylor.edu/lib/centrallib/index.php?id=84371>
- For the Armstrong Browning Library, follow the directions and forms associated with this link: <http://www.browninglibrary.org/index.php?id=47428>

The Mentor-Mentee Relationship

Mentoring relationships between female faculty and female graduate students should be characterized by “mutual empowerment, empathy, reciprocity, role flexibility, acceptance, and caring that allows female students to develop a professional identity” (Dua, 2007).

Why Mentoring Graduate Student Women is Important

The past 40 years have been marked by a notable increase in the number of women receiving their doctoral degree, from 20% in 1975 to 46% in 2015 (National Survey of Earned Doctorates, 2015). However, women make up only 37% of tenured faculty members and only 26% of university presidents in the United States (Kim & Cook, 2012; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014).

Robyn Marschke and her colleagues famously highlighted the academy’s gender disparity in 2007, asserting that “Women’s attrition from academia indicates at best a leaky pipeline and, at worst, an occupation mired in institutional discrimination.” While there are many “holes” contributing to the leaks in the pipeline, studies have continued to affirm the significant positive effects of quality mentorship on doctoral student success and persistence, particularly for women (Cumings Mansfield, 2010; Maher et al., 2004; Marschke et al., 2007; Moyer et al., 1999).

The numerous challenges of graduate school leave many female students feeling overwhelmed, unsure, or at times lost in their academic career (Dua, 2007). Mentoring in doctoral education is critical to female students’ development as individuals and professionals because it acts as a source of support, aiding in their identity formation while promoting success beyond graduate school (Cronon, 2006).

Quality mentorship can assist female graduate students in building strong communities of support. As a result, mentorship enriches female students’ overall satisfaction with their graduate school experience by providing a safe and open platform for them to discuss concerns or challenges, receive guidance and feedback, and by helping them navigate the unknown waters of graduate school and their future profession.

Benefits of Mentoring Relationships

For the Mentor

- Pride in helping young professionals find their place in the professional community
- Personal satisfaction from passing on wisdom to a mentee and seeing her succeed
- Respect from peers for contributing to the development of new academics and professionals
- Support from the professionals who seek your counsel
- Engagement with the curiosity and energy of fresh minds
- Participation in creating the next generation of leaders in academia and society
- Development and expansion of your professional network
- The gift of renewal and regeneration through reflection and observation

For the Mentee

- Increased confidence
- Increased ability to deal with personal and professional challenges of academia
- Growth in productivity levels
- Enhancement of student identity
- Greater knowledge of post-degree career options
- Emotional and moral support
- Better performance in academic coursework
- Development of professional skills (e.g. collaboration and networking)
- Perspective on how a discipline operates academically, socially, and politically
- A sense of scholarly citizenship by understanding her role in a larger educational enterprise

(Adapted from the Harvard HGWise Graduate Mentoring Program Guidelines)

Roles and Responsibilities of a Mentor

The role of a mentor is centered on a commitment to advancing the student's career through an interpersonal engagement that facilitates sharing guidance, experience, and expertise. The mentor's responsibilities extend well beyond helping students learn what's entailed in the research and writing components of graduate school. First and foremost, mentors socialize students into the culture of the academy, clarifying and reinforcing (principally by example) what's expected of a professional scholar.

Basic Responsibilities of a Mentor

Model Professional Responsibility	Consciously acting with integrity, in every aspect of his or her work, is crucial for the mentor. Modeling professionalism and ethical behavior for mentees is critical for helping graduate students become properly socialized in the norms of the academy.
Demystify Graduate School	To the degree that you are able, assist in clarifying students' expectations about graduate school. Where relevant, this could include expectations about coursework, comprehensive exams, research topics, teaching, administrative involvement, leadership, etc. Discuss prevailing norms and criteria used to define quality performance.
Encourage Effective Use of Time	Share techniques and practices that have been useful for others but don't insist there is only one way. Rather, help mentees develop their own plan/schedule and help devise a plan that keeps them on task.
Provide Guidance on Professional Development	Purposeful engagement in certain professional development activities that are familiar to you may need to be made explicit to students. Mentees may not understand why or how to engage in such activities. Mentors should strive to help their students become full-fledged members of a profession.
Assist with Finding Other Mentors	Effective mentoring is a community effort, and creating fruitful networks takes more than one mentor. Be sure to introduce students to faculty, emeriti, alumni, staff and other graduate students who have complementary interests.

