

MIG LESSONS LEARNED SUMMARY

1. CLINICAL CO-MENTORSHIP

- Have an oversight/advisory committee or individuals dedicated to selecting the most appropriate co-mentors.
- But if you don't have the resources to provide this formal oversight, have students rotate through at least one translational research lab.
- We need to teach clinicians how to talk to students – provide them with training on how to mentor graduate students.
- Having the MIG students present their research to the clinicians helps them understand how to talk to the students.

1. CLINICAL CO-MENTORSHIP (cont.)

- Evaluate the outcome of the mentoring by having the students evaluate the mentors and vice versa.
- Discourage students from picking mentors who are chiefs or department chairs – they usually don't have time to invest in the relationship.
- Be sure to have an “opt-out” option if the relationship isn't working.
- Students may relate better to younger co-mentors.
- Use upper-level MSTP students for peer-mentoring.

2. CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

- Shadowing clinicians without engaging students in the case or discussing the experience afterwards is very ineffective.
- Viewing an autopsy for the deadliest diseases (e.g. cancer) is a very effective experience.
- Having the students keep a formalized log of the clinical experience is a good way to keep track of and assess the experience.
- Following a patient for an extended period of time is a very effective experience.

2. CLINICAL EXPERIENCE (cont.)

- Every program needs to have a stated intent of what the student will get out of the clinical experience.
- The students should get to know the Attendings because they are always there and they usually take time to discuss the individual cases in advance of seeing the patient.
- Be aware of student saturation – they don't need ten weeks in one area.
- Some PI's complain that 8-10 weeks is too long to be away from the lab.

3. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- It's not important to have breadth, but to have depth. It's not important to gloss over everything to teach everything. Teaching graduate students is easier and more fun because you can teach discovery and go into depth.
- Interactive learning is very effective. Students watch lectures online before coming to class. Students apply the information they learned during class. You can hire a curriculum fellow to go over lectures with the presenter ahead of time to make sure they don't revert to giving their canned lecture.
- Student-led courses are very effective.

3. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (cont.)

- Have students do their qualifying exam on their thesis topic. This cuts down on time-to-degree.
- Have students write proposals about doing translational research; it gives them a leg-up in grant competitions – it's unusual, desirable, and shows institutional support for the student and his/her study.
- Make sure you give students time to reflect on and digest new information and experiences before bombarding them with more.

4. COMMUNITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

- Get the incoming students and program alumni together at the beginning and end of the program.
- Try to get more faculty and alumni to participate in these activities.
- Having events at a faculty member's home helps to put students at ease.
- Science and beer work well together – up to a point.
- You don't need to do too much community building or they won't do it.

OTHER IDEAS?

- Set up a website where MIG PDs can post lessons learned and best practices; ask questions; share resources, etc.
- HHMI should think of developing an online biostatistics course.
- MIG programs should exchange online educational components to take advantage of what another institution has rather than reinventing the wheel.
- All MIG students can be invited to all student symposiums hosted by each other's institutions. Funding will be up to each institution. Students want to especially to meet and network with PDs for possible postdocs.
- We should think about how to build a community of faculty who are committed to this and can build collaboration. How can we use this collaboration to lead to more translational research?