Totally & thoroughly confused

Total clarity; I could be the mentor

Wk 1  Wk 2  Wk 3  Wk 4  Wk 5  Wk 6  Wk 7  Wk 8  Wk 9  Wk 10

- elevator talks
- 5-min talks
- this week

- 5-min talks
- this week
How to Conduct Research Meetings

Design
I currently use these during research meetings:
• group 2–3 participants by either sub-discipline or research methods
• find a scientist who is not currently a mentor; an interested outsider for that year
• someone working in the same general research area (or familiar with the same methods)
• sample questions to ask are on the next slide

Conduct
• as we are gathering to start the meeting I give them the blank graph and a pen/pencil and ask them to draw their curve
• conduct the rest of the meeting
• ask them to explain their graphs toward the end, after rapport has been reached with the stranger

When
• we usually do these in about week 8, in place of a third practice talk
• the participants do not need to prepare

Benefits
• the research meetings allow me:
  • to see how well they can talk about their research and answer questions
  • how interested they seem to be in their work
  • glean how well they are getting along with their mentor(s)
• it allows them:
  • opportunity to meet another scientist
  • tap into another school
  • hear about another scientist’s career journey
• the confusion graphs open the door to what can be harder conversations about how their project has gone

Questions? This formative evaluation activity was invented by Dr. Daphne LaDue, 405-325-1898, dzaras@ou.edu.
Sample Questions to Ask During Research Meetings
Do introductions and ask the participants to *briefly* explain their project to the visiting scientist.

**Opener Questions:**
• How are things going?
• What are you doing now in your project?
• What are you finding?

**Methods:**
• How are you approaching your study?
• What would you like to do with your project if you did not have your current limitations (e.g., skills, resources, time)?

**Preliminary Findings:**
• If appropriate, sketch a graph or two and discuss it. (This question sometimes leads to really amazing discussions with the visiting scientist. If you think the student has a graph to sketch, do this question relatively early, as it’ll lead to a whole host of follow-up questions from your guest researcher about the work itself.)
• How will the world be different if you get this right? (E.g., What is the practical basis / why should anyone care about this study? This could lead to discussion of broader impacts of research, if you want to take it in that direction.)

**Nature of Research:**
• Have your research goals changed since the start?
• What do you enjoyed most about conducting research? ... least?
• What aspects of your project have been the hardest? ... easiest?
• What surprised you the most?

**Careers / Graduate School:** (These can reveal a lot about their career/graduate school thinking that you don’t get in surveys.)
• Why did you want to do this REU instead of whatever else you were considering?
• What as your experience told you about potential careers?
• How has REU changed what you want to do? (This can reveal a lot about their career thinking.)
• What is the biggest surprise about what you thought research would be like?
• What do your experiences tell you about whether you would like a career in research?

**Other:**
• If someone asked you for advice, what one course would you recommend that someone take before REU?

*Questions?* This formative evaluation activity was invented by Dr. Daphne LaDue, 405-325-1898, dzaras@ou.edu.