



Frequently Asked Questions: Faculty Coaches

What is expected of coaches, including the time commitment?

Standard:

- Attend Opening Ceremony and lead table discussions/introductions of assigned peer groups (1.5 hr)
- Attend Coaches' Meeting (May) with Boot Camp Manager (1hr)
- Coordinating, cooperating with a co-coach
- Attend small peer group (team) meetings once per month (in coordination with co-coach) and lead group through activities and discussions. Cc the Boot Camp Manager so s/he is updated and can include them on mentees' activity reports. (10 hrs)
- Review mentees' research roadmaps, specific aims, and final proposals (10-20 hrs)
- Attend one mid-program progress meeting with other coaches and Boot Camp Manager (1-2 hrs)
- Contact Boot Camp Manager immediately to communicate any unmet needs of the group
- Communicate with mentees' Chairs regarding progress as desired/requested
- Attend Closing Ceremony (1 hr)
- Evaluate program experience

Optional:

- Attend Grant Writing Seminar- for 2023 it will be the AtKisson Training Group
- Attend mentees' departmental Chalk Talks

Total estimated time commitment is approximately 30-40 hours over 10 months (excluding optional components).

Why work in teams/small groups?

Small group peer mentoring fosters camaraderie, support, and cooperation. Several articles have described the success of peer mentoring (e.g., Johnson KS, Hastings SN, Purser JL, Whitson, HE. 2011. The Junior Faculty Laboratory: An innovative model of peer mentoring; *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 86, No. 12).

An additional benefit is stimulation of interdisciplinary and translational research. Teams of 3-5 mentees will be assembled according to scientific commonality with the coaches (e.g., clinical research, chronic health conditions), but who come from different departments and represent different scientific perspectives, disciplines, or methodologies.

While coaches are only committed to attending one small group meeting per month, the members of the small group may decide to meet more often on their own.



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What are some resources available to you as a coach?

The RDU will send out a monthly email to mentees advising them of steps they should be taking (elements of proposals to be tackling, upcoming workshops, etc.) Coaches will be cced as the suggestions can be talking points during the meeting. Mentees will be attending “Planning and Writing Successful NIH Grant Proposals” presented by AtKisson Training Group and coaches are welcome to attend. At the workshop each mentee will receive a copy of a grant writing workbook. Coaches who also receive a copy of the book upon request.

It’s expected that chairs will be interested in the progress of their mentees, and coaches are encouraged to contact them, as well as the Boot Camp manager with progress reports or concerns.

In addition, coaches may contact the Boot Camp Manager to request assistance with locating resources to meet needs identified by the group throughout the program (e.g., names of biostatisticians, speakers from IRB, IACUC, etc.).

How are teams formed?

The Boot Camp Manager forms the teams. Co-coaches are likewise selected to meet group research characteristics. Some factors include type of research (e.g., clinical, basic, outcomes), subject area, and common methodologies.

Who determines the content of the team meetings?

The coaches and mentees are responsible for content. Often it is best to decide who presents at the next meeting during the current meeting. It is expected that much of the time will be devoted to individual proposal sections as they are developed by the mentees. Coaches should oversee the discussion to assure that it is respectful and constructive.

What topics should I cover in my team discussions?

One of the primary purposes of the small group is to review sections of the mentees’ proposals as they are developed. Have the mentees circulate their sections in advance and plan ahead for these reviews.

Additional topics that should be covered as scheduled by the coaches:

- Contacting the NIH Program Officer (PO) – how to select, contact, prepare
- Selecting Study Sections (e.g., match with expertise)
- Biases of Study Sections (e.g., methodology preference)



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- Identifying primary reviewers and researching their subject expertise and biases (e.g., look at publications)
- Selecting collaborators
- Time management and maintaining a writing schedule
- Communicating with the Scientific Review Officer or PO after the review
- Tips to write and present information/data succinctly and clearly

The Boot Camp Manager will also provide mentees and coaches with a recommended list of topics as well as other resources to facilitate discussion.

How will mentee progress be tracked?

Coaches will be asked to take attendance during small group activities and to provide general information about mentees' progress. In the middle and at the end of program, the Boot Camp Manager will develop an activity report for each mentee and send a copy to both Chair and co-coaches. In addition, any concerns regarding mentees' participation and progress should be communicated to the Boot Camp Manager and mentees' Department chairs as appropriate.

What are the rewards/compensation for serving as a coach?

While the biggest compensation will be the satisfaction of contributing to the success of new investigators, each coach will receive \$5,000 discretionary funding, plus \$900 for hosting expenses per team.