

Graduate School Primer Series: Getting the Mentoring You Need and Want

[AUDIO LOGO] SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: Welcome, everyone. We welcome you to utilize the chat to just let us know why you've chosen to join us today on this session that is focused on mentoring and explicitly you, in your role as graduate students-- how you can take action to get the mentoring that you need and want. We also want to point out the QR code and the URL on this slide, which you can use to access the resources that we will be referencing during today's session. And that link will also be placed in the chat. So again, today's session-- Getting the Mentoring You Need and Want While You're in Graduate School. I'm Sara Xayarath Hernandez, as Sarah introduced me. I get to work in collaboration on several different initiatives with my friend and colleague, Dr. Colleen McLinn. We hope to carry you through to what will be a valuable learning experience today. We will have some interactive activities for you to be in small groups, as well as large group discussions. So we look forward to today's time together. So introductions-- Colleen, you want to give a little bit of a start? COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. So we'd actually thank you so much, those who are starting to add your information in the chat about why you were interested in coming today. Please continue to build on that and add your own thoughts. And feel free, if you want to say anything more about what field you're in or anything more about yourself as a person as well. We'd love to know who we're encountering today, since you'll be joining us very soon. And we know this is a little early still in summer mode, but we're just delighted that you chose to be here with us today. Sara and I really feel these topics of how students and faculty work together around graduate education and your development as emerging scholars are really critically important ones. My own interest in it was sparked by being a PhD student at another university-- at University of Minnesota-- which was a long and sometimes winding journey. And not always having the most positive relationships with my mentor for various reasons, including not really knowing how to go about assessing my needs and getting my needs met. So that's one of my motivations here. SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: And one of my motivations also draws upon my experience as a graduate student. I did my graduate work at Cornell. And the initial advisor that I worked with in graduate school, thankfully, I was quickly able to assess was not going to be the best fit for me. But through prior experience with other mentors, I knew from the onset that there was an option to be able to move to a different advisor, and so I was able to pursue that pathway and ended up with an advisor who became a mentor and who continues to be among those people I consider a mentor. And I'm very grateful that that turned into a lifelong relationship that has been a positive one. That doesn't always happen, but one of our goals is also to help you consider how it is that you are facilitating the development of your mentoring relationships so that not all, but many of them-- you have the ability to sustain them for longer than just your time in graduate school. OK. So we'd like to start off just to see some of the thoughts that are on your mind as you anticipate beginning your graduate studies at Cornell. Some of you may be coming directly from undergrad. Some of you may be coming from other graduate programs. Some of you may be like I was, where I worked for several years before returning to graduate school. So we'd love to hear from you about what are some of the challenges-- a polling tool for you to respond. So

