Tenets of a Positive Student-Mentoring Relationship

Like any good relationship, the relationship between students and mentors works best when both people, and the institution in which they work, fulfill certain commitments. The following expectations are adapted from the *Compact Between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Research Advisors* published by the Association of American Medical Colleges in 2008 and available in full at www.aamc.org/gradcompact. These tenets should help guide your relationship with your BRAiN mentor and research mentors in graduate school and beyond.

Commitments of BRAiN Students

• I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree. I will be committed to my education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom and the research laboratory. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation,
engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards.

**• I will meet regularly with my research advisor and provide him/her with updates on the
progress and results of my activities and experiments.**

• I will work with my research advisor to develop a project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to meet the established deadlines.

• I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of the BRAiN program and my institution. I will commit to meeting these requirements, including teaching responsibilities.

• I will attend and participate in laboratory meetings, seminars and journal clubs that are part of my educational program.

• I will comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones. I will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional safe laboratory practices and animal-use and human-research policies at my institution.

• I will be a good lab citizen. I will agree to take part in shared laboratory responsibilities and will use laboratory resources carefully and frugally. I will maintain a safe and clean laboratory space. I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all laboratory personnel.

• I will maintain a detailed, organized, and accurate laboratory notebook. I am aware that my original notebooks and all tangible research data are the property of my institution

but that I am able to take a copy of my notebooks with me after I complete my thesis/dissertation.

• **I will discuss policies on work hours, sick leave and vacation with my research advisor and program staff**. I will consult with my advisor and notify fellow lab members in advance of any planned absences.

• **I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor**. I will work with my advisor to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication in a timely manner prior to my graduation.

• **I acknowledge that it is primarily my responsibility to develop my graduate career**. I will seek guidance from my research advisor, BRAiN program staff, other mentors, and any other resources available for advice on career plans.

Commitments of Research Advisors

• **I will be committed to the life-long mentoring of the student**. I will be committed to the education and training of the BRAiN student as a future member of the scientific community.

• **I will be committed to the research project of the BRAiN student**. I will help to plan and direct the student's project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion.

• **I will be committed to meeting one-on-one with the student on a regular basis.**

• **I will be committed to providing financial and other resources for the student as appropriate, in order for him/her to conduct research.** I will expect the graduate student to share common laboratory responsibilities and utilize resources carefully and frugally.

• **I will be knowledgeable of, and guide the graduate student through, the requirements and deadlines of the BRAiN program as well as those of the institution.**

• **I will lead by example and facilitate the training of the student in complementary skills needed to be a successful scientist, such as oral and written communication skills, grant writing, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism.**

• **I will discuss authorship policies regarding presentations and papers with the student**. I will acknowledge the student's scientific contributions to the work in my laboratory.

• I will encourage the graduate student to attend scientific/professional meetings and help the student prepare for such activities.

• I will provide career advice and assist in finding a position for the student following his/her graduation. I will provide honest letters of recommendation for his/her next phase of professional development. I will also be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals.

• I will provide for every student under my supervision an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment.

• Throughout the student's time in my laboratory, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful. I will foster the student's professional confidence and encourage critical thinking, skepticism and creativity.