Women in Physics Mentoring Program Tips
Mostly taken from the Compass Project at UC Berkeley

1. Meet and check in with your mentee on a regular basis. Being consistent will not only foster trust, it will avoid damaging the relationship should you or your mentee have to cancel on occasion. Establishing a regular schedule is a great item for discussion when you first meet.

2. Find a place to meet that is not distracting and noisy. Meet in a public place, preferably one that is frequented by other students.

3. Define clear expectations and boundaries from the very beginning. Be sure to ask about your mentee’s expectations. Be honest about your own areas of expertise and do not promise anything you cannot deliver. You don’t need to know all the answers, but be supportive and a good resource.

4. If you are meeting with your mentee infrequently, please be sure to communicate that you are available should the need arise and check in on a regular basis. If your mentee wants or needs a mentoring relationship that is more active than you can provide, refer them to additional resources offered through the school (see Campus Resource list).

5. If your mentee is hesitant or inconsistent in contacting you, continue to make a regular effort to build the relationship and meet with each other. If this is a persistent problem, please let me know and I’ll try to help.

6. Share some of your own relevant stories and experiences. Don’t be concerned about knowing everything they need or having the best advice, but share what you can.

7. Offer encouragement in both good times and bad. Be aware of signs of stress from your mentee and of the difference between what is normal and what would require more attention. Is your mentee becoming frustrated by things outside of the purview of your normal rapport?

8. Be aware that all students do not share the same access to academic networks. It is important to ask questions before assuming that your mentee is aware of a resource or skill that may come as second nature to you.

9. Some good, general topics for early discussions are:
   a. Goals, skills and interests
   b. Work and school experiences
   c. Why you both chose your college
   d. Expectations of your school, department and major
   e. Job or career expectations
   f. Favorite television shows or movies
   g. Sports and outside hobbies, both indoor and outdoor
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Campus Resources

- Writing Center
  - offers workshops and individual appointments
  - [http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter](http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter)
- Tutoring
  - through the university: [http://www.tutoring.umd.edu/](http://www.tutoring.umd.edu/)
    - this website seems very sparse and this probably won't offer many upper level physics courses
  - Jane Hessing puts together a list of grad students who tutor
  - SPS also provides drop in tutoring
- Learning Assistance
  - has workshops on a range of topics like time management, test anxiety, etc.
  - offers academic counseling (though Dr. Shukla might be a better starting place for Physics Students)
  - [http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/)
- Sexual Harassment/Assault
  - CARE: [http://www.health.umd.edu/mentalhealth/sarpp](http://www.health.umd.edu/mentalhealth/sarpp)
    - How to Help a Friend page looks especially useful
- Dr. Sonali Shukla, Academic Advisor, Office of Student and Education Services
  - if none of the above resources are sufficient, Dr. Shukla might be able to point the student to others
  - Email: sshukla1@umd.edu
  - Phone: 301-405-5949

Activity Suggestions

- Meals together
  - regular lunches or coffee
  - making dinner together
  - picnics
- Baking
- Movie Night
- Take a walk together

Many of these activities can also be done with another pairing, which can further build community among the department.

For students still in the dorms, getting off campus for a little while is often welcome.