Psychology Doctoral Program
Guidelines for Effective Advisor-Advisee Relationships

Purpose: These guidelines communicate, clarify and confirm expectations for graduate advising in the Psychology Department and are consistent with the Graduate School best practices at Penn State University. Our department affirms that effective advising is based on a commitment to guide performance in ways that support student's development over time, to provide regular and clear communication, and to engage in supportive, respectful and ethical behavior. See: http://gradschool.psu.edu/current-students/mentoring/

Using this tool: These guidelines should be discussed and agreed upon (1) at the beginning of an advisor-advisee relationship, to ensure the relationship starts with two-way communication and shared expectations, and (2) at the end of each academic year to discuss how well expectations were met. If expectations are unmet from one perspective or the other, this should be discussed openly and desired changes identified. If unmet expectations continue in the following semester, inform Area Coordinator or Associate Director/Director of Graduate Studies [see GUIDELINES p. 4, 16 for policy]

Guidelines for Faculty Advisors
Effectively guide advisee performance and career goals
- Be familiar with departmental guidelines and set clear expectations and goals regarding academic performance and research progress
- Advise graduate students on the selection of appropriate course work, appropriate research topics and assist them in selecting committee members
- Provide student training and oversight in all relevant aspects of research, including the design of research projects, the development of necessary skills, and the use of rigorous research techniques
- Ensure students receive training in the skills needed for a successful career in their discipline, including oral and written communication and grant preparation as appropriate
- Encourage participation in professional meetings and provide support about how to seek funding for such activities
- Provide timely and thorough feedback on products discuss and complete departmental annual review in a timely way. **Goal for feedback turnaround time: _____ (e.g., 2 weeks)**
- Provide career advice, offer help with interview and application preparation, and write letters of recommendation in a timely manner
- Acknowledge that some students will pursue careers outside of academia and/or outside their research discipline, and assist them in achieving their chosen career goals

Communicate regularly and clearly
- Communicate and/or meet regularly (at least once a month according to Graduate School) to provide feedback on research activities and progress. **Scheduled**:_____(e.g., biweekly Wed)
- Clarify expectations for communication (email), discuss boundaries around times/modes (e.g., vacations, texting). **Goal for email response time**: _____(e.g., 2 business days)
- Be open to discuss topics other than research, such as professional development, career objectives and opportunities, climate, laboratory personnel relations, etc.
- Be open to communications about conflicts or concerns, and work to address them together
- Discuss policies and expectations for work hours and locations, vacation time and heath contingencies

Promote supportive, considerate, and ethical behavior
- Promote an environment that is intellectually stimulating and free of bullying or harassment
- Be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful
- Recognize and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and strive for inclusion of all perspectives
- Be a role model in professional and courteous treatment toward students, staff and faculty.
- Respect students' competing demands in courses, assistantships, and research as well as personal demands, while still expecting timely progress towards their degree
- Devise ways of providing students with supervision during any prolonged absence
- Avoid placing pressure on students to produce results that support particular hypotheses
- Provide and discuss clear criteria for authorship at the beginning of all collaborative projects
- Create a safe environment for the sharing of mistakes, failures or ethical concerns in order for all to learn from them and change course
- Show sensitivity to the power differential: Avoid requesting activities that are outside students' professional responsibilities and expectations

Guidelines for Graduate Advisees

Seek to perform effectively and develop skills
- Recognize that the student bears the primary responsibility for the successful completion of the degree
- Seek to understand expectations in terms of tasks, goals, communications, and deadlines
- Take an active role in identifying and pursuing professional development opportunities including research projects, grant funding, and/or teaching or applied opportunities, as appropriate.
- Complete all tasks in a timely manner, including teaching, grading and other assistantship responsibilities communicate with advisor if having difficulties
- Know the policies that govern graduate studies in the department and the graduate school, and take responsibility for meeting departmental and graduate school deadlines
- Review feedback and seek to improve oral and written products in a reasonable timeframe, and contact advisor if delayed **Goal for revision turnaround time**: _____ (e.g., 2 weeks)
- Seek mentoring beyond faculty advisor, including other faculty members, peers, and organizations

Communicate regularly and clearly
- Be responsive to requests and regularly update advisor and committee about progress or constraints. **Goal for email response time:** _____. (e.g., 2 business days)
- Regularly communicate and update advisor and committee about progress or constraints
- Clarify expectations for how often and by what mode communication occurs, recognizing the need for boundaries around certain times/modes.
- Clearly communicate with advisor(s) regarding career preferences as they grow or change
- Inform advisors of potential and/or existing conflict and work toward resolution with the parties involved
- Obtain outside help from other faculty, area coordinator, director of graduate studies, or ombudsperson, if conflicts continue without resolution
- If decide to change advisors/research direction, student should consult with advisor, area coordinator, director of graduate studies, and/or associate heads (ideally in that order).

Maintain supportive, considerate, and ethical behavior
- Promote an environment that is intellectually stimulating and free of bullying or harassment
- Be respectful and mindful of competing demands and constraints imposed on faculty and staff
- Recognize and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and strive for inclusion of all perspectives
- Be available: if prolonged absences are unavoidable create a plan to ensure that responsibilities to clients, teaching instructor, or others are managed appropriately during absence.
- Always act in a professional and courteous manner towards other students, staff and faculty.
- Exercise the highest ethical standards in all aspects of research (including but not limited to collection, storage, analysis, and communication of research data)

Day-to-Day Advising Expectations and "What Ifs" Discussed?
- ☐ Advising meetings set; discussed alternatives/constraints
- ☐ Communication mode and response time; discussed alternatives/constraints
- ☐ Draft turnaround time expected; discussed alternatives/constraints
- ☐ Other:

Expectations of Area/Departmental Administration
- Provide up-to-date information on policies, practices, degree requirements, and resources. We have a link/copy of this year's Department GUIDELINES _____ and Area Handbook _____
- Coordinate annual feedback assessment of research, teaching and assistantship activities
- Monitor graduate student progress towards their degrees and professional development
- Provide and monitor training in the ethical conduct of research (SARI training)
- Provide resources and infrastructure for training and research in timely and productive manner
- Provide opportunities for professional development that will be relevant to students seeking careers inside and/or outside academia
- Communicate policies for health issues, emergencies and unplanned situations that may disrupt the work of students and/or faculty
- Assist students with selection of or changes in their advisor as needed, and provide students with contacts and resources for conflict resolution

We have discussed these guidelines and will submit this signed form with the dept annual evaluation:

_____   _____   _____
(Faculty Research Advisor)   **(Graduate Student)**   **(Date)**