

# Finding a Faculty Mentor<sup>1</sup>

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## Benefits of Faculty Mentors

- Offer you informed advice
- Stimulate your professional and personal growth
- Introduce you to the culture of a discipline or profession
- Instill intellectual confidence, deeper knowledge, and skills
- Write letters of recommendation on your behalf

## Identifying a Potential Faculty Mentor

1. Talk to professors or the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) in your department to identify potential mentors or research opportunities.
2. Browse department and research centers and institute webpages for faculty with similar research areas and interests. ([www.nd.edu/academics/centers-institutes/](http://www.nd.edu/academics/centers-institutes/))
3. Attend networking events, such as lectures, conferences, receptions, etc.
4. Consider a “Mentor Committee” comprised of faculty from different areas who can help you develop technical skills, research focus, and wider area expertise related to your project.
5. Read recent publications by faculty to become familiar with their research interests.

## Preparing for the Research Conversation

Consider the following questions as you formulate your strategy:

*Note: You do not need to address all of these in your response.*

1. Will the conversation be in person or via email?
2. What questions will you ask the professor about their research?
3. What do you know about their research?
4. What have they published and how can you incorporate this information into the conversation?
5. What commonalities exist between your academic/professional interests and those of the professor?
6. How will you discuss your skills and experience?
7. Why do you want this position?
8. What questions will you ask about the research position?

## Asking for a Letter of Recommendation

Ask for a recommendation letter at least *4-6 weeks* before the deadline. Be sure to provide:

1. Drafts of the application materials
2. A resume or CV
3. Copies of relevant assignments, papers, or projects
4. Deadline information and detailed submission instructions

*\* It is the student's responsibility to make sure that their faculty mentor submits their recommendation letter correctly and in a timely manner. Grant applications missing recommendation letters will not be reviewed. \**

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<sup>1</sup> Mentor materials borrowed/adapted from “Getting Started Series: Mentor Workshop” by the Office for Undergraduate Research, University of South Florida.





## Researching a Faculty Mentor

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Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Research Agenda/Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

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Professional Affiliations: \_\_\_\_\_

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Recent Publications: \_\_\_\_\_

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Other Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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