

Academic relationships: you are not the only dependent variable

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Relationships in academia are not any less complicated in than relationships in life outside it, regardless it is with lab-mates, other fellow students, or with faculty, and administrators. A relationship necessarily requires two, at least two parties. We, as one of the parties may account no more than 50% of the variance, but we most definitely account for some of the variance. And we are both the independent variables and dependent variables, as if there is not enough complexity already.

This talk hopes to be evoke curiosity and mindfulness of the variables that go into an academic relationship and the dynamics of them, the directions of the variables' movement, the interactional effect that hopefully can lead to better recognition and understanding of the effect, independently or interactively, of these variables and how to navigate them.

- ✦ What does it mean “you are not the only dependent variable in the academic relationships”? Each can be and will be affect by the OTHER
- ✦ No “clean slate”
- ✦ Faculty:
 - 1) Was a graduate student, but..
 - 2) “I’ll be a better adult”; **OR** “I went through this and you can and should”;
 - 3) good w/ science ≠ good w/ people, mentoring, in particular.
 - 4) Can NOT read minds but can and will be **confused**; will miss the boat, some of the time!
 - 5) Can and will misunderstand things and be misunderstood
 - 6) “Which year AM I in”?
- ✦ Student: You are NOT a bystander! But the other half of the dyad
 - 1) What does it mean to you as a student? top-down or side by side?
 - 2) Teaching/help as “the pay”.
 - 3) When hurt, say “ouch”:
 - 4) “They should ask” ???
 - 5) Being denial is not the only possibly scenario: to Ask, or not ask
 - 6) Learn to be the PM as you learn to be the PI: “which year am I in?”
 - 7) Get curious about interpersonal dynamics: What else is possible?

Useful interpersonal skills to develop

- 1) Knowing what you want.
- 2) Getting information about the other(s)
- 3) Asking for what you want:
- 4) Negotiating conflicting needs.
- 5) Saying no