Getting the Mentoring You Need and Want

COLLEEN MCLINN: Thank you so much, Janna. So Sara will be driving the slides today, and I'm just going to kick things off really quickly. And then we'll be going back and forth between the two of us. We're delighted to have you here today. Thanks for joining us. If you'd like to, and can find the three little dots to rename yourself-- let's see. I think you might need to go to the participant list in order to rename yourself. And then try clicking on More once you've hovered over near your name to rename yourself. Feel free to add-- if you want, if your name is iPhone 1, 2, or 3, you can change your name to what you'd like us to call you. And feel free to add your graduate field that you're coming into, if you'd like to, or are returning to. So we're gonna-- this is "Getting the Mentoring you Need and Want." And we've been doing a program of this kind for several years. This is part of a broader effort that we're doing. And so we've decided to name this "Getting the Mentoring you Need and Want 101." It's an introduction to mutual expectations tailored primarily for first-year graduate students, or graduate students pretty early in their careers. In doing this, we realized that we can talk about similar concepts with graduate students and postdocs that are a little further along, but we wanted to just start from not making too many assumptions about how much access you already have to mentoring, or how far you've already gone down the path of deciding who's going to be your primary graduate advisor or special committee chair. And so we'll give you a good foundation and we'll do lots of discussion as well, including a video case study in a little bit, and some breakouts as well. But we'll spend most of the time in the main room here. So just to say a little bit more about us, I'm Colleen McLinn. I'm Associate Dean for Professional Development in the graduate school. I've been at the grad school since 2012, and at Cornell since 2006. And prior to that, I did a PhD at University of Minnesota in ecology, evolution, and behavior. And I want to turn it over to Sara.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Sure. Hi, everyone. My name is Sara Xayarath Hernández. I serve as our Associate Dean for Inclusion and Student and Faculty Engagement. I've been at Cornell for just over 23 years in different positions, but also as a graduate student. So there are a lot of things that I'm empathetic to in the experience of navigating Cornell, but also as part of what all of us have dedicated our careers to is improving the experience for graduate students as they navigate academia. I also want to take a moment to acknowledge our colleague, Dr. Evelyn Ambríz, who is a postdoctoral researcher in the graduate school who focuses on mentoring and faculty engagement. And so her contributions have also been integral to the content and the resources we'll be sharing with you today. All right, Colleen.

COLLEEN MCLINN: So to start things off, we wanted to prompt you to think about how you define mentorship. And you can either think about this on your own or you can feel free to add an idea in the chat if you want. And in a moment, we'll share with you some thoughts that we've had on this recently. And we're thinking in a graduate education research context right now. But you can feel free to start in any context that's familiar to you with your thinking.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Oops, sorry. I skipped ahead.

COLLEEN MCLINN: All right, Sara, do you want to go ahead and show the next one?

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Sure. Sure.

COLLEEN MCLINN: And thanks for adding to the chat, Sam and Louis, Sarah, and others who continue to do so.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: So there are many different definitions that we could use for mentorship. But the definition that we wanted to familiarize you with, as well as faculty and others who are supporting graduate students, is the definition that derives from our FAIM framework. So FAIM stands for Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring. And within this framework, we define inclusive mentorship as a co-constructed and a reciprocal relationship between a mentor and a mentee who take a strengths-based and identity-informed approach to working together to support your mutual growth, development and success. So this definition derives from the work of one of our colleagues, Dr. Sweeney Windchief at Montana State University. And it also derives from work led by the National Academies for Science, Engineering and Medicine. And it really puts the emphasis on that in a mentorship relationship that there are two people that are both contributing for mutual benefits. And so even though the mentor oftentimes is seen as a person with greater knowledge and experience, this definition also validates that the mentee brings important knowledge and experience to that relationship, and there's opportunity to learn together. And it also reinforces the importance of taking an individualized lens to how we perceive and work with each other, by seeing each other as whole individuals, but also looking at what are our strengths, and focusing on those as we try to support students in their development in areas in which they may lack certain skills or knowledge or experience.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Great. So now we're going to do the first of several polling activities. And we're using a little tool called Padlet. And when you go to the link on the next slide, after you've had a chance to understand what the questions are, you'll have a chance to click the Plus button and add your own perspectives. So we have two prompts for you. Thinking about individuals who have been good or effective mentors for you, think about this in two ways. First, how did they make you feel? What kind of thoughts, emotions, feelings did they generate in you that made you feel like they were effective mentors? And then what did they do? What kind of actions did they carry out that made them good

mentors for you? All right. So think about those two prompts. And then here is where you will be able to contribute. And we'll post this link in the chat as well. Or if you're on a phone, you can scan the QR code and contribute. Thank you, Zenobia.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: So you didn't see it, the link is already in the chat. And I'm going to stop screen share for a moment so I can switch over to the Padlet. And we can see as the responses populate.

COLLEEN MCLINN: And you've already found this out because you're so familiar with this from social media and everything. But you can also like other people's contributions, too. And then they'll go up to the top.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Oops, sorry. Where did it go? There we go.

COLLEEN MCLINN: There. That looks pretty good. You can also-- you should be able to see the responses where you contribute, too. And if you need to, up at the top where it says "Sara Hernández's screen," by the three little dots, you can zoom in or out. And don't worry if your response seems to move around. That probably means that people are liking it. So it moved up in the order. Otherwise, they're coming in, I think, as people respond. It's All right. So some of the things that are rising to the top in terms of how they made you feel-- empowered, trusted, accepted, heard. I also saw seen, confident, supported, curious. Maybe initially kind of knee-jerk defensiveness, but later helping work through that to find meaning in action from critical feedback, that it was OK to make mistakes. Valued, appreciated, like I didn't have to wear a mask around them. I'm assuming metaphorical mask, perhaps, about being a certain thing. You could be authentic. Great, wonderful. Wonderful answers here. Some of the things that are coming in terms of actions of what they did that made them good mentors for you-- invested time in you; offered advice, not necessarily forcing you to take it; honest; share wisdom and advice; taking extra time to teach fundamental skills; really listening to what I was saying and responding with valuable feedback; were a friend. Able to acknowledge my opinion, share their own, and facilitate nice back-and-forth of ideas. I like that because it's really sharing that they value your perspective and they don't see themselves as the font of all truth, but they see it as a dialogue that you're constructing knowledge and understanding together. Also helped me make a plan for my study; saw me as a whole person and not just a student; reminded me of strengths; motivating me to deliver the project successfully. Some really fantastic ideas here, and we'll share this back afterwards, and the slides. But yeah. Thanks for continuing to contribute. And please do continue to read and like things that you agree with.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Thank you, everyone, for your input. So, Colleen, you want to go through some additional traits?