Program-Specific Responsibilities

In addition to basic responsibilities, there are a few responsibilities specific to the Faculty Mentors in the WITA Mentorship Program. These include:

- Meeting with their mentorship group, on average, 3 times per semester (or for a total of 7 times per year).
- Maintaining regular communication with their co-leader and mentees.
- Selecting (and reserving) the dates, times, and locations for meeting with their mentorship groups.
- Determining group discussion topics, along with relevant materials, and communicating it in a timely manner to their group so members can have adequate time to prepare and reflect.
- Attending program-wide receptions each semester, such as the program kick-off in August and the end of the year reception in May.

Characteristics of a Successful Mentor

Just as students have different learning styles, the skill sets and aptitudes of successful mentors are as varied as mentors themselves. There is no foolproof recipe for mentoring graduate students. However, several fundamental qualities of a successful mentor have been shown across the board to improve the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship and enhance the student's experience in graduate school.

In general, a successful mentor...

Is Open, Approachable, and Respectful

Many students may come from different cultural backgrounds and nearly all students suffer from "impostor syndrome" (i.e. anxiety about whether they belong in graduate school), so it's important to be sensitive and respectful. Respect can open the door to trust and to a more fruitful mentorship in which you reassure them of their skills and abilities to succeed.

Communicating with your mentees from the beginning to let them know that you are there if or when they need guidance provides a sense of support and creates a stronger mentor-mentee relationship. While your time as a mentor is limited, the enthusiasm, openness, friendliness, and optimism you show can be inspirational.

Is Clear About Their Expectations

It helps to discuss your expectations (and their expectations as well) about your mentee-mentor relationship. Be transparent about your expectations concerning the form and function of the relationship and about what's reasonable to expect of you.

Spends Quality Time with Their Mentees

Give students your full attention when they are talking with you and the time and encouragement to open up. Try to minimize interruptions or distractions, such as phone calls or texts. If you can remember your previous conversations with a student they will know that your focus is on them. It's good idea to keep notes on such discussions and review them prior to your next meeting.

Gives Constructive and Supportive Feedback

What the mentor communicates with the students must be timely, clear, and above all, constructive. Critical feedback is essential, but it's more likely to be effective if tempered with praise when deserved.

Encourages Their Mentees

Encourage students to try new techniques, expand their skills, and discuss their ideas, even those they fear might seem naïve or unworkable. Remind students that mistakes are productive because we learn from our failures.

Provides Emotional Support

Being a mentor can have qualities of a friendship in that you listen to your mentee's challenges and concerns, both academic, and at times personal. Especially in graduate school, emotional support and encouragement from a mentor can go a long way.

Shares Wisdom and Insight

Share what you've learned as both a scholar and a member of a profession. You might think things are obvious to students that aren't. At the same time, tell your students what you learn from them. Such disclosures can give students confidence and enable them to see themselves as future colleagues.

Of course, it's not necessary to embody all of these attributes in order to be a successful mentor. More than any particular piece of advice or supportive act, your student will remember how they were treated. The example you set as a person will have a profound effect on how she conducts herself as an individual and professional.

Stages of a Mentoring Relationship

Like any interpersonal relationship, the one between mentor and mentee will evolve and adjust over time. The fact that today's students come from increasingly diverse backgrounds may add a layer of complexity, but it's more likely to enrich than confound the relationship.

New graduate students, in particular, may express the desire for a mentor with whom they can personally identify, but their eventual level of satisfaction with their mentors seems to have little to do with this aspect of the relationship. This confirms the important point that you can be a successful mentor even if you and your student don't share similar backgrounds.

One classical model of the mentoring relationship is described by Kathy Kram (1988) and includes four stages:



Initiation

In this first stage, both the mentor and mentee(s) learn from each other and develop early connections, especially by sharing experiences and focusing on achieving specific goals. The mentee feels valued and supported by someone she looks up to who can provide emotional, moral, and professional guidance.



Cultivation

In this second stage, the transfer of knowledge and skills reaches its peak. Engaging in meaningful feedback is a key component in fostering growth and nurturing the relationship. Effective and consistent communication is important throughout this stage.



Separation

If the mentoring relationship is successful, a mentee will grow under her mentor's guidance and eventually gain independence. Here, the relationship becomes less prominent in each person's life. In this stage, the mentor and mentee come to closure in their relationship and reflect on what has been learned, what went well or not in the relationship, and future aspirations.



