

NCFR Mentoring Academy Ethical Guidelines

The [NCFR Mentoring Academy](#) aims to advance the discipline of Family Science by supporting and encouraging the professional development of graduate students and early-career Family Science professionals.

Central to the mission is cultivating and nurturing relationships among NCFR members that provide guidance for navigating issues related to educational and career development, equity and diversity, and work-life integration.

Purpose of Ethical Guidelines

- These ethical guidelines were developed to increase the level of professional and ethical consciousness in the mentoring relationship, to encourage ethical practice, and to provide guidance in navigating ethical issues.
- Participants also will abide by the NCFR Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Family Scientists. The essence of the NCFR principles and guidelines are reiterated below and tailored more specifically to mentoring relationships for clarity. Read the full [NCFR Ethical Principles and Guidelines for Family Scientists](#).

General Guidelines

- Mentors and mentees will establish a mutually beneficial relationship aimed at developing professional expertise and avoid advancing one's personal self-interests.
- Mentors and mentees will respect each other's time and other responsibilities and ensure they set reasonable, and appropriate goals for the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors and mentees will respect the privacy and confidentiality of the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors and mentees are responsible for cultivating a respectful relationship based on the inherent dignity of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, parental status, religion, national origin, ability, or socioeconomic status.
- Mentors and mentees will avoid inflicting harm (i.e., neglect, abandonment, exploitation, boundary violations).
- Mentors and mentees should separate sexual and romantic relationships from the mentoring relationship and avoid developing inappropriate relationships while performing mentor and mentee roles in the Mentoring Academy.

- Mentors and mentees will be mindful of sexual harassment and avoid behaviors that are considered harassing. Sexual harassment involves unwelcomed intimate and sexual advances, requests, or other conduct of a sexual nature which is used as grounds for providing benefits or services for terms of or conditions of employment, or for the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's learning or work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or working environment. Such things as inappropriate hugging, touching, or language are considered harassment.
- Mentors and mentees share responsibility for an amicable end to the mentoring relationship when it has achieved its purpose.
- Both mentors and mentees have the right to dissolve the relationship. However, both mentors and mentees have responsibility for respectfully discussing the matter together as part of mutual learning.
- Mentors and mentees have a responsibility to acknowledge and respond to any ethical issues (such as conflicts of interest) that may arise during a mentoring relationship at the earliest opportunity.
- Mentors and mentees should be aware of their rights and any complaints procedures established by NCFR and the Mentoring Academy.
- Mentors and mentees each hold the responsibility of reporting any violation of the ethical guidelines to the NCFR Mentoring Academy. Please contact NCFR's membership staff at membership@ncfr.org.

Additional Guidelines for Mentors

- Mentors should be attuned to the natural power imbalance inherent within the mentoring relationship and therefore be cognizant of the mentee's rights and responsibilities. Mentors will strive to center the development of the mentee within the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors will ensure the mentee accepts increasing responsibility for managing the relationship; the mentor will empower them to do so and will promote the mentee's autonomy.
- Mentors will not work beyond the bounds of their capability, experience, and expertise. Where appropriate, mentors should seek advice or refer mentees to appropriate resources.
- Mentors should be mindful when offering feedback and ensure that it is constructive rather than critical.
- Mentors will maintain their professional competence through participation in continuous professional development.

Additional Guidelines for Mentees

- Mentees will accept mutual responsibility for managing the mentoring relationship. For example, they may take the lead in managing mentoring sessions and meeting times.
- Mentees will strive for personal and professional growth and practice self-reflexivity regarding areas of growth and improvement.
- Mentees will be open to constructive feedback and varying points of view.