this is a menti meter. You can access it directly by using the QR code on the screen. There will also be a direct link placed in the chat. You can also go to menti.com and enter the code 83297348. But we welcome you to put in multiple entries just so that we can gain some insights on what challenges may be on your mind. That link should be in the chat now, so I'm going to go ahead and switch my screens. And are you all seeing the menti meter now? Excellent. It's ideal when things work the way that you hope. So we're going to give this a few moments, just to see as this menti meter starts to populate. And one of the goals of being able to do this type of exercise with some anonymity is that it allows you to be a little bit vulnerable on the challenges that might be on your mind. It also helps you to see what your peers are considering, too. And hopefully-- I see on the screen one of the challenges is feeling isolated and lost-- knowing that you may not be alone. So we can see some of the additional responses. So balancing research classes and personal life, homesickness, becoming confident as a graduate student and researcher, choosing the right advisor for your PhD, time management and networking, difficulties with time management, balancing work-life, not knowing the norms of academia. We acknowledge that there oftentimes is a hidden curriculum to graduate education. Lack of direction, feelings of being overwhelmed, loneliness isolated, lost, not asking interesting or critical questions, life as an international student, networking and balancing classes online, imposter syndrome, dealing with faculty that are not used to working with a non-white person. Let me refresh this one more time before I switch screens. OK. And there's additional things coming in. Initiating and handling project collaborations, balancing classes, pivoting career path, not getting along with your advisor or collaborators, difficulty communicating boundaries when you're seeking to join a lab and not having enough experience, to be able to join labs of interest, homesickness, lack of close and regular mentorship, understanding how everything works as a first generation graduate student. We welcome you to continue to populate this. I'm going to change the screen, but we will convert what you have shared and post it as a PDF document in the Resources folder for this session. It is very important to be able to voice challenge, and to also see what other people are experiencing. Because not feeling alone in experiencing some of these concerns is very important. So let me just switch my screen share. I'm going to turn it over to Colleen. COLLEEN MCLINN: Thank you. You can see that some of the things that you shared from your experience and what you expect to be challenging about graduate school at a broader level have also been-- similar ideas have also been reported by graduate students at other universities as well. And so we're basing this presentation around the work of other people, including our very good colleague Senior Assistant Dean of Graduate Student Life, Jana LeMay. She really began this wonderful primer series. And so this is a slide that she has used before in some of our presentations and workshops she's done with graduate fields. But some of this work also draws on other resources, reports from the Council of Graduate Schools, and from other societies, and then work that we have done or our peers at other graduate schools as well. So we'll share some more resources as we go along. But you can see many of these were raised. Specifically, there might be things related to finances and funding, including funding concerns in the program about funding your graduate education, as well as concern about job prospects, acculturation in general, and finding people that you feel like you connect with enough for relationships and friendships. Great. If you could go on to the next slide, Sara. We are going to ask you to reflect for a moment on a mentor you've had in the past. And what traits made them so effective? So just take a moment and reflect on this. We don't have a

polling tool for this one, but we'd like you to think about a specific example of a mentor that you've had, and what it was. How did they make you feel? Or what did they do? What behaviors made them effective in your eyes? Whether they were in a formally designated role as a mentor or not. And then once you've had a chance to think about that, we'll go on to the next slide and share from literature from another report on mentoring. This particular one is from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. And it's a report that's a free PDF download called Making the Right Moves. Some of the information in this is more relevant as you're getting a little more senior in your career and closer to leaving graduate school and embarking on the next stage. So this isn't one of our main resources, but we do like how they talk about traits of good mentors. And I see in the chat that someone has shared examples of good mentors and things that they do-- respect and caring. And these really relate in some ways to some of the literature findings on traits of good mentors. Accessibility, meaning open door and approachable attitude. Empathy, meaning personal insight into what the mentee is experiencing. They might have completely different life experiences and backgrounds to, but at least open mindedness and empathy to try and see what you're telling them about your experience and where you're coming from. Humility and openmindedness, respect for you as an individual, your working style and career goals, consistency and acting on stated principles. Patience with mistakes and awareness that everyone is a work in progress, and we all develop-- we're all continually growing and developing, and are developing at different rates. Honesty about communicating constructive feedback in a productive manner-- and then savvy means attention to pragmatic aspects of career development. What kind of unspoken advice or hardwon experience can faculty share with you about what really will matter and help in the particular graduate field and program that you're in, terms of your career development? One of our overall arguments is that these traits, both the ones that you were thinking of and mentioning and some of the ones in the literature, are not just inherent that some people are just naturally good at, but they're things that can be learned and developed. And so we're approaching our work from that perspective that there's area of learning, both for faculty who are serving as mentors and graduate advisors, but also for us in how we can work with faculty and work with our network of mentors. The next thing that we're going to do is talk about a case study. This comes from a video called My Voice My Story. It's one of seven or eight monologues in this program that we often do with graduate fields, either with student and post-doc audiences or with faculty and staff who work with graduate student audiences. And so this case study-- it's portrayed by an actor. It's based on an anonymized, real graduate student experience. And so the actor is portraying a student named Javier. And Javier is talking about his experience. So we'll watch this short video. It's only about 2 and 1/2 minutes. And then we'll talk about questions for discussing it. SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Javier. I'm in the third year of a PhD program. I came to grad school right out of undergrad. I knew exactly what I wanted to study, and I was lucky enough to get into my first choice program. The faculty in my department are superstars to me. I deeply admire their work. I chose my advisor at the end of my first semester. She's a senior faculty member with great influence. She's brilliant, and her research interests and mine are very closely aligned. She's also been instrumental in helping me get grants, and she's introduced me to some key figures in our field. I have to say, though, working with her has come with some challenges. She's very demanding. When I was her research assistant, she gave me tight, rather unreasonable deadlines to turn around, and she pulled me into projects that required a lot of work and time.

