

GRADUATE FELLOW MENTORSHIP GUIDE



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Developing your mentor-mentee relationship with an OSU-appointed Graduate Fellow

OSU Graduate Fellowships are appointed to acknowledge and support students in pursuit of their advanced degree objectives. Graduate fellowships provide a stipend to support housing, meals, and personal living expenses. These fellowships also provide graduate fellow health insurance coverage, tuition support, and may also include support for mandatory fees.

Fellows are not considered employees of the institution; rather, graduate fellows are mentored through their own identified education and research goals. Mentors should: (1) develop a mentoring plan, (2) familiarize themselves with the fellow's award requirements, if any, (3) have regular meetings to assist in evaluating, monitoring, and modifying goals/objectives, (4) actively participate in OSU's CIMER mentoring workshops, and (5) evaluate student progress towards expected academic and research pursuits.

In addition to this guide, reach out to the Graduate School contact for an in-person/Zoom discussion on the specific logistics of your fellow's award.



Quick Tips:

- **Graduate Fellowships are not employment** – fellows are not considered employees at the institution, but given the time commitment related to their scholarly activities they cannot be employed at OSU in any capacity while on appointment
- **Activities are fellow-driven** – fellows are specifically pursuing time commitments that directly benefit their intended education and/or research
- **Time is not monitored** – since they are not employees, fellows manage their own time and are expected to make appropriate progress on their educational, research, and award objectives
- **Reporting requirements vary** – fellow deliverables may vary, but are typically limited to (1) periodic reports on degree/research progress, (2) copies of publications, manuscripts, or other research submissions, and/or (3) academic and research (self or mentor) evaluations on progress
- **Training is commonplace** – beyond their typical educational, research, and award-related activities, fellows may choose to engage in training such as necessary research reading, shadowing in activities, developing proposals, participation in workshops/conferences, and team meetings

1. MENTOR PLAN

A mentoring plan articulates clear guidelines, roles, and expectations of both mentors and mentees. A mentoring plan/agreement should be reviewed regularly, and it should be open for possible revision as needed or requested by either party.

Resources:

- [American Association for the Advancement of Science STEM Mentor Resources](#)
- [Pathways to Science: Mentoring Manual](#)
- [Grad School – Suggestions for Mentoring Programs](#)

2. AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Graduate fellowships vary widely by their purpose, selectivity, duration and support level. They are often awarded at a specific stage in the educational continuum. They may be supported by either internal or external sources of funds. The following resources illustrate the variety of fellowships that are commonly available and emphasize the differences among varying fellowship types.

Resources:

- [Grad School - Intro to Graduate Fellowships](#)
- [OSU Graduate Fellowship Policies](#)

3. REGULAR MEETINGS

Review of student goals should be conducted at least annually and possibly more often at the discretion of the mentor and mentee. Regular meetings should occur to discuss research topics and any emergent or ongoing areas of concern. Appropriate types of communication may include face-to-face meetings, email, or phone, depending on the types of topics to be discussed. The professor may also wish to establish whether the student can call them at home and under what circumstances.

Resources:

- [Grad School – Maintaining and Evaluating Mentoring](#)
- [University of Michigan – How to Mentor Graduate Students](#)

4. MENTOR TRAINING

OSU requires that all graduate faculty that mentor thesis based graduate students completed mentorship training. At present, this training is based on the curriculum developed by the Center for Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER). The training consists of three workshops that can be completed online or in-person.

Resources:

- [Grad School – Mentor Training for Faculty](#)
- [Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research \(CIMER\)](#)

5. EVALUATE PROGRESS

There are many ways in which mentoring can be assessed including yearly reviews and student surveys. It is strongly recommended that the mentor identify and initiate an approach whereby each party can provide evaluative feedback as it relates to the mentor plan and the relationship.

Additionally, the graduate fellows academic and research progress must also be regularly assessed, both as part of the program-specific requirements and as maintaining a fellowship award in many cases.

Resources:

- [Grad School – Progress Information for Programs](#)
- [NSF Annual Report Template](#)

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