COLLEEN MCLINN: Sure. So these are some example traits, or actions, or ways of being from effective mentors based on research. And this is from a number of different sources that we've been looking at, among them a report from the Council of Graduate

Schools, a free PDF download from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute on mentoring and being mentored, and then some primary journal articles as well. So some of the examples of things that often occur with effective mentoring-- accessible, empathetic, humble, open-minded, consistent, patient, honest, affirming, aware, collegial, trustworthy, and respectful. And now Sara is going to prompt you to think about from a different perspective.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: OK. So the next term that we want to introduce you to is the anti-mentor, or what some folks have called the tormentors. So oftentimes, we'll hear students speak about somebody and referring to them as a mentor. And then they'll go on to say this really negative experience that they had with them, or a relationship that's not very healthy. And so we want to really try to separate what we mean when somebody is truly serving as a mentor to you. All of you will have advisors. And we hope that your faculty advisors will evolve into mentors for you. But not all of them will be a mentor for you. And so you have to think about who in your realm can be a mentor. But an anti-mentor would be an individual who has negatively influenced you. And they may have done so either intentionally or unintentionally. So examples might be folks, when you talked about wanting to go to grad school, who discouraged you or who might have indicated maybe that's not the pathway for you. Even if they weren't doing that intentionally, that is really an anti-mentoring type of interaction because it's not supportive of you. So we want you to take a moment to think about who are some of the folks that you might have encountered along your journey thus far that you might categorize as engaging in anti-mentoring behaviors. And again, we want you to think about how they made you feel. And we also want you to think about what did they do or say to discourage you. And we're going to utilize a Padlet again to capture your responses. So Zenobia is about to put the second Padlet link into the chat. She just did.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Sara, this one actually isn't the right Padlet for this.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Oh. Oh.

COLLEEN MCLINN: So we're just thinking about this. And then if people are willing to and wanted to and felt comfortable, they can share in the chat.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Excellent. And I just deleted that so that we don't have that there to—

COLLEEN MCLINN: Yep. Just got a little ahead of ourselves. Sorry.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I got ahead of ourselves. We love Padlet. And just one example before we move forward, when I think about some of the individuals in my life who have been mentors to me, but I also think about those who I might categorize as an anti-mentor, sometimes you can learn really valuable lessons from those that you might categorize as an anti-mentor because it may inform you how you don't want to engage with

others. It may inform how you might want to seek out different people to be part of your network of mentors, which we'll talk about later.

COLLEEN MCLINN: All right. So now what we're going to think about is start brainstorming to needs we might have for mentoring while in graduate school. And I know this must feel a little bit funny because we're just coming to the start of an academic year, and some of you are just matriculating and coming in. But we want to be realistic that there are challenges that are in graduate-- that happen while in graduate school. I encountered a number in my seven years in graduate school. And Sara, I'm sure, did as well. So we want to normalize this, that there are some kinds of challenges. And we want to think about trying to categorize these too, so we can figure out what kind of mentoring, what kind of support systems, what kind of networks could help us really feel prepared and confident to deal with some of these challenges. All right. So we're going to put the Padlet up next again. And this is just a chance to brainstorm some potential challenges.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Zenobia will put that Padlet link back into the chat.

COLLEEN MCLINN: And again, we'll take a little time for people to respond, to read and to like things. And also, eventually we'll display some of the responses for you, too. And feel free to put-- the first couple coming in are super thoughtful, reflective sentences. Feel free to put shorter, single words too, if that's easier, especially if you're on a phone. Great. So some of the things that are coming up-- don't know what I want-- what I don't know. So I don't know what to ask, or how to ask for help. Balancing life/family events with grad school responsibilities. Yes. This is very real. Time management is also very real. Cultural differences, making it difficult to understand how to ask for help. Running into rabbit holes with my dissertation or thesis. Not knowing how to navigate the hidden curriculum. That can be different from everyone, like what other people kind of know naturally, maybe through family experience if you have parents that have been to graduate school, that other people might not realize if they're first-generation graduate students or college students. Knowing when to continue working on an idea versus pivot. So many professors, I don't even know how to choose a potential advisor. Balancing rotations, if you're in a field that has rotations, classwork, and life outside of work. Finding career direction. Not knowing whether the first big hurdle is actually a big hurdle or just a small bump. Not knowing how homesickness will impact me. Research logistics. Oh my gosh, that one's so real. Getting past the fear of asking not smart questions. My supervisor being too busy, having little time for me. How to engage with my peers with diverse backgrounds. Developing a support network. Some other along the lines of work/life balance, and then choosing a supervisor you'll have to deal with for the next five years if you're in a PhD. Yeah, great. Great responses. Thank you. All right. Sara's going to bring back up the presentation. [INTERPOSING VOICES IN CHINESE]

COLLEEN MCLINN: Sorry. One second. We'll make sure to mute the background noise there. All right. So these are some responses from literature, just to validate some of the things you've been saying and maybe build on a couple that didn't immediately occur to

people as the first ones. And this-- Janna has presented this in some presentations that she has done around adapting to graduate school. And it's also drawn from literature as well. But they've kind of balanced this into academic and more personal or social challenges. So on the academic side, relationship with a mentor or advisor, having difficulties with communicating or working styles; disappointment in academic performance and things like milestones, exams; funding concerns related to the program and support that you have there; concern about future job prospects; managing health or disability that might be impacting your academics in some way and getting the support and resources you need; balancing competing demands. And then on the personal and social side, housing concerns; financial concerns; legal or immigration concern; acculturation to a new environment, new location, new people, new accents, new weather, a smaller or bigger town than you're from; and relationship and friendship difficulties, meeting like-minded people to connect with as well.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: So [AUDIO OUT] going to do is a video case study. So we're going to show you a video. We're going to introduce you to a character whose name is Javier. Javier is portrayed by an actor. However, Javier's story is rooted in real Cornell graduate student stories. So we're going to ask you to really listen to what Javier is sharing about his experience. And then following the video case study, we're going to do some breakout group and some discussions. And we'll present the questions that you'll be discussing in those small groups. So give me one moment to tee up the video. [VIDEO PLAYBACK] - My name is Javier. I am in the third year of a PhD [AUDIO OUT]. I came to grad school right out of [AUDIO OUT]. 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 like superstars to [AUDIO OUT]. I deeply admire their work. [AUDIO OUT] [END PLAYBACK]

