Instructor: Dr. Laura Oxtoby
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Office hours: I’m available for short meetings M-F after 1:30 pm. For longer discussions, please make an appointment.

General class times and locations:
Thursday 4-6 pm Murie 230
VCON option (session recordings available on Blackboard)

Course overview
Effective mentoring skills are extremely valuable for success as scientists and teachers, yet are rarely taught. This course provides a forum for graduate students to develop their mentoring philosophy and build effective mentoring skills. This course seeks to provide a discussion and learning environment for accelerating the process of learning to be a successful mentor. Through a mentoring practicum, in-class activities, writing projects, and assigned readings, students will consider their mentoring philosophy, articulate it, anticipate challenges and practice effective solutions to a variety of mentoring issues.

Prerequisites
There are no required prerequisites for this course, and no prior experience in mentoring is required. The course targets graduate students in all scientific fields, and is particularly geared toward graduate students in the Scientific Teaching and Outreach (STO) graduate certificate program. Other early career participants (e.g., research professionals and other staff, and post-doctoral researchers) are welcome, space permitting.

Course materials
• Other resources (including journalism articles, essays, book chapters, and audio/video clips) will also be assigned on an ad hoc basis for background and discussion. These will be provided electronically by the instructor through Blackboard.
Course goals and student learning objectives
- Differentiate among roles of Advisor, Teacher, Mentor, and Leader
- Design and evaluate various approaches to mentoring and advising
- Develop a mentoring philosophy and articulate it in written form
- Build a personal step-by-step guide for initiating and maintaining a healthy mentoring relationship
- Develop a proposed project for a student or group of students
- Learn to communicate more effectively with students and mentees
- Prepare to work well with students of diverse learning and communication styles, personal styles, experiences, ethnicities, nationalities, and gender.
- Prepare to resolve an array of mentoring and advising issues through case studies, discussion, role playing and/or written reflection.

Course format
Assigned readings and in-class activities will be the springboard for discussions. Regular short readings will be assigned from the required text, and additional readings will be provided in electronic form through Blackboard. A variety of scientifically supported active learning teaching techniques will be incorporated into the class to engage students with a diversity of learning styles and to promote engagement. Writing skills will be developed through peer and instructor feedback to written work, with opportunities for revision in major assignments.

Assessment
Students will be given a pass/fail grade based on evaluation by the instructor on their attendance at 14 sessions. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Absences may be excused with permission in advance for valid reasons (e.g. family medical, scientific conferences).

Grading scheme
14 pts participation during the sessions
14 pts completion of reflection statements after each session
14 pts class discussion leadership (preparation and self-evaluation)
48 pts quality of assignments (4 assignments, 12 points each)
10 pts comprehension of the material as evidenced in assignments, discussion, and presentations

Total points possible: 100 pts
Pass >80% of points Fail < 80% of points

Late policy
Assignments turned in after the deadline will have 1 points deducted per day it is late. Exceptions may be made in the case of excused absences due to documented family/medical or other reasons or when arrangements have been made with instructor in advance. In general, when an absence is anticipated due to travel or other conflicts, work should be turned in ahead of time.
Support services
Instructor is happy to meet individually with students during office hours or by appointment. For additional guidance with writing, you are encouraged to work with your peers and/or consult the UAF Writing Center.

Students with disabilities
UAF is committed to equal opportunity for all students. Students with even minor disabilities, students who are the first in their families to attempt a four-year college degree, or students whose incomes are low, have opportunities for tutorial and other forms of support from the office of Disability Services or the office of Student Support Services. If you need classroom accommodations or other support, please meet with me during office hours as soon as possible to let me know; and please make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services and Student Support Services, to enlist the appropriate support. I will collaborate to provide the appropriate accommodations and supports or services to assist you in meeting the goals of the course.

Schedule of sessions
Please see Blackboard for details on reading assignments, in class activities, recordings of our sessions, and other announcements. The instructor will update Blackboard throughout the semester.

8/31  Session 1: What is a mentor?
9/7   Session 2: Basics of communicating
9/14  Session 3: Teaching/mentoring overlap
9/21  Session 4: Building and evolving a one-on-one mentoring relationship
9/28  Session 5: Leadership and team management
10/5  Session 6: Experiences in graduate school
10/12 Session 7: Attending to equity/ the value of diversity
10/19 Session 8: Identifying challenges and issues
10/26 Session 9: Resolving challenges and issues: Part 1
11/2  Session 10: Resolving challenges and issues: Part 2
11/9  Session 11: Science career advice for undergraduate and graduate students
11/16 Session 12: Mentoring philosophies: Peer review and discussion
11/30 Session 13: Seeking our own mentors
12/7  Session 14: Review and wrap up