I'm not her RA right now, but I'm still finishing off these projects. The workload is more than I can bear. And I don't feel that I can say no to her. We communicate so little, I often feel lost. I haven't told anyone in my department yet because I don't know who to trust. I don't want other grad students to think that I can't cut it. And I'm afraid other faculty will judge me, too. Also, the department is pretty opaque with what an advisor-advisee relationship should entail. It isn't clear to me what a normal workload looks like. I'm thankful for the opportunities she's opened up for me, but lately, I've been thinking about changing advisors. I don't know the administrative process behind changing advisors, and frankly, I'm afraid to ask. Mostly, I'm afraid of how my advisor will respond. How will we interact in the department or at conferences? Will she badmouth me or silently retaliate? I don't know. So far, I've benefited from her influence, but I am very well aware that if she wanted to, she could end my career before it even gets started.

SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: Thank you so much for that, Colleen.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Absolutely. And I can pull up the slides where we have the discussion questions that we'll be talking about.

SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: That would be great.

COLLEEN MCLINN: The next thing that we are going to do is we are going to get into-- after we give you the questions that you're going to be talking about and the instructions on how to do it, we're going to get into smaller, random breakout groups of approximately four people to talk about these case study discussion questions. And as we do that, we have a little tool that you can use in order to-- sorry, I shared this incorrectly and it's annoying me. We have a little tool that you can use to contribute on a padlet your thoughts and responses to the questions. And you can do this anonymously as well.

SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: And so while Colleen works on projecting the questions, I did just place them into the chat. So within your small groups, you should be able to retain access to these questions when we put you in those groups. But we would like you to discuss what are some of the challenges being experienced by Javier? So what was he communicating to us? What are some of the proactive strategies to minimize such challenges? So Javier's already into his graduate program. He's been in this relationship for a bit. But based on what he's shared with us, think about what is it that he might have been able to do differently at the onset of his graduate studies that may have helped minimize some of the challenges that he shared with us? We want you to consider who you could use as resources to provide you with insights on managing your advising and mentoring relationships. You can think about that within the context of Cornell, but also just think about even beyond Cornell what resources may be available to you. And then think about what additional resources do you think could be helpful to you in navigating your graduate studies? And this can help be informative to others within this group today, but it's also helpful for us to hear your insights on what else might be helpful to you. And we will consider that as we build out resources for graduate students. So Sara, [INAUDIBLE], I believe is managing the breakout groups. And so you should get a notification in a moment to join one of those groups.

COLLEEN MCLINN: And so one thing to be aware of-- once you're in your groups, we have a padlet that you can share the group's notes and thoughts about the discussion questions. And you might want to pick someone to be the recorder for the group. You can do it based on whose birthday is closest to today or something like that. And you'll have approximately 10 or 12 minutes to talk in the breakout groups about these four questions.

SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: Excellent. So we know that time goes by very quickly and that you might not have been able to capture your notes from your full discussion. We welcome you to continue adding notes, but we want to just walk