COLLEEN MCLINN: Sorry, I can't hear this. I'm not sure if others-- yeah. I can't hear you. You're on mute.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Can you not hear it at all, or—

COLLEEN MCLINN: It dropped off. It was going for a while and then it stopped.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: OK. Let me restart it. And let me make sure my sound is up louder, opens up all the way. OK, everyone. Thank you for your patience. We're going to try this again. [VIDEO PLAYBACK] - 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 like 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 up 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 equipment 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. 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. [END PLAYBACK]

COLLEEN MCLINN: All right. Fantastic Thanks, Sara, for showing that. And thanks for-- yeah, letting us know about the little technical difficulties. Sometimes Zoom can be touchy. All right. So what we're going to do next is we have some case study discussion questions. And guess what? We'll have a Padlet to answer these on. So do have a look at these, but you'll get to see them when you go into breakout rooms as well. So what we're going to do is we're going to give you some time in breakout rooms to discuss these three questions. And this will be a good chance to both meet some other people who might be coming into graduate school, returning students, or I think we also have some graduate field assistants in the group. And if you happen to be a graduate field assistant, if you could please raise your virtual hand using the React symbol, we will put you in a room together with other grad field assistants as well. Thank you. Thank you. And we'll just wait and check and see if there's anyone else. If not, we'll put you with grad school staff to chat about, too. All right. Wonderful. And then we got another reaction. Yeah. So Sara is sharing. Please put yourself-- when you're in your groups, please take a moment to introduce yourselves, your name, and your graduate program. And then we'll talk about these questions. The questions are, first describe what kind of challenges is Javier experiencing. You might have heard something a little different than someone else coming at this with different life experiences or different perspectives. And so we will make sure you take a few moments to list out all of these. And then we can go into more kind of brainstorming solutions mode. Think about-- imagine you're Javier. What actions might you take next, or who or what could you use as resources to help you navigate your advising and mentoring relationships? And again, you might have different ideas than other people. All right. So we are going to-- you'll be in breakout groups of three or four people. And we are going to ask you, after you've had time to introduce yourselves and chat about it a little-- you'll be able to see a countdown with the way I'm setting up the breakout rooms. But as you're talking, do pick someone to be the scribe or to post on behalf of your group on the Padlet. And that person could be, for example, the person whose birthday will be soonest after today, like my birthday will be September 4. So if everyone else was a winter birthday, I would be the scribe and responsible for posting on the Padlet. And then again afterwards, after we have time to discuss and post on the Padlet, we will bring people back together again. All

right. So take a few more minutes to think to yourself and read the questions. I just have one more little change to make to the breakout rooms to make sure we got our graduate field assistants together. And then we will go into breakouts and we'll set a timer for eight or 10 minutes or so.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Welcome back, everyone.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. Welcome back. We hope you enjoyed the chance to meet a few other people and talk about your perspectives on the case study. So we have some entries in the Padlet that Sara's displaying. And again, you can either go up to the top by "Sara Hernández's screen," the three dots, and zoom in on this. Or you can just go directly to the Padlet link for the case study to view this a little bigger. But so some of the challenges Javier is experiencing, some things that people came up with-- poor communication with his advisor; overworked; conflicted; wants to change advisor; both positive and negative aspects and conflicted about it. Overworked and communication issues. This group also said it seems like he glorifies his PI a bit, which could impact his communication if he doesn't want to contradict them or raise issues with them. Javier might feel it's late in his studies to switch advisors. This might be a challenge that's more common earlier in grad school. Might be afraid to get behind on research or worried about how it might affect his career if he speaks out. Pressure, power difference, transparency, gatekeeping of information. So Javier mentioned that he wasn't really comfortable asking his peers about things because he felt like he should know them, and he felt like he would feel kind of, I don't know, out of the loop. Poor communication with advisor; fear of potential consequences; lack of clear expectations. Yes. There weren't clear expectations of the advisor and the student. He finds his advisor demanding. He's unsure of who to consult and who he can trust to discuss. Boundary issues, how to define my own workload. Making a decision based on research topics, choosing an advisor based on research topics rather than lab environment. Power imbalance, fear of retaliation for speaking up. And other people said feeling intimidated and confused about expectations, not sure if he has access to help. Great Thank you. Sara, do you want to discuss some of the ones-- more solution-oriented brainstorming?

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Absolutely. So thank you for the thoughts that you went into, what Javier could possibly do. So let's see what you say. Ask peers or more senior students about workload. Meet with staff members outside of the department and ask for advice, and ask other students working with similar professors. And so just even having an idea of what you should expect. Speak to the PI, possibly a facilitated conversation expressing his concerns, and possibly drafting, writing them beforehand, which is a great way to prepare for what sometimes can be an intense conversation. Communication, being in direct communication, talking to peers and advisors. Consider reaching out to other members within the lab, or past members, to seek out their perspective and maybe recommendations on how to proceed. Leaning on committee members. So those of you who are in doctoral programs, you will form what's called a special committee, which will have a minimum of three faculty members on it, so

