

SEAS Values Statement for Ph.D. Student Advising

This document complements the [university guidelines](#) for students and faculty members to promote good mentoring relationships between advisers and advisees.

Faculty will adhere to and uphold a shared set of values and guidelines for conduct towards SEAS Ph.D. students that is ethical, respectful, and professional in all circumstances.

We regard doctoral students as scientists in training and potential future colleagues. We see them as active rather than passive participants in the research enterprise. We will guide them to become what they aspire to be, subject to constraints of resources, and regard their journey in our research group as a part of that process.

Ph.D. advising norms:

1. Meet advisees on a regular basis to make research progress and ensure that they meet milestones (qualifiers, candidacy, graduation) in a timely fashion.
2. Provide advisees with timely, constructive, and specific feedback in written form, such as through annual reviews and individual development plans.
3. Develop advisees professionally into independent researchers instead of focusing solely on the faculty's own scientific pursuits and recognitions.
4. Adapt to each advisee's individual strengths and areas of improvement instead of imposing a rigid or one-size-fits-all blueprint.
5. Set high expectations of Ph.D. Advisees during their roughly 5-6 year journey toward becoming an independent researcher, through timely and rigorous research that leads to publications at top conferences and journals.
6. Develop research group culture that promotes inclusion and forbids discrimination by race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status, or other legally protected classes.
7. Give advisees and postdocs due credit for scientific contributions on research papers and artifacts.
8. Be flexible in granting advisees breaks and reasonable time away from research.
9. Accommodate advisees with medical or personal issues, including allowing them to opt-in to leaves of absence.
10. Seek assistance with challenging situations from the department or school in a timely manner. This should be done before pursuing an alternative advising assignment or different financial support arrangements for an advisee.
11. Seek prior and written permission from the department graduate chair and/or school graduate associate dean before involving advisees in additional research or volunteer opportunities outside program requirements. Examples include involving advisees as

significant primary authors on PI grant proposals for extended periods or participating in the advisor's extramural activities.

12. Provide assignments that are directly related to advisees' educational, scientific/engineering, and professional development.
13. Use respectful language in interactions with advisees.
14. Report any inappropriate treatment of an advisee – whether by another student, a postdoc or a faculty member –to the department graduate chair and/or school graduate associate dean.

Confidentiality and conflict resolution:

- Students can report concerns or incidents by choosing from [multiple communication channels](#) that they are most comfortable with, including any faculty within or outside the department, graduate coordinator, graduate chair, department chair, associate dean of graduate programs, staff from the Research and Administrative Services office, anonymous web-based reporting, and the university ombudsman.
- The faculty or staff member will discuss the degree of confidentiality with the reporting student before acting, protect the student from any adverse repercussions or retaliation that may result from the action, and follow due process for conflict resolution (next page).

Remedial action in event of violation: The department or school will undertake remedial action towards faculty members who violate the code of conduct. The action will range from mediation and counseling to imposition of sanctions in extreme or recurring cases. Specifically, the department or school will:

- Initially attempt to mediate and counsel through an ombudsperson or counselor.
- If there are repeated violations after mediation and counseling, issue written notices which may be associated with the faculty member's personnel record.
- Prolonged or serious violations may warrant the imposition of major sanctions (e.g. temporary suspension of the faculty member from admitting or advising Ph.D. students).