

THE (UNOFFICIAL) GUIDE TO GETTING THE ADVISING YOU NEED

The mentoring you receive from your faculty advisor is one of the most important elements of your University experience. You can shape your mentoring relationship in significant ways.

1 | Find the Right Advisor for You

Start by understanding your own needs:

- Write down your topical interests, career interests, and desired skills.
- Request meetings to discuss the above points with potential advisors.
 - Do your interests align?
 - Can you communicate with each other clearly?
- Speak with other students about working with this professor.

3 | Discuss Your Career Goals with Your Advisor

- Make an individual development plan. This is a short list of your career goals, and the skills/experiences you need to achieve them.
- Schedule a careers meeting to discuss your plan with your advisor. This helps your supervisor learn what you want, and encourages them to focus on ways to get you there.

5 | Facing Difficulties?

- Your Director of Graduate Studies has a responsibility to ensure that you are adequately advised.
- The Graduate School has advisors who can provide assistance if you're still facing problems.
- If you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, the Duke Counseling and Psychological Services offers free support for all Duke students: studentaffairs.duke.edu/caps

2 | Be a Diligent Advisee

Your adviser will not do your work or keep you organized. S/he is there for advising!

- Request regular meetings. Set a brief agenda in advance each time.
- Be honest and professional about any research problems you face. Problems will happen.
- Consider having a 'renovation' meeting. Explain to your adviser what you need, and find out what s/he expects from you. Visit the Duke-advisee-tips website for details (see More Information).

4 | Maintain and Build Connections

Your advisor may be your primary mentor, but s/he should not be your only mentor.

- Reach out to other faculty, staff and more senior students with similar interests or career trajectories.
- Maintain your connections to past advisors. An ongoing connection will make it easy to ask for reference letters, advice, or future work opportunities.

6 | More Information

- For much more detail on this topic, visit our companion website: duke-advisee-tips.weebly.com
- Visit the official Graduate School mentoring website: gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development/cultivating-culture-mentoring