two other faculty members other than your primary advisor. So leaning on them and see if they could provide advice and mentorship. Leaning on other experiences of graduate students. If possible, find a new advisor. If not, manage expectations and be transparent with workload. Graduate school-- some group had said that they hoped there will be some consulting from the grad school to express their concern. Absolutely. The graduate school, all of us, but especially Jana and Olivia, will be first points of contact to help support you in some of these intense discussions in other places. Talk to the advisor directly, advisees, a third party. Speak with friends or staff or faculty and discuss what to do. And later on, speak one-on-one to the PI and discuss honestly and possibly help them. Chat with your GFA. The GFA, that stands for the Graduate Field Assistant-- or Administrator, rather. And these are staff members who are in the programs who support faculty and graduate students. And they are a phenomenal first point of contact in your localized environment. So what resources could you use? You could look up people on Cornell website. You will have access to a portal for orientation. So we will have compiled a lot of great links and information for you-- administrative staff, counseling staff, other people in the group, peers. The ombudsperson. so if you're not familiar with the term ombuds, or ombudsman or ombudsperson, these are individuals that oftentimes are in universities that you can go to confidentially to talk about situations you're experiencing, and they may give you some guidance. And again, it's a confidential source. And they oftentimes can point you to your better, more primary resources. Ask other students, again, the GFA. Use the grad school's mentoring guide. So this is an advising guide for research students. So this is a nice companion to the FAIM resources that we'll share with you as well. And friends, students, more senior students, and faculty members. So really thinking about leaning on your community. Give me a second and I'm going to switch my screens. OK. So thank you for the thought that you've put into this exercise, and to thinking about what are the resources that you can tap into. We hope that hearing Javier's story and knowing that this was based on a real student's stories will let you know that if you end up experiencing anything like Javier that you're not alone. But being aware that those types of experiences exist can help you be more proactive so maybe you don't end up in a situation like Javier's. So next we want to talk about identifying your network of mentors. So we've mentioned that at different points earlier in this session. And so we want you to think about, who are other people, in addition to your academic advisor or special committee chair, that might be able to serve in a mentoring capacity with you? So as was suggested in the small breakout group discussions, special committee members-- so the faculty who are on your committee-- can be other forms of mentors. Faculty course leaders for teaching assistantships. So some of you will serve as TAs during your graduate studies, and the instructor of record-- so the faculty member leading the course-- might be another person that you could seek mentorship from. Other internal and external faculty. So as you're building your network, we want you to think about how to do that within Cornell, but also thinking about how to do that beyond Cornell, and then also thinking about how do you leverage some of the established relationships that you might have with faculty from prior institutions, Administrators-- so again, the GFA, the graduate school, and others. Some of you are in disciplines in which there are postdocs that commonly will be in research groups. And so they are more advanced researchers that

could be another source of mentorship. Peers, family members and friends, professionals from outside of academia. One thing I want to point out about family members and friends, if any of you are like me-- a first-generation college student, which meant I was a first-generation college graduate-- it's also important to think about what role your loved ones might be able to play in providing you more personalized mentorship. So my parents didn't know what in the world I was doing in grad school, yet they were a source of mentorship in other ways. And so they weren't my academic-related mentorship, but they provided me support in other ways. And it's important for them to understand that they're part of your network as well. But at the end of it, no single individual can mentor you in all the ways you need. So building a network is an asset as you go through graduate studies. So things that you need to consider as you're trying to figure out what kind of mentoring you might need. So these are different domains within mentorship that we just want you to think about. Who within your network might be able to provide you this type of support? Or who might you need to get into your network so that they can provide this type of support? So as we think about feedback-- and so feedback might be on your research, your scholarship, your writing. Professional development, learning the how-tos of your academic and professional trajectory, thinking about career exploration and the different avenues that you might pursue. Sponsorship-- sponsorship oftentimes-- Colleen will talk about this a little bit more-- but these are folks in your network who might recommend you for awards, who are thinking about when you're not necessarily in the room and might say, you know what, Colleen would be an excellent candidate for this opportunity. So they're sponsoring you in that way. Emotional support. So who can provide empathy and support, especially in times of stress? Access to opportunities to help you create and communicate your research and develop your professional identity. Role models-- and so these might be people who are peer-level. They may be near-peer. They may be advanced career professionals. But who are people that are moving through the world and moving through their careers in ways that you would like to model? And so identifying some of those folks. Accountability. So it's really important to think about. It's important to develop your own skills to be able to hold yourself accountable. But it's an asset to be able to have other people in your network who can help you remain accountable, that maybe you are writing partners with or that you are doing other things together and helping each other remain accountable to the work that you're trying to do. Your intellectual community. So who are you going to ideate with? Who are you going to share things with and think about what is it that you're going to do? And your safe space. Who are the people that you can be around that you don't have to worry about putting on a certain face, you don't have to worry about being judged. But who can be a source of support for you, and that you can re-energize and recharge without fear of judgment? Colleen?

COLLEEN MCLINN: All right. So I'm going to, in a second, show you a tool that we've been working on for developing a map of a network of mentors. And before I put up this whole spider web tool-- and it looks a little overwhelming-- I wanted to just clarify that we've really been thinking about dividing this into major areas or domains for reflecting on when you think about your mentoring network map, because as Sara mentioned, some of these people are going to be people from the academic or intellectual sphere that they're

mentors in your discipline or your field of study. Some of these people are going to be maybe more career-focused if you have interest in a certain domain. And some of them might be-- really have a purpose of supporting you in the well-being domain as well. And we absolutely will share the slides with you. So keep this in mind as we share with you the map in a second. So here's what the map looks like. And you can find-- we have the permanent link to where it lives on the website with the Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring project that we've had going on for the last couple of years. We've been trying to communicate with faculty working with graduate students, as well as with graduate students like you and postdocs and others involved in graduate education, about some kind of principles for establishing mutual expectations. And we'll end with a little bit more about that project and some of the types of overall principles. But we wanted to introduce this as a tool for you of something that you could work on and also refine. And I'm going to put a quick temporary link. All you need to do on the public website is just enter your email address, I think, in order to access and download it. But in this little temporary box folder, we have a quick, fillable PDF version of this document that you can go right in the PDF and type in it. And you could type names for near-peer colleagues, faculty, things like that in the academic domain that might provide you feedback, for example, on your writing or your draft presentations that you might give at a research group seminar, things like that. We also have a fuller version of this that's a three-page PDF document that has more detailed instructions on filling this out, links to additional resources, and then a version of the map that if you wanted to print out and do this by hand, you could as well. So this is something we're really going to encourage you to either get a start on at the end of this session during some of the Q&A time, or after this session. And it's something that we also encourage you to continue to revisit and think about this later, like for areas that you don't have anyone listed, asking other people, who do you use for accountability buddies? Or how do you make sure that you're working on the things that are important, that you should be working on? Or what professional development resources are important to you? And so this is something you can continually work on, refine, and discuss with others. All right. So, Sara, if you'd move to the next slide, please. And then I mentioned there's in the full web-based version-- that you can enter in your email address and download, or in the temporary box folder that we've given you access to. As you look through this, the steps of completing it, self-reflecting, and prioritizing areas for mentorship. And we have a really brand new tool coming very soon, within the next couple of weeks, that we've been working on. The postdoc that we mentioned, Dr. Evelyn Ambríz, is working on this tool for prioritizing what are your mentoring needs versus what are your mentoring wants? And what's most important to you to get from, say, your primary advisor, special committee chair, versus other people? And then identifying mentors who can provide appropriate mentorship in this area. So identifying both current and prospective or possible future mentors is important steps. Where do you already have access to people that can serve as resources, as sounding boards for you? And where do you need to identify people yet? And then another breaking, any day now, coming soon tool that Dr. Ambríz is working on are scripts to reach out to potential mentors. And we've got versions for if you know this person already, or if this is someone you're reaching out to the first time-- for the first time and you don't know them at all yet. And then what kind of mentorship or advice or support you might be seeking

