Areas for Change to Advance a Culture of Mentorship and Example Actions
Complied by Janet Branchaw, Christine Pfund, and Melissa McDaniels
CIMER, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Definition
 "Mentorship is a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together over time to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of the relational partners through the provision of career and psychosocial support" (NASEM, 2019). Mentorship includes high quality, evidence-based mentoring support across multiple dimensions for mentees that is provided by individuals, groups, and organizations.

Access
Mentees have access to multiple mentors.

Examples: An institution or program…
- Has and distributes a directory of mentors within the program and more broadly
- Educates mentees on how to articulate their needs, access mentorship supports, and build a supportive mentoring network to address those needs
- Educates mentees about technology-supported mentoring networks such as NRMN, MentorNet, and other social media hashtags
- Supports mentee participation in disciplinary society-sponsored mentoring programs

Quality
Mentorship and training program supports are effective and use evidence-based approaches and tools.

Examples: An institution or program…
- Articulates its mentor-mentee goals and principles
- Offers and strongly encourages participation in evidence-based mentor and mentee training for mentors and mentees
- Has and distributes a list of mentorship supports available
- Requires mentor-mentee agreements that are formally documented in writing
- Makes mentorship resources and mentor-mentee relationship tools and training materials available
- Ensures that mentorship resources and quality mentor-mentee relationships (and resources to support them) are described and discussed at orientations and check-in meetings

Continuous Improvement
Programs regularly assess access to and the quality of training, mentorship, and mentor-mentee relationships…and then address areas for growth and improvement.

Examples: An institution or program…
- Appoints a committee to develop criteria for effective training, mentorship, and mentor-mentee relationships and ways to evaluate them
- Develops guidelines that delineate criteria for evaluating training, mentorship, and mentor-mentee relationship success
- Creates guidelines about managing conflict in the mentor-mentee relationship
- Makes evaluation tools and resources available
- Ensures responsiveness to and resources to address identified areas for improvement in training programs, mentorship supports, and mentor-mentee relationships

Value and Visibility
Institutions and organizations demonstrate their commitment to inclusive excellence through mentorship.

Examples: An institution or program…
- Acknowledges effective, trained mentors and training programs on institution, center, and program websites
- Offers travel and professional development funds for a range of mentoring efforts
- Provides central support for mentor training and rewards time dedicated to mentor training and mentoring activities
- Integrates evidence-based mentee training into training programs
- Integrates valuation of mentoring and mentorship program development and support into mission statements and strategic plans
- Establishes prominent awards to enhance the visibility of quality mentoring and mentorship support

These ideas were built in part upon recommendations from the NASEM Consensus Report "The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM" (2019) and presented at the Understanding Interventions Conference (2023).