through some of what it was that you had shared as it relates to challenges. There's a theme about time management, concern about it being too late to change advisors-- that if he does change advisors, he would have to compete with newer students. A lack of communication and discomfort with the workload. Fear of retaliation for changing advisors, which is a very significant challenge that we need to explore. There's an issue of him not having trusted resources that he can turn to. And he uses that language-- he doesn't know who to trust. Thinking about what could have Javier done differently? Or institutionally, what could the department or the graduate school have done differently? Something that we should also consider. But Javier should try to communicate his ideas and feelings about the work. Clear communication can help his advisor understand the situation. So thinking about how is it that you're going to manage communications with your advisor? Setting time boundaries early on, and trying not to juggle. So thinking about what conversations could Javier initiate with his advisor if the advisor is not initiating them? One on one conversations-- thinking about how you can actually engage in conversation around understanding expectations before even committing to a particular lab and/or particular mentor. And building relationships out-- so thinking about that network of support. [INAUDIBLE] about a non-bias advice like the graduate school or [INAUDIBLE] literacy programs in engineering. Undergrad [INAUDIBLE] within your support network as it relates to loved ones, friends, mentors from other institution. But that peer insight can be highly valuable from other graduate students, especially other graduate students who are from within your program. Because there can be so much variability between programs, it can be helpful to get peer insights from outside of your program. But you want to get some contextually specific insights as well. So give us one moment while Colleen switches screens back to the slide deck. COLLEEN MCLINN: Wonderful. Your connection is giving you trouble again. I don't know if you're going to have to go without video for a little while. So in this last part, we were reflecting on what could help Javier and what he was experiencing in his situation. And so now we'd like to turn the framing to you-- navigating your graduate studies, whether you encountered this kind of scenario or a different kind of situation in your graduate studies. What are some actions that could help you to be a good mentee? What are proactive steps you could take to help cultivate a productive and positive relationship with your mentor? SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: So some of the things that we wanted to highlight, because mentoring relationships are two way. Yes, positionally, faculty are in a more senior position. There are power dynamics at play, but a mentoring relationship is bidirectional. And as a mentee in a relationship, there are things that you can contribute to help make sure that you are getting the most out of that relationship as possible. So thinking about some of the habits to cultivate-- things that you should do some introspection on. One, foresight-- so looking ahead. What is it that you need to be thinking about in those next steps in your progression, in your relationship. But helping to inform how it is that you might approach your advisor or mentor, and thinking about how you can navigate that strategically. Being proactive-- so having foresight is one thing, but acting upon it proactively is another thing. Probing-- so asking questions. Ask questions, ask for clarity. It can be a little scary sometimes when you're early in a relationship, because you don't want to be seen as perhaps not knowing something. But it is important to be able to ask questions. Demonstrating respect, and hopefully also receiving respect. Gratitude can go a distance with folks. Yes, there are certain expectations that you should have within your mentoring relationships, but there are often times that those who become authentic

mentors to us may go above and beyond. And just even acknowledging that, and expressing the impact a mentor has had on you. Reciprocation-- so thinking about this isn't just about you receiving mentoring. It's also thinking about how, then, do you mentor others? And how is it that you give back within your mentoring relationships? Humility, interest, and curiosity. So those are all some really important habits as mentees to cultivate. Colleen, if you could progress the slides. OK. So how do you even understand what it is that you need in your relationship? And then how is it that you can communicate about that? So within the Resources folder is a worksheet that we invite you to use-- not right at this moment, but this is a worksheet that is meant to help you quickly assess the types of support that you might need and how important support in a particular area might be. So for example what are the things that you must have in that mentoring relationship? So that really should help inform how you're working with your mentor to define expectations. And then the wish list-- the nice things to have. I would encourage you to think about this. If you utilize this worksheet as a tool-- if you have multiple people that you end up building into your mentoring network that you perhaps consider doing this worksheet with the lens of each of those mentors. So for example, do this within the context of your advisor and what it is that you hope to get out of that relationship. So it can help you to think about how you're going to communicate about it. But then also think about-- you'll eventually have a committee. You may have other mentors that are important to you from prior institutions. Think about what's important to you within the context of that particular mentoring relationship. And this can be a quick and easy tool to help you to assess, really, what's important to you, and then who might be able to help provide you with critical support in specific arenas. Because no one person can be everything to any other individual. Let's see if we can progress slides. OK. So Colleen, this goes back to you. COLLEEN MCLINN: So Sara was just talking about how this concept from the bottom of the slide-- that no single individual can mentor you in all the ways you need mentoring. So obviously, a relationship with a graduate advisor is a key relationship to work on cultivating, because there is the understanding that they're going to serve as a mentor to you and advise you in many important ways around your progress towards a graduate degree and your research, if you're in a research degree program. But think also about academic advisor, a special committee chair role. Beyond that, if you have other members of your graduate special committee that you'll be forming that work with you, that may be coming across other departments, colleges, and other areas of the university. If you're on a teaching assistantship, the faculty course leader for the courses you're teaching-- other faculty, internally and externally. Administrators and staff, such as us in the graduate school. But others that you could encounter and work with as well-- the graduate field assistant or graduate field coordinator is a major staff member that you might interact with. Postdoctoral scholars, if there are those in your discipline or area of study. Graduate peers, family members, and even professionals from outside of academia can serve as mentors. And so again, it doesn't necessarily have to be someone in a senior relationship to you and in your same area of study. And we're sharing with you, also in the Resources folder, a map that helps really clarify these ideas of thinking about the different types of support that you need. Where are some places that you can go to access that type of support? And I'm going to turn it back to Sara to see what she wants to say about this one. SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: Yes. So again, there is a worksheet for this in the Resources folder. And in that worksheet, you'll actually be able to fill in some of the names of individuals who may already be within your mentoring network and who