Redefinition

While the formal mentoring relationship has ended, the relationship between the individuals may continue and evolve. Often, the new relationship is of friendship in which the mentor and mentee maintain contact and mutual support.

Each mentoring relationship should be tailored to the student's goals, needs, and learning style, but the core principles apply across the board. What you and the student share (e.g. a commitment to the goals of the scholarly enterprise and a desire to succeed) is far more powerful and relevant than what might seem to divide you.

Supporting Students When Issues Arise

What If...

Conflict Arises Between Group Members

First, consider whether the conflict is an isolated incident or a more consistent occurrence. When dealing with an isolated incident, try talking one-on-one with the individual to get a better understanding of the situation. If the conflict is more consistent and talking with the individual hasn't improved the situation, mentors and mentees are encouraged to contact the program co-chairs with any questions or comments. If issues prove unresolvable, we are happy to re-match mentors or mentees into different groups.

Students Are Repeatedly Absent or Are Difficult to Contact

We are happy to help you reach out to your mentee groups to ensure students remain active and engaged. Feel free to contact the program co-chairs if student attendance or communication is becoming an issue.

A Sensitive Topic Comes Up in Conversation

If a mentee is willing to share sensitive information about herself or her experiences, either with you or the mentorship group, begin by acknowledging the mentee's comment and conveying a sense of appreciation for the mentee's vulnerability. Maintaining a non-judgmental physical and dispositional posture that both conveys empathy, and encourages empathy from other group members, can help create a safe and affirming environment. It's important for mentors to be sensitive to students' experiences, especially if those experiences pertain to stigmatizing topics.

The Women in the Academy Mentorship Program is focused on empowering women, both graduate students and faculty, while leaving room for participants to share their stories of when they have felt disempowered. The Mentorship Program Committee encourages all mentors to support participants by connecting them with the proper resources, especially in cases of interpersonal violence, gender-based discrimination, and serious crises. See the Contact Information section (page 12) for on-campus assistance and resources that are available to you and your group.

Contact Information

The following is a list of useful contacts in case you or anyone in your group requires assistance:

Baylor University Counseling Center

http://www.baylor.edu/counseling_center/Counseling_Center@baylor.edu

Office Phone: 254-710-2467

Crisis Line: (254)710-2467

Title IX Office

Anonymous Reporting:

https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report_custom.asp?clientid=6771

Online Reporting: <https://www.baylor.edu/titleIX/index.php?id=933733>

Kristen Tucker, Title IX Coordinator

Kristen_Tucker@baylor.edu

254-710-8454

Baylor University Health Services

http://www.baylor.edu/health_center/

Office Phone: 254-710-1010

For Emergencies: 254-710-2222 or 911

Baylor University Chaplain, Dr. Burt Burleson

<http://www.baylor.edu/spirituallife/index.php?id=870509>

Burt_Burleson@baylor.edu

254-710-3517

Program Contact Information

Dr. Laine Scales

WITA Mentorship Program Co-Chair

Associate Dean of the Graduate School

Laine_Scales@baylor.edu

(254) 710-4487

Katie Robbins

WITA Mentorship Program Co-Chair

Ph.D. Candidate in Higher Education Studies and Leadership

Katie_Robbins@baylor.edu

Alanna Martinez

Assistant for Graduate Studies and Professional Development

Alanna_Martinez@baylor.edu

(254) 710-3588

Additional Resources

Further Reading to Inspire Planning and Reflection

Ibarra, H., Ely, R. J., & Kolb, D. M. (2013, September 1). Women Rising: The Unseen Barriers. Retrieved April 29, 2017, from <https://hbr.org/2013/09/women-rising-the-unseen-barriers>

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Potential Materials for Group Discussions

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Connelly, R., & Ghodsee, K. (2011). *Professor mommy: Finding work-family balance in academia*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

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Articles, Books, and Websites on Mentoring Graduate Students

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Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring

<http://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

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HGWISE Graduate Mentoring Program Handbook, Harvard University <http://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hgwise/files/hgwisementoringprogramguidebook2014.pdf>

How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty (University of Michigan) <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/Fmentoring.pdf>

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http://www2.hawaii.edu/~gurdal/grad/Mentoring_Guide.pdf

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- How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty (University of Michigan)
<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/Fmentoring.pdf>
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