to establish with them. And then, of course, step 3, strategizing and looking forward to fill in gaps and reflect on what you already have versus what you're still hoping to fill in on your map.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And one thing I just want to put in here, as we're talking about people who might serve in a mentoring capacity, there are people who will serve in a very formal way as your mentor. And they will self-identify as your mentor. And you have an established relationship, and you know you're in this mentoring relationship together. There may be other people that you cultivate relationships with who provide you with mentorship. But if you ask them, they might not say, oh yeah, I'm Sara's mentor. But there are certainly people that I've cultivated in my network that I receive a lot of mentorship from them, even if they don't always recognize that that's the role that they're playing for me. So here is the link-- and I had put it into the chat earlier-- to the FAIM practical toolkit for mentoring in graduate education, which is publicly accessible. So share it with others within and beyond Cornell. So these are great tools that already exist. And as Colleen mentioned, there are tools under development. So we will continue to build out this practical toolkit, both for the benefit of graduate students who are in a mentee role, but also for the benefit of our faculty as we're trying to support them in their development as mentors. And more on mentoring and mutual expectations. So if you remember earlier when you were talking about Javier's case, some of you had mentioned lack of clarity of expectations. So that is something that is commonly-- can be a trouble spot for students and faculty when they aren't able to communicate clearly and understand what are their expectations of each other within the relationships. And so I'm going to turn it over to Colleen to talk a little bit about this to distinguish different types of relationships. And then we'll talk about some other complementary resources.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. So this is an area of active theory and work. And Sara and I are approaching this more from the perspective of practitioners, or practitioners who try to be informed by the literature and the research and social sciences. And we do occasionally publish about and present our work nationally. But we really try to be informed by the work of others. And this is someone that I really admire their approach, coming from a more ecological background like myself and working in a smaller more undergraduate focused institution. No relation, different spelling to the last name, but Terry McGlynn, who's a faculty member, and then the work of-- and has a blog. And then the work of the National Research Mentoring Network as well, which is a more biomedically focused organization. They've really made distinctions between some of the different types of roles that people can play and what they look like in practice. So earlier we talked about some actions of effective mentoring. So advising would be telling someone, I think it's a good idea for you to go to this conference. So this is valid. This is useful. You might have professional advisors. You might have academic advisors, faculty advisors. These are people that are interacting with you from a place of deeper knowledge or expertise and telling you their advice. You might have supervisors as well at the same time. Or people might be playing the role of supervisors if they are, the lab head, essentially, and you have an appointment as a research assistant, or if you have an appointment as a teaching

assistant or are working with them in more of a supervisory employment context. It might be completely appropriate for them to say, you know, I really need you to go to this conference to represent or present our work on this area. We've been funded by this grant, and part of your time has been dedicated to this grant, and it would be really good and necessary for you to go and present this. We mentioned the idea of sponsorship, and someone who creates opportunities for you and advances your ability to take advantage of opportunities. So sponsorship might look like someone saying, I will pay for you to go to this conference and nominate you to give a talk, or I'll nominate you for an award. To really bring it back to mentorship, and the idea that we're trying to create a culture around at Cornell in graduate education and in the professoriate, this looks like someone asking you questions and really interacting with you as a valued partner, saying, what do you think are benefits and drawbacks of going to this conference? What do you think is best for you? So sharing their perspective and engaging you in conversation to really think about it and come to your own conclusions as well. So these are important ways to think about how you're interacting with people. And people can play multiple roles, and they might play multiple roles over the period of your relationship. But what we're really aiming for, ultimately, is for you to feel a sense of you have mentors that are taking into account your needs and what's best for you, and helping you engage in thinking about what you'd like to do in terms of next steps. So Sara, I think, is going to talk a little bit more about stages.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Sure. And so if you're thinking about-- I know that we have folks in the room that are in different degree programs, but I'm just going to refer as an example to the doctoral pathway. And so if you think about that doctoral experience, that you will be here working with a faculty member for anywhere between four to six to seven years, depending on your program and the progress of your research when you are entering that mentoring relationship, this is defined as the initiation stage. So this is the stage of a mentoring relationship where structure is starting to be established, that you are trying to both earn and provide trust, that you are talking about what are your expectations of each other. Within the FAIM framework, we have provided a core set of mutual expectations for mentoring relationships within graduate education. And so there are examples that we'll provide that are related to what are fundamental things that students should be able to expect of faculty serving as mentors. But also, what are some of the fundamental things that faculty should expect of all their graduate students? But these are foundational core expectations. Beyond that, you should be able to talk within your individual relationship, what are your more detailed expectations of each other? How are you going to work together? And this is also an important stage where the mentor is providing encouragement and affirmation. Using myself as an example, I went from undergraduate work in the life sciences predominantly, I worked in higher education, and then I went to grad school for the social sciences. So I switched disciplines. And when I did, there were moments of time where I'm like, uh, did I make the right choice? Do I really belong here? There are other people who seem to know more things because they came from a predominantly social science background. And then I realized that there were things that I could learn. But there was support and affirmation that I was able to gain not only from my primary advisor, but from some of my peers as well, who were like, yeah, Sara, don't worry