may be providing you support in these different arenas. And then once you do that worksheet and you start to see where might be some of the vacancies that you have within your network, that will allow you to approach the cultivation of the ongoing expansion of your mentoring network from a very informed way so that you can start to identify where people are placed. And there may be several people within your network that are providing you with support in multiple areas, so being able to put their names in these multiple areas is really important as well. But again, this is something-- a concept that if you're not already thinking about it in a very intentional way, that we are strongly advocating and encouraging you to do so as a goal to develop a mentoring network-- and to track that and how it may change over time. Colleen, if you can advance. So one of the things that we want to point out that is a little bit different in the context of graduate education than it is, especially from undergraduate education is the influence of that advisor-student mentoring relationship in your overall experience as a graduate student. So you are all coming to Cornell, and there are aspects of what the graduate school may offer and what other centralized resources within the University may offer to you that will help enhance your experience while you're here. But the most significant factor that will influence your experience as a graduate student at Cornell is really anchored into that localized context of your graduate program. And then even more so, that relationship between you and your advisor. Now, this somewhat varies if you are a research degree student versus a professional degree student. For professional degree students, that locus of influence is more so like in your program itself. So for example, if you are a Master's of Public Affairs student, that would be in that capacity. But for those of you who may be doctoral students or research master degree students, that greatest influence on your experience at Cornell will be your advisor. Some of you may have been admitted to work specifically already with an individual. Others of you are in programs where, over the course of your first year, you will navigate getting to know faculty and seeing where you belong. Others of you may be in graduate fields in which there are formal rotations, where you will spend a period of time with up to three faculty members over the course of the year. So really paying attention to how you are experiencing those individuals-- what that relationship might be like beyond just mutual research interests. So a couple of tools that we want to highlight are from the Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring Resource Center. So this is a resource center that is more so focused on supporting faculty and their development as mentors. But some of the tools that we are providing to the faculty are equally relevant to you as graduate students. Two of the ones that we wanted to highlight to you is a template for a Mutual Expectations Agreement Plan. So this is a document that you can utilize in your conversations, ultimately with your advisor, so that you can start to get clarity around how you are going to work with each other and have shared understanding in some of these areas that can otherwise be opaque. There's also a worksheet in there that is a Mentoring Expectation Scales Worksheet. This is a really quick resource to use that can be very informative to faculty and students in a mentoring relationship. So this is a worksheet that each of you would go through very quickly, and complete it individually. And then you would come together and talk about the areas within the worksheet where your expectations converge, like you agree already from the onset whose primary responsibility certain aspects of the mentoring relationship might be in. But then it also helps you to quickly identify where are the areas of divergence? So where are the areas in which your expectation is that a responsibility for one particular aspect of your relationship rests predominantly with the faculty member, but the

