

## **Matthew Allen's Mentoring Statement**

My mentoring philosophy is centered on preparing students to be complete scientists. To prepare students in this way involves rigorous scientific training in addition to a wide range of skills including communication, ethics, and networking. I constantly seek to improve my mentoring skills by learning from other outstanding mentors and implementing best practices in mentorship. While preparing students to compete for positions post-graduation, I also take time to learn each student's specific strengths and weaknesses to tailor their graduate education to make them more complete as a researcher by addressing their weaknesses and building upon their strengths. Furthermore, graduate school comes at a difficult time in the lives of many students, and I strive to accommodate any life issues that students encounter along their graduate journey, and I continue to serve as a mentor long after they graduate.

In practice, I interact with students during weekly scheduled one-on-one meetings where we discuss research progress, publication drafts, career goals, programmatic requirements, and anything else the students need to discuss. I also walk through the laboratory daily (during non-pandemic times) to help students that need help on an informal basis. I strive to be accessible to students as much as possible. At the same time, it is my obligation as a Ph.D. mentor to help students become independent thinkers. I use my weekly meetings with students to help achieve this. For example, during a student's first year, meetings might focus on laboratory techniques, data interpretation, or my recommendations for scientists to follow in the literature. As a student progresses into the second and third year, our conversations shift from being driven by me to being influenced by both of us. Students at this point often bring ideas to our meetings, and I discuss the ideas with them and share my insight from experience on things to try and things to avoid. Beyond the third year, students start to be the main drivers of the conversations, and often I find myself learning from them about new science that they discovered. Throughout the course of a Ph.D.-worth of these meetings I learn the student's career goals and set up opportunities for networking to help them achieve their goals.

All Ph.D. students that have graduated from my laboratory have published multiple peer-reviewed articles describing their research, and graduate students wrote the first drafts of all of these manuscripts. I subsequently worked with students through rounds of revisions to improve both the manuscript and their ability to communicate science. Beyond scientific interactions with students, I incorporate ethics, safety, communication (written and oral), and professional-networking training into group meetings and regular interactions with students. I send all of the Ph.D. students in my research group to scientific meetings and prepare them with networking tips and assignments prior to the meetings. I also encourage students to take advantage of career- and professional-development events at WSU.

The bonds that I build with graduate students last well beyond their time at WSU. Alumni from my research group often call for career advice years after leaving my group, and I always do my best to help them. Mentoring graduate students is the most satisfying part of my job. I am deeply indebted to the students who spend their time with me to discover new science.