that you didn't know that. This is what that means. And it's like, oh, that makes sense. Somebody had said earlier, being scared of not asking the smart questions, finding people that you can ask those questions of. And your primary mentor should become one of those individuals. As you progress, you enter the cultivation stage. And so this is where your mentor may be providing more coaching. This is where they may also serve as a sponsor and might be supporting you to go after certain opportunities, who might nominate you, who might push you in preparation for fellowships. This is where they're starting to support your career aspirations, be they career aspirations within academia or well beyond academia. Increasingly, there's reciprocity and collegiality as you are progressing in your identity and your professionalization. And they're promoting your scholarly identity formation. So you're seeing yourself more so as a scholar, as a scientist, as a humanist, whatever field that you may be in. And then as you go through the course of graduate school, toward the end, there is that transition stage. And this is a great time to engage in reflection, to recognize the mutual growth and development that you experienced. This is a place where you should have more scholarly and professional independence. And this is also an important moment to redefine your relationship structure. Some of you, after grad school, you might not maintain lifelong contact with your primary advisor or mentor. Others of you, this might become a lifelong relationship that just-- it transitions to another form. I was very lucky that my advisor from grad school is somebody that I've maintained a lifelong relationship with. But how that relationship exists now looks different than it did when I was in graduate school. So core areas of mutual expectations that you'll find within the FAIM framework. The categories are communication-- you heard that come up a lot today; milestone timeline and funding plans; health and well-being; teams and relationships; feedback on scholarly performance and materials; conflict resolution, because conflict is normal but we need to know how to engage in a healthy way and manage it and navigate it; authorship of publications and other scholarly products; service and contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and then professional and career development. Just a small little snapshot. When you go to the core mutual expectations, the way you will see that content presented is as a mentee. I will, for example, seek to understand my mentoring needs, so doing that self-reflection so I can work to identify and establish a broad network of mentors. So that is one of the expectations that is bestowed upon you. As a mentor, a complimentary expectation is that they'll discuss their mentoring philosophy and workstyle preferences with you, ideally before committing to mentor you. Some of you are admitted to work already directly with a faculty member. So this is something that you would want to explore in your early conversations because it's important to understand what are the workstyle preferences, what is the philosophy, so that you can understand how to navigate best these relationships. Colleen?

COLLEEN MCLINN: OK. And we know that this has been kind of a journey starting from early thoughts about, well, A, how do you like to stay cool in the summer? And who all is participating here? But also your definitions of mentoring, what you think of as characteristics of effective mentors and how they made you feel, and then some tools, resources, and ideas for trying to approach planning and mapping out, getting the kind of mentoring you want. So we wanted to end with some more practical takeaways,

again informed by some of the literature on mentoring and also seeking success in graduate education. And so one of these is to try and work actively on establishing a sense of belonging in your academic community. So being sure to go to seminars in your discipline, trying to connect with peers and colleagues, other people at different stages of graduate study or perhaps postdoctoral scholars, or perhaps undergraduate researchers as well. Trying to cultivate trust with others. Practice vulnerability and really ask questions like, saying that, hey, I thought that was a really interesting seminar. I didn't necessarily understand the importance of this part. What did you think about that? Have you seen this kind of research before, this way of presenting information before? Really practicing agency within mentoring relationships, taking responsibility for reflecting upon and communicating what you need and want. You could be waiting so long for someone to read your mind and naturally do what will serve you best. But if you can figure out ways to communicate about it, like, I learn really well in this way, or, I respond really well to this kind of feedback, that could really help jumpstart your relationship. And then really working on establishing a scholarly identity of, I am studying this, and I'm immersing myself in the research on this or the practice on that, and really a future person in training in this discipline. Being an active partner also, thinking about consistently communicating. One of the-- I feel like one of the main reasons that sometimes we get contacted by faculty at the graduate school is if they're concerned because they haven't been hearing regularly from students and are concerned that it's a sign that something is not right or going on in the student's life. So really trying to consistently communicate, check in. Figure out together, define and establish boundaries. How often are you going to meet? How are you going to communicate in between meetings? Try to really engage proactively. Like if someone is traveling for work, you could send them a note and be like, hey, I've been working on reading articles in this area and just wanted to let you know what I've been up to while you're away, or being responsive if they send you communication as well. And then really thinking about collaboratively, what are these mutual expectations? Where do each of you lie in terms of your understanding or agreement on whose roles and responsibilities different things are, if they're completely shared, if it's more a mentor's responsibility, more a mentee's responsibility, and how to navigate and bridge that if you have slight differences in that. And then just revisiting, refining in ongoing ways and communication.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And so now we wanted to open it up to questions. And also in a moment, Zenobia will add to the chat a link to the evaluation for today's session, for your feedback. If you can take a few moments after this session to complete the short survey, your feedback is very helpful to us as we think about how to improve our delivery of this content so that it is most practical and useful to our intended audience, and in this case, predominantly incoming and early-career graduate students. But you will, as Colleen had mentioned before, have access to the slide deck. So really quickly, I'm just going to show you. I'm not going to go through it. I'm going to show you that in that slide deck will be links to other resources, our contact information, the partners on this project. And so you'll have access to all of that. But now we will just open it up for any questions that you might have, which we would welcome you to raise your hand and ask questions. Or if you rather

present a question anonymously, you can send it directly to Colleen or me to repeat your question and respond to you. But that is what we have for you today. Trying to remove the pins. There we go. So great. And if you didn't see it, Colleen also put a link to the temporary box folder that we set up for today's participants. So if you'd like to grab any of those resources and we'll have additional follow up. And then Zenobia also put a link to the future sessions. So the primer is a whole series, and it's a series of very useful topics. And so we are encouraging our incoming students, but also even some of our continuing students, to take advantage of these sessions. So we have a question in the chat. How would you recommend initiating conversation of asking your advisor's expectations of you, or just learn as you go? So this is something that will be helpful that Dr. Ambríz is working on as some of the prompts, because we get this both from students as well as from faculty, that they know they need to talk about certain things but they're not always certain how to initiate those discussions. And so that is something that we'll have tools available to you. But if you're in a situation in which you were a direct admit, so you already know who's going to serve as your advisor, or if you are in a program in which you won't know who your advisor is until later in this year, really starting some of those conversations off from just saying, like, I would like to get the most out of my time in graduate school and my opportunity to work with you. And I understand everyone has different workstyle preferences and different ways of mentoring. And so you could open the discussion by asking them in general, like, what are some of their expectations of the students that are working with them, so that at least you're hearing from them first of what their expectations are. I think that's a good starting place, is to understand where the faculty member is starting from, and then being able to communicate what-- hopefully they'll start asking you some questions. But if not, this is where Colleen was mentioning earlier, where you might be able to mention, like, I found that these are the types of support that have been helpful for me. Is that something that we would be able to do within this relationship? You know, asking those questions because you may have certain needs, or you might have certain preferences that faculty member simply isn't going to be able to meet because it doesn't fit within the way that they approach their mentoring relationships. And so that also gives you a signal of, OK, where do I need to adapt? And then, where might I be able to get the other forms of support that I need that are outside of this particular relationship? Because again, not everyone can do everything for you. Another question. What advice, Cornell resources, would you recommend for students looking to find mentors who specifically share their social identities? And so I can give that a stab or, Colleen, is there anything that you wanted to share first?