faculty member thinks that it's the reverse-- that you are primarily responsible. It's those areas of divergence that are the ones that we would encourage you to prioritize for focus, because those are the types of things that can then create tension. So Nicole, I see, has put a question in the chat about what kinds of questions or approaches would you take with a mentoring faculty relationship? We'll talk a little bit about that, but also as you think about what types of questions, these tools-- the template agreement plan, as well as the worksheet-- will provide detail in informing you on how to formulate some of these questions and help you think about what are even the areas that should be on your mind? Today, we don't have time to do the deep dive in that, but we would encourage you to look at these documents and then to use as ongoing resources. Colleen, if you could advance. So considerations-- here are some of the questions, but this is not exhaustive. But some of the considerations for advisor-student mentoring relationships, especially with your primary advisor, is how are you going to navigate conversations and come to an understanding about their expectations of you and what you should reasonably expect of them? That can sometimes be a little difficult to engage in if the faculty member isn't already initiating those types of discussions. So looking at that shared expectations, agreement form, and the type of questions that are within there should be helpful to you into figuring out what types of questions that you might want to start asking of your advisor so that you can get clarity and understanding of their expectations and then their input on what you can reasonably expect of them. You want to think about how your advisor might define success as it relates to your progress, because that can look very differently from faculty member to faculty member. And so if you don't understand how they're defining success, it may create some challenges for you in really being able to understand where you are in your program. And one example I want to give that might be in contrast-- a faculty member, very many of them in the progress of research-- their definition of success may be that you fail multiple times before you have successful experiments. Because, for example, that may indicate that you have the ability to define a research experiment, have a hypothesis, have methods in mind, and then undergo that process. And if you fail at it, that you have the ability to learn from that failure and recalibrate and take a different approach from an informed perspective. So even if that was a failed experiment, their definition of success may be that you have the ability to learn quickly from failure and take the lessons learned to inform your next steps. So just even understanding that is really important. You want to know how you're going to manage your ongoing communications with your advisor. Questions there might be what are their expectations around frequency of meetings? What are their preferred methods of communication? Who defines the agenda for those meetings? What is their anticipated follow-up? What are you responsible for versus what are they? You need to think about this also individually is how you come to recognize work style preferences, meaning your own style preferences, as well as those of your advisor-- and how you might adapt, as appropriate, within your mentoring relationships. Because there may be ways in which you have to adapt based on the work style preferences of your advisor. But if those preferences are in significant tension and are not likely to change, that could also be an indicator of perhaps this is not the best fit advisor-student relationship for you to be in. Colleen, if you can advance. So quick tips to initiate an expectations conversation with your advisor or your director of graduate studies. Doing this proactively to get clarity is super important-- and to help minimize miscommunications and potential conflict. Now, I should share that conflict is natural. That is going to happen. It's not

always a bad thing, but being able to minimize unnecessary conflict is super important. So again, we would point to the FAIM Resource Center tools. Reaching out to other program faculty administrators and peers to get advice and support-- again, reflecting back to your mentoring network. And when in doubt, ask for help-- that this can be a sign of strength, not weakness. And if you need to ask for help but you might not feel comfortable asking your advisor straight off the bat, consider some of those other people that can be resources to you, such as your director of graduate studies; the graduate field assistant oftentimes, which is a staff member that works within your graduate field; and then of course, Colleen, myself, and others within the graduate school can be some of those resources that can be safer to ask a question to if you are not feeling like it's something you can ask of your advisor. Colleen, if you could advance. OK, so this goes back over to you. COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. So some of the types of things that you might want to make note of that you can ask other students and get input from people who have been here a little longer than you have, especially in your graduate program-- what are departmental expectations and norms? Who should I know? What resources are available to support graduate students? Back when you were in years one and two, what goals did you have? What do you wish you knew when you were in your first year? What advice do you have in setting goals for working with your mentor? And what goals did you have at this early stage relating to career, exploration, and preparation? Is it to perhaps just start exploring a couple of avenues and identifying people whose career trajectory interests you? And you want to perhaps make notes about them for later doing an informational interview to learn more about what their experience has been like. In terms of departmental expectations and norms, these might include things like are there, for example, a professional development seminar that is offered within your graduate field that all new incoming students are expected to attend? I know for me, one of the unspoken norms-- which thankfully, someone actually spoke it to us so that I was able to meet this expectation-- was that for the weekly departmental seminars spanning, in my case, ecology, evolution, and behavior, we were expected to attend those research seminars. Not just for the cookies, but actually attend the seminars and try to understand them, even though sometimes the research outside of our area was really technical. And then we were also expected as first year students, as well as attending weekly, to identify a couple of people who would be the coordinators working with presenters in the series on their audio visual needs and helping welcome them to campus, if they were visiting from outside campus. And so that's the kind of norm that is really important to make sure that you have a clear understanding of anything that you might be expected to participate in, whether it's in January or in the winter season, when we're recruiting the next cohort. Are you expected to participate in welcome and recruitment activities? What other types of things are considered to be important activities for getting acculturated and getting to know people in the broader department? We have mentioned this FAIM, or Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring framework that we've been working on developing along with colleagues over the last year or two. And so some of the general areas for conversation about mutual expectations include having a talk with your graduate advisor that you ultimately opt to work with about things like how will you communicate? What are the timelines for your milestones towards degree progress? What are the funding plans looking like each year in general terms? Even if it's big picture, like, well, you will have a first year and a final year fellowship. And in between then, it might be a mix of TA and RA, or it might be good to try and seek external funding. Health and well-being and advice

