

## Frequently Asked Questions: Faculty Coaches

### What is expected of coaches, including the time commitment?

#### *Required:*

- Attend pre-program Coaches' Orientation with Boot Camp Manager (1-2 hrs)
- Coordinating, cooperating with a co-coach
- Attend Opening Ceremony and lead table discussions/introductions of assigned peer groups (2 hrs)
- Attend small peer group meetings once per month (in coordination with co-coach) and lead group through activities and discussions. Coaches will be asked to submit dates of meetings so the Boot Camp Manager can include them on mentees' activities reports. (10 hrs)
- Review mentees' research roadmaps, specific aims, and final proposals (10-20 hrs)
- Attend one mid-program progress meeting with other coaches and Boot Camp Manager (1-2 hrs)
- Participate in a NIH Mock Study Section event (2 hrs)
- Contact Boot Camp Manager immediately to communicate any unmet needs of the group
- Communicate with mentees' Chairs regarding progress as desired/requested
- Attend Closing Ceremony (1 hr)
- Evaluate program experience (1 hr)

#### *Optional:*

- Attend widely acclaimed one-day workshop, "Write Winning Grant Proposals", presented by [Grant Writers' Seminars & Workshops, LLC](#)
- Attend mentees' departmental Chalk Talks

Total estimated time commitment is approximately 30-50 hours (excluding optional components).

### Why work in small groups?

Small group peer mentoring fosters camaraderie, support, and cooperation. Several articles have described the success of peer mentoring (e.g., Johnson KS, Hastings SN, Purser JL, Whitson, HE. 2011. The Junior Faculty Laboratory: An innovative model of peer mentoring; *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 86, No. 12).

An additional benefit is stimulation of interdisciplinary and translational research. Teams of 4-8 mentees will be assembled according to scientific commonality with the coaches (e.g., clinical research, chronic health conditions), but who come from different departments and represent different scientific perspectives, disciplines, or methodologies.

While coaches are only committed to attending one small group meeting per month, the members of the small group may decide to meet more often on their own.

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### What are the rewards/compensation for serving as a coach?

While the biggest compensation will be the satisfaction of contributing to the success of new investigators, each coach will receive \$5,000 discretionary funding, plus \$500 for hosting expenses per team.

### What are some resources available to you as a coach?

Coaches will be asked to attend Coaches' Orientation, where you will receive a more comprehensive overview of the program and some resources that will help you as coaches. Mentees will be attending the "Write Winning Grant Proposals" workshop presented by Grant Writers' Seminars & Workshops, LLC, and coaches are welcome to attend. At the workshop each mentee will receive a copy of the workbook, *The Grant Application Writer's Workbook* (NIH version). Coaches who also attend will receive a copy of the book upon request at no cost.

Another planned large group activity is a NIH Mock Study Section, and coaches are expected to participate. Coaches will select 1-2 proposals from the mentee cohort and emulate a peer review discussion.

It's expected that chairs will be interested in the progress of their mentees, and coaches are encouraged to contact them, as well as the Boot Camp manager with progress reports or concerns.

In addition, coaches may contact the Boot Camp Manager to request assistance with locating resources to meet needs identified by the group throughout the program (e.g., names of biostatisticians, speakers from IRB, IACUC, etc.).

### Who is eligible to apply as a coach?

Eligibility for coaches includes:

- History of funding as a Principal Investigator (PI) on NIH grant applications (i.e. R01, U01, P01, etc.)
- Rank of associate or full professor
- Demonstrated interest in mentoring
- Willingness to comply with the Boot Camp schedule and meet the time commitment

Preference will be given to those faculty members who have served as reviewers on NIH study sections.

### How do I apply?

Individuals interested in serving as Faculty Coaches should email a statement of interest and recent version of their NIH biosketch to [somrd@hs.uci.edu](mailto:somrd@hs.uci.edu).

# **Frequently Asked Questions: Faculty Coaches**

## **How does the coach selection process work?**

Applications will be reviewed by UCI leadership with input from Department Chairs.

Selection will be made based on:

- Strength of experience both as an investigator and a mentor, and
- Match with scientific composition of mentee applicants

Preference will be given to coaches who have experience serving on an NIH study section.

The UCI NIH Boot Camp is looking for a diverse cadre of mentors who are willing, above all, to help new investigators prepare good applications – from identifying study sections, contacting Program Officers, and determining the best deadline cycle, to finally submitting a reviewed, competitive proposal.

## **How are small groups formed?**

Experienced Boot Camp coaches will work with the Boot Camp Manager to form small groups. Co-coaches are likewise selected to meet group research characteristics. Some factors include type of research (e.g., clinical, basic, outcomes), subject area, and common methodologies.

## **How will mentee progress be tracked?**

Coaches will be asked to take attendance during small group activities and to provide general information about mentees' progress. In the middle and at the end of program, the Boot Camp Manager will develop an activity report for each mentee and send a copy to both Chair and co-coaches. In addition, any concerns regarding mentees' participation and progress should be communicated to the Boot Camp Manager and mentees' Department chairs as appropriate.

## **Who determines the content of the small group meetings?**

The coaches are responsible for content. It is expected that much of the time will be devoted to individual proposal sections as they are developed by the mentees. Coaches should oversee the discussion to assure that it is respectful and constructive.

There are also topics that coaches are expected to cover throughout the course of the Boot Camp:

- Contacting the Program Officer
- Selecting a study section
- Dealing with reviews, e.g. contacting Scientific Review Officer

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### **What topics should I cover in the small group discussions?**

One of the primary purposes of the small group is to review sections of the mentees' proposals as they are developed. Have the mentees circulate their sections in advance and plan ahead for these reviews.

Additional topics that should be covered as scheduled by the coaches:

- Contacting the NIH Program Officer (PO) – how to select, contact, prepare
- Selecting Study Sections (e.g., match with expertise)
- Biases of Study Sections (e.g., methodology preference)
- Identifying primary reviewers and researching their subject expertise and biases (e.g., look at publications)
- Selecting collaborators
- Time management and maintaining a writing schedule
- Communicating with the Scientific Review Officer or PO after the review
- Tips to write and present information/data succinctly and clearly

The Boot Camp Manager will also provide coaches with a recommended list of topics as well as other resources to facilitate discussion.