August 31 Mentoring Groups: Graduate School Expectations

* **Business:** 
  + Core Course, Journal Club, Essentials Course—everything okay so far?
  + IACUC training – start completing ASAP if you want to join a lab that does animal work (<https://www.aalaslearninglibrary.org/)>
    - For those needing to observe in an animal facility and but don’t have access yet, a lab can fill out a Request For Visitor(s) to Observe Animal Research form (<https://my.acs.ufl.edu/forms/visitorRequest.pdf)> for approval (up to 5 days of visiting)
  + The September GSO General Body Meeting is this Friday (tomorrow!) at noon in R2-265! More pizza!
* **Getting a PhD requires more effort on your part than previous schooling. You are responsible for yourself.** 
  + You alone are expected to keep track of deadlines, registration dates, signing up for insurance, paying student fees, etc.
  + For now, make Brett, Amy, & James your best friends. After you join a concentration, get on good terms with your graduate secretary. They are awesome and helpful and will make your life easier.
  + Read the handbook! It has a lot of important information.
  + Make sure you're turning in journal club reports, rotation reports, and mentor selections on time.
  + Later on: there are specific deadlines to form a committee, have your meetings, and set your qualifying exam. Don't be that person who has no idea of what is going on. You are in charge of setting up your committee meetings. This means finding a date where everyone can attend, booking a room, and making sure the paperwork gets done.
* Take classes seriously. Your GPA can determine whether you get fellowships.
* READ.
  + Keep up with your field. You don't want to miss an article that's super relevant to your research.
  + Explore a bit. Don't get too focused on only your thesis project or your lab’s field.
* Socialize (if you want)
  + The GSO puts on lots of events that are free. It's a great way to meet people and have some fun.
    - You're as involved in the program as you want to be. No one is forcing you at this point (other than journal club and the like).
  + Many other UF organizations to get involved with: GSC, GAU, OGAP (formerly GSAC)
  + UF also has tons of free or very cheap things. Some highlights: all sports except football are free, the Harn Museum (traveling exhibits, Butterfly Garden is awesome), movies once a month, music, comedians, lectures
* Experiments are going to fail. Pretty much everyone hits a point where nothing works for a little bit.
  + Don't give up!
  + Ask for advice. This can be from your mentor, your committee, a faculty member, or even another student. Sometimes you're too close to the project to see the issue.
  + Reading up on your techniques can help. Sometimes you can find tips on how to make something work better.
* Be on the lookout for professional development. There are seminars directly related to this through UF and IDP.
  + Go to conferences. Network. Meet other grad students. Meet the big names in a non-annoying way. Many conferences have sessions for grad students that are free or very inexpensive.
  + Meet seminar speakers who come to UF. There's almost always a lunch or dinner or coffee break where you can introduce yourself and chat.