on how to make sure that you're feeling supported and at your best-- and what to do if you're encountering challenges in those areas. How you might work and collaborate across teams and other professional relationships. How you you'll get feedback on things like scholarly performance and materials. Does your advisor want you to wait until you have a complete draft of something and send it to them? Probably not, actually. If you ask, you might find that they want you to send your first acceptable draft, and then they can give you some input on it while it's still at an early stage. And it won't be as crushing if they're like, well, I think you should really take this whole section of work in a different direction. Things like resolving conflict; expectations around authorship, especially if things are collaborative within a broader research group; service and contributions, too, especially diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, but then also professional and career development. We have in this website sets of common baseline expectations for mentor and mentee, framed in terms of I will statements. So as a mentor, I will encourage my mentee to explore a breadth of career options and opportunities, and not just necessarily focus their interests towards academia, if that's not what they're necessarily interested in. And similarly for mentee, I will statements. These kind of statements can be a guide for you, especially during the early onboarding stage. But it's also a good thing to revisit over the course of your time in graduate school, too. And look at has this evolved? Or how has this evolved as time has gone on? And so I'm going to turn it back to Sara to see if she wants to say anything more about that last point or to transition into the resources to learn more. SARA XAYARATH HERNÁNDEZ: Yeah. No, I think given where we are with time that it will be fine to transition to the resources to learn more. So again, we've mentioned multiple times the FAIM Resource Center-- Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring. Mentoring and advising-- although there are intersections between the two, they are also separate types of relationships where every graduate student may have an advisor and the advisor functions are in a particular arena. Not all advisors become mentors. It is ideal that they become mentors, but just understanding, at least at the base, fundamental level, what it is that you should be seeking to receive in an advising relationship. We have two guides available, one that is more contextually relevant for research degree students, and then one that's more contextually relevant to professional degree students. Although we have great resources at Cornell, many of our resources are informed by the work of others. And then also, we lean into what great work colleagues at other institutions have done. And so the graduate student mentoring guide that was developed by the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan is just a phenomenal guide, and so we encourage you to look at that. And then one of the resources that we pointed to for some of our content today is from the Council of Graduate School and their quick start guide for proteges. And so that is a super practical resource for you to look at. Earlier, we had said that within graduate education, a lot hinges on your local context of your program. And on that note, another resource that I want to highlight for you is that each of your graduate programs, your graduate fields should have a handbook for your graduate field. Many of those may be posted as part of the websites for your programs, but sometimes those handbooks are posted in a box folder and in other areas. So if that has not been something, after the first week of your time and orientation for your program, that hasn't been mentioned, make sure you ask about how you access your field-specific handbook. Colleen, if you want to progress. OK. So we are going to leave time for questions. And we see some questions have come into the chat. But another action item that we wanted to just put out there as a healthy

