Building a
Productive
Relationship with
Your Advisor and
Other Professors

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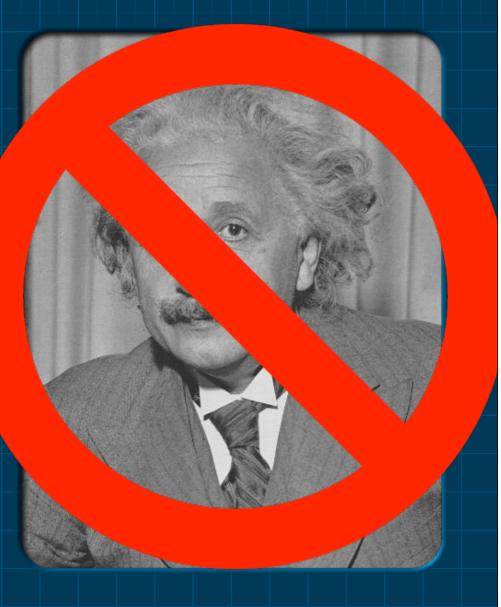


#### Useful Resources

- How to Get the Mentoring You Want: <a href="http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf">http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf</a>
- Professor/Grad Relationships: Maximizing the Mentoring Potential http://www.gradresources.org/articles/prof\_grad.shtml
- How to be a Good Graduate Student <u>http://www.cs.indiana.edu/how.2b/how.2b.html</u>
- So Long, and Thanks for the Ph.D.! <a href="http://www.cs.unc.edu/~azuma/hitch4.html">http://www.cs.unc.edu/~azuma/hitch4.html</a>
- Tomorrow's Professor Listserv http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/index.shtml

### What is an advisor?





#### What is an advisor?

ad•vis•er |əd¹vīzər| (also ad•vi•sor) noun

a person who gives advice, typically someone who is expert in a particular field : the

- Teacher
- Coach
- Guide
- Mentor
- Resource



 This is one of the most important decisions you will make as a graduate student



## How not to choose an advisor...

- On't leave it to chance!
- O Don't pick someone only because they are available, or because they're the only one who works on your preferred area of interest
- Don't pick someone whose "style" doesn't match your needs



# Some questions to ask a prospective advisor

- Ohow many students do you presently have?
- O How are your students supported financially (research grants, teaching assistants, no support)? What do you expect in return?
- Ohow is your research group structured?
- O How many of your students have graduated, and how long did it take on average?
- What are your former students doing now?

### How do you find out more?

- Talk directly to faculty members with whom you might like to work; get a sense of how they interact
- Talk to other graduate students in your department (they always know things...)
- Talk to other professors (they don't always know things...)
- Look up publications, citations, funding history, indications of standing in field

# What can an advisor do for you?

- Teach you about the field
- Guide you in choosing a reasonable and interesting project
- Help you past the obstacles
- Provide you with resources & feedback
- Tailor your experiences to your career goals
- Promote your work to others in the field
- OHelp you get a job! (recommendations)

# What can an advisor not do for you?

- The work! (and the commitment)
- Decide what interests you (choose your passion, drive the bus)
- Write your thesis/dissertation
- Think for you (your goal is to become an <u>independent</u> researcher)

### Advisors are busy people...



- They likely have many other responsibilities, like administrative work, teaching, grant writing, other research
- They may have other students as well
- There are many demands on their time

### ... but not too busy for you!



- A good advisor will always make time for you when you ask... SO ASK!
- Use your time wisely,
   come prepared to every
   meeting with your advisor
- Keep your advisor informed of your progress
- ODon't "disappear"

### What about other faculty?

- You will interact with them in classes and in informal settings
- Their impressions are also important
- They can provide useful feedback and insights from another perspective
- They are also potential mentors (you can never have too many!)
- Don't think of questions as attacks rather, think of them as opportunities or expressions of interest

#### Other advice

- Take every opportunity to present and talk about your work, and to get feedback
  - Olf you can explain it to others, especially nonspecialists, you begin finally to understand it yourself.
  - Oral presentations and talks in classes
  - Conference presentations (oral or poster)
  - Conversation with visiting researchers
  - Talking with other graduate students
  - Tell your Mom! your Dad! your Grandmother! your neighbor! your mail carrier! (you get the picture...)

### Summary Points

- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Don't disappear or hide out
- Show initiative, work hard
- OBe self-motivated "Drive the bus"
- Make time for research every day
- Ask for help when you get stuck
- Take advantage of informal interactions
- Learn about process as well as content
- Interact, present, conferences, network
- Keep your "eyes on the prize"