COLLEEN MCLINN: Go ahead, Sara.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: Sure. So I appreciate that it can be very valuable and important to have people in a mentoring role who may share some aspect either of your identities or your lived experiences, like somebody-- I have made references several times, I identify as a first-generation college student. That has been an asset to me to have people in my mentor network who know what it means to exist in academia as somebody who didn't come from generations of folks who have gone through higher education and

who have gone through graduate school. So that's one form of identity. That is not how I identified my primary advisor. Also recognizing, just to share a little bit about me, some of my other identities that are really salient to me, is I'm female identifying. I identify as a Chicana and a mestiza. So if I wanted to find somebody in my trajectory who shared multiple domains of my identity, it would be really sparse in any of the institutions that I've been in. And so that was something that I learned really early on, was it's important to try to find people who may share certain aspects of my identity or my experiences, but it's also equally and just as important to find people who are empathetic and supportive. And so many of my mentors, although some of them have been people who have shared aspects of my cultural and racial and ethnic identities, others-- for example, I worked in engineering for 10 years. Some of my most important mentors were senior faculty who identified as white men who came from generations of academia. They have different insights. They moved in the world in different ways. But what made our relationships work were they recognized the value of us engaging in a mutual mentoring relationship where they recognize there were things that they could learn from me. I knew that there were things that I could learn from them. There was mutual respect and valuing of each other. And so it's just as important to think about how you build out some of those mentoring relationships with people who have very different identities from you, but who are very supportive and empathetic and who may come into that relationship with a level of humility and not saying, just because I identify as this, I'm in a more senior position than you, or this is the normal way things are, but rather are supportive of you and are some of your champions. I hope that makes sense. There are other questions that have come up. Is it possible for us to seek cross-department mentorship? Is that possible, and how to initiate that? That's a brilliant question. And that's a great one for Cornell and the way that we're set up in our graduate field structure. Colleen, you want to give that one a stab, just to explain a little bit about how we actually structurally can facilitate that?

COLLEEN MCLINN: Sure. I just posted a link in the chat in response to that. So graduate fields are set up in an interdisciplinary way. The fields are composed of faculty members across departments. So there's an example on the website that I shared that the graduate field of economics might have faculty from the School of Public Policy, Applied Economics and Management department in the College of Ag and Life Sciences, Industrial and Labor Relations School, Management in the Johnson Grad School of Management, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Sociology, or Economics. And so if you identify faculty whose research interests you, then you could start going about seeing what fields of study that they belong to. And basically-- sorry, Sara. Help me fill this in. In terms of what fields they already belong to, or if there's someone that you're interested in working with, they could always seek field membership as well in a field of study if necessary.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And this is something many of our faculty who have been here, who may be mid-career or advanced career, they're already affiliated with multiple graduate fields. But if any of you end up working with very early-career faculty who are new to Cornell, it sometimes will take them time to establish their field status. And so that is

something that if you find a faculty member whose research intersects with your interests and you would be interested in having them on your committee or even possibly exploring whether they might be a fit for you as a primary mentor, that's something to discuss with them about whether or not they have interest in pursuing field membership in your field if they are not already affiliated with your graduate field. So there's an additional question. I often have this question about mentorship, usually the personal ones. Why is this person helping me? Something I am only on the receiving side of. Is it a good question to ask myself and maybe even them? And should I do something actively to make our interaction rewarding to them? I think this is a great series of related questions. And I think that you would likely get lots of different responses from different folks. So I think those are questions to get multiple perspectives on. Ideally, as you go through the course of a mentoring relationship, there will be mutual benefits. But I think it's perfectly understandable and reasonable that when you are in that initiation stage, when you're just entering a mentoring relationship, that it's OK if you're the primary beneficiary at that stage. You likely will be giving something to them. But I wouldn't put that pressure on yourself immediately, because this is also something that in most cases, people are really invested in working with their graduate students. This is part of the role and responsibility of faculty, especially in a research focused institution, that they are mentoring and supporting that next generation of researchers and graduate and professional students. So yes, I think it's a reasonable question to ask yourself. But don't try to put too much pressure on yourself early on. And it is something that you can discuss. But I think first, give yourself time to establish a relationship and mutual trust, and so that you can be in a place where you can be more vulnerable with that person. I hope that helped, Arsh.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. If it-- so I've got another person who's going to post. They're having a little bit of trouble getting their questions through in the main chat. So they're going to try and post to me privately. But in the meantime, while we're talking about that, so Sara and I have been doing a lot of workshops with faculty over the last year or two as we've started to roll out this Faculty Advancing Inclusive Mentoring initiative. And one of the questions-- we use Padlets with faculty, too-- we've been asking them their goals for working with graduate students, and then challenges that they encounter in working with graduate students. And it's really interesting to say-- to see across different fields where there's commonalities and where there's things that are unique to a specific field. In general, I hope this is reassuring for you. A lot of faculty we've been interacting with, even if they've been here for a long time, they really see a lot of benefits in working with the next generation of younger researchers, the excitement, the ideas, the energy that they can bring to studying the research, helping develop and build new colleagues, and helping younger people at a formative stage of their careers, thinking about what they want to do next and helping them develop and find direction about where to go. These are really common answers that we get.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And when we use the word "younger," what we're talking about is not necessarily your age of entry into graduate education, but your stage of where you are, so that you are part of that earlier next generation of researchers, because we have

people that come into graduate studies at various junctures of life, or some folks who are switching disciplines altogether. And so they are-- they may have already-- we've had doctors and lawyers who, all of a sudden, who have intentionally made a shift to wanting to come into a research degree program. So those are things to keep in mind. But absolutely, what Colleen just shared is on point. And then also thinking about, we experience things differently based on our perspectives, our lived experiences, where we were, the institutions that we were at. And so sometimes you're bringing in a way of thinking about a problem in a very different lens. And so that can lead a group to maybe go in a different direction that they otherwise might not have without your perspective there. So those are great benefits as well.