challenge to you is to commit to action in this area. So we want you to think about what are three actions that you could take within the next couple of weeks to build upon your mentoring foundation? Almost every one here is an incoming student, and we know we have some continuing students here. But especially for incoming students-- before the official start of your orientation and first week of classes, et cetera, think concretely about the actions that you may be able to take within this space. We would welcome you to share some of your thoughts on this if you have immediate thoughts within the chat. But if not, this is a reflective exercise for you to actually put pen to paper or finger to keyboard or to your screen and your notes-- however you want to record this. But do it in a way that you can come back to it reflexively. Want to progress the slide, Colleen? OK. So we're going to open it up to questions, but we'll leave this slide on the screen for you so that you can see where we're located physically, because we do predominantly work on campus. But you can also see our contact information. Both Colleen's office, as well as mine, are rather active, especially on Twitter, at least for now-- and sharing resources. And so for those of you who may be active on Twitter or are still active for the moment on Twitter, we welcome you to follow us, because it is another mechanism that we utilize for sharing information. So one of the questions that had come up earlier from the chat is do some students have their main advisor be someone who does not completely share the same research interests but have similar ideas and still want to work together? Does it always have to be a perfect match within that department? So one of the things that I want to explain-- and this is part of the hidden curriculum-- is that you will hear people talk about departments, and then you'll hear people talk about graduate fields. So this is a Cornell context explanation, which is academic departments are where faculty may have their tenure home. So for example, there is an academic department, or school, rather, of chemical and biomolecular engineering. All of the faculty within that school-- their tenure home is there. A graduate field-- we do have a graduate field of chemical engineering. However, the faculty affiliated with that field, although they include all the faculty from the Department of Chemical Engineering, that field will also include faculty that may be from multiple other departments throughout the university. It may include faculty from chemistry, from physics, from materials science, from molecular biology. And so there are faculty that go well beyond a department that graduate students within a graduate field may have access to in considering who might be their best fit as an advisor. And so for some of you who are in the STEM fields where there are research groups with multiple people, you may end up finding yourself in a research group that is with a faculty member who has field status with multiple different fields. And so you might be a PhD student in genetics and genomics and development, but one of your lab mates might be a PhD student in microbiology. So that's something to keep in mind, and it'll probably make more sense as you're here longer. But your primary advisor has to be affiliated with your field. You may have come in with interests really aligned in a very specific area of research, and there may be faculty that you have in mind that-- oh, this faculty member is perfectly aligned with my research interests. But then you might discover they're not taking new students right now or you do a rotation with them and you find, you know what? I don't think this research group is the best fit for me. And that's where you want to demonstrate some flexibility, where you want to be able to retain your general research interests, but you might need to pivot a bit in order to engage in research with another faculty member who may be a better fit for you, holistically. There's another question about slides and recording. Yes, the slides will be available. We'll put them in

the Research folder, but they'll also be available in the Orientation hub in Canvas. And there will be a recording of this session available on the Canvas hub, but the caveat is that it needs to be edited. I see Heidi responded to that. Sorry, Heidi. An anonymous question that just came in is as an international student, is it usually hard to communicate vacation time with mentors to visit home or to have such conversations beforehand? This is an excellent and very important question. And it is one that we do address in some of the main resources that we've pointed you towards. What your vacation allocation may be is dependent in part on your funding resource or your funding source. So for those of you who may be funded by assistantships-- that could be a teaching assistantship, that could be a research assistantship-- we do have a policy around the vacation time that you are allotted. Those of you who are on fellowships, there's not a strict policy, but you still need to be very mindful about staying within the range of the policy. But having those conversations from the onset as part of mutual expectations and shared understanding is important. Because some faculty members may be very nonchalant about it and say, yes, no problem, et cetera. Others are going to be very exacting about the protocol that they might want you to follow as it relates to how much advance notice, outside of the case of an emergency-- but how much advance notice they might want you to provide them with vacation requests, the duration. So those are things to have some explicit conversations about, especially for those of you who are international who we know that your travel, if you're trying to go home, is a lengthy period in and of itself. So other questions-- we would invite other questions by hand raises. If somebody would like to come onto to ask a question-- or of course, you can still submit questions in the chat. And if there's a question that you want submitted anonymously, you can submit it directly to Colleen, me, or Heidi Marshall I'll designate as another anonymous question receiver. I'm seeing no hands raised. Colleen, are there some closing comments that you would like to make? COLLEEN MCLINN: Sure. I was just going to say we could probably also say thank you and stop the recording at this part. So thank you so much for coming already.