



## Case: Who is a Mentor?

### Key Phrases:

- Understanding the mentoring relationship
- Clarifying expectations
- Establishing boundaries and responsibilities
- Developing a process for evaluation and communication
- Formal and informal mentorship

### David's Perspective:

David is having trouble with his mentor, Ralph. David got to know Ralph during his fellowship, when they had worked together on the consult service. David enjoyed stopping by Ralph's office and discussing his research ideas. He feels that Ralph gave him excellent feedback and ideas about his research. However, since David became a faculty member a year ago, he has felt that Ralph has become less accessible. When David tries to stop by Ralph's office, Ralph is often busy with someone else. Recently, Ralph nominated Tom, another junior faculty member in the division, for a junior faculty fellowship that provides \$50,000 in salary support. David is upset that Ralph did not nominate him for this fellowship and wonders what he should do.

### Ralph's Perspective:

Ralph is an Associate Professor at HMS and a researcher with two RO1s. He also attends on the consult service for 4 weeks each year and enjoys working with the clinical fellows in this context. He received a score outside the funding range on the renewal of one of the RO1s, and he will need to resubmit it. Ralph is a mentor to Tom, a junior faculty member who works in his lab, and he is partially supporting Tom. He is thrilled and relieved that Tom just received a junior faculty fellowship that will provide Tom with enough salary support to fill the gap while Ralph resubmits his RO1. Ralph feels that he really needs to protect his own time now while he reworks his RO1. He wonders what he should do about David, a junior faculty member with whom he worked on the consult service a year ago. David keeps stopping by his office to talk. Ralph likes to talk with David and wants to be supportive but really doesn't have time right now.

### Case Questions:

1. Is Ralph David's mentor?
2. What might Ralph and David have done differently in establishing their relationship?



## Faculty Development & Diversity

3. Whose responsibility is it to guide the formation of the relationship?
4. What might Ralph do differently to create a better environment for David?
5. What might David do from this point on?