COLLEEN MCLINN: OK. Clarifying question. OK. So I thought we'd addressed this already because I was misinterpreting the question. But the question was, could we provide approaches to, Sara and I, how we might be receptive to approaches from people interested in our mentorship? And that's a different lens on it that I thought-- I thought prior, the question was asking for examples of how students could go about this. I mean, it is, in a way. But it's like Sara and I thinking about ourselves being approached by other people. It's a really good question. So I mean, one of the things that I do in my role with career and professional development, I tend to focus more on work personally with students interested in academic careers. So I do consultations and things like that. And so I just have a bookings form that people can meet with me about different subjects. And I also try to indicate, in seminars and workshops and webinars and things that I do, that I'm happy to meet with people if they want advice and input on their academic job search process and their application materials. And so that would be completely normal for me to be approached just by someone who's interested in having that kind of input and consultation and gaining advice, and then also someone to use as a sounding board for responding to their initial approach, and if there's ways that they could be tweaking their approach to the job search, or ways that they could be exploring other careers they haven't been thinking about. I've definitely appreciated just a chance to let a relationship develop naturally, organically as well, so seeing people in multiple workshops, or hearing from people. One of the more, I think, meaningful relationships that I developed with a graduate student who ended up-- is now an alum who's a faculty member elsewhere, but definitely had, in some ways, a non-linear path, and decided after leaving here with a PhD in biomedical engineering to apply to a specific cancer research program where they were going to get a master's of public health and work on applied projects in public health along the way as part of their career. That person would follow up with me fairly regularly after workshops and events that they participated in and just always have so many interesting ideas and questions and thoughts. And does something like this exist for graduate students that exists for undergrads? Or could we do something like this? Could I volunteer to do something like this? And so that level of interest really made an impact on me. And when they were later in their career, trying to apply for a really competitive program to have a fellowship in the fall semester, to develop a new first-year writing seminar and then two in the spring semester, deliver that brand new first-year writing seminar they developed. That was just an easy yes for me in terms of thinking about

the meaningful interactions I'd had with that person over a period of time, and being able to write them a strong letter of support. I was really honored that they invited me to write that letter, because I think they could only submit two letters for that. So they picked someone more disciplinary and then me, that knew their interest in teaching and in communicating about research.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And I would just share the ways in which I engage with students are variable because of the way my role intersects with the work of other colleagues within the graduate school, but also with partners beyond the graduate school. So there are students who may be part of particular cohorts or programs. Some of you here today might be Dean's Scholars. And so that's a group where I tend to have a higher level of engagement. But I also work with a number of graduate student organizations that are represented on our graduate and professional student Diversity Council. And so I work very closely with the leaders of those organizations and the emerging leaders. So those are other ways in which I've cultivated strong mentoring relationships with students, or those who are seeking to be engaged. Other students, it's been because they're interested in a similar career pathway, or there's some aspect of my identity that is not represented in the faculty, maybe, for example, within their program. And so just sometimes having somebody that they could come to and have conversations who are like, oh, you get it because of some aspect of shared experience or identity. So that's something that has been cultivated over time as well. So students reach out to all of us all the time. Sometimes it's because they're trying to navigate a challenge, a problem, or they're looking for advice on certain things. And sometimes it's just they're seeking to cultivate relationships. And so we are open and welcoming of that.

COLLEEN MCLINN: Yeah. And another thing that just occurred to me. So on the more professional mentorship, role modeling, advice, direction, there's a concept of informational interviews, which you may be familiar with. So our colleagues at Cornell Central Career Services for the whole university, they have a really nice career development toolkit in Canvas that you can enroll in. And in that career development toolkit, it has some example questions and things for if you wanted to do an informational interview with someone. So this is the kind of thing that people sometimes request to do an informational interview with me about my perspective on getting a PhD in ecology, evolution, and behavior, and then knowing by the end of my PhD program that I was more interested in a career that was at the intersection of education, public outreach, science communication, and these kind of things. Before I worked at the graduate school, I was at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology doing extension and education work for all ages, but K-12 students and adult learners as well. And so sometimes people will want to meet for just an hour and talk about, what were the decision points that I made along the way? Or what are some considerations or possibilities or things like that that might inform how they want to approach their exploration of career options? And so that's a completely valid type of mentorship, too. And Sara and I have been actually piloting an activity called power mentoring sessions, where we're bringing in, for example, faculty members from other universities that bring really distinct perspectives on

their lived experiences, and that they can meet with a cohort of people for a limited period of time, like an hour or 90 minutes, and answer questions, and that the group can collectively learn from them, but without it needing to be an ongoing formalized relationship in the long term.

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: And I see that one of the questions in the chat was, what are some of the challenges that advisors have with students? And it's really interesting because some of the challenges that you all have come up with, not all of them, but there is a sharp intersection with some of the challenges that they're experiencing. And a lot of times, probably the most common are challenges around expectations, so like not clearly understood or clearly communicated expectations. And so that's something that's on the responsibility of both people. There are challenges related to how they're engaging within the group. So some of you may be in disciplines where your relationship is going to be really one-to-one with a faculty member because perhaps you're a humanist, for example. So that's a very individualized pathway. But others of you are in disciplines where you're going to be part of a research group. And so whenever you bring together a group of people, you have all kinds of different human behaviors that come up. Positive, but also sometimes challenging. Not everyone always gets along, or there can be challenges with how people engage with each other. So sometimes those are challenges that we've heard come up from faculty, is just managing the group and how people are working with each other. So it's not just about the individual relationship. But it's like, how are you working together in that research group? I think also some of the challenges that have come up-- I'm trying to think about the word clouds and the different exercises that we've come up with faculty is-- what are some of the other ones that come up, Colleen?

COLLEEN MCLINN: So I was going to say time management, and just having multiple mentees that want and need different approaches sometimes, so having to tailor, I mean, manage your time to work as much as you'd like to if you're supporting multiple graduate students, but also tailoring your approach to individuals who might have different working styles and preferences. And some of the things that come up sometimes that's a little more humorous is boundaries, faculty members sharing, well, they're telling me about their relationship issues, and I don't really want to know that much detail. So figuring out how to communicate how much-- how-- or culturally, sometimes people have asked me, in my culture, it's not as common to be as open and to talk about all the details of what might be considered private information. And so how can I show that I care and I support my students, but without necessarily crossing that boundary into being "friends" sharing?

SARA XAYARATH HERNANDEZ: So we have some additional time. But we also know that your time is valuable and important as well. So we'll officially come to a close. So those of you who need to step out, we completely understand. You can go ahead. If there's anyone who would like to stick around to engage in more conversation, we will stick around for a bit longer. Olivia is also here. So there's a good opportunity to meet Olivia, who's on our graduate student life team and who works really directly with students. But with that, we thank you for your time and for engaging. And we hope that you will continue to engage in

the primer series, but also in some of the other programs and events that are provided by the graduate school and support your progression and success as students at Cornell.

COLLEEN MCLINN: And thank you all so much for being here, for making the time for this session, which is a little longer than some of the others, and just all your really thoughtful questions and ideas.