

# IOWA ELEVEN COMPETENCIES

The Iowa Eleven are a set of competencies which can support your success as a mentee and may be a good starting point for you to brainstorm **SMART goals** that you would like to work towards with your mentor. Below, find short descriptions of each competency, as well as mentoring specific examples.

---

## **1. Analysis - Detecting patterns and trends across multiple sources of information.**

Example: Talia is a third-year undergraduate student who wants to build her resume in preparation for medical school applications. Her lab mentor is Dr. Yang, who works with Talia on strengthening her research and presentation skills, providing her with several structured opportunities to grow her abilities.

## **2. Collaboration - Working with others toward a common objective by sharing ideas and distributing responsibilities equitably across team members.**

Example: Walter, a second-year graduate student, is part of a mentoring cohort through a structured mentoring opportunity. During the month that the opportunity takes place, he works in small discussion groups with other mentees to reflect on their experiences and build peer accountability.

## **3. Diversity - Having interactions with people of different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences.**

Example: Kiona is a peer mentor to Chavon, a first-year professional student who is seeking out advice when it comes to navigating graduate school. In order to assist him, she listens actively to his experiences and also reaches out to resources to educate herself further on being an effective mentor.

## **4. Ethics - Behaving in an ethical manner and adhering to established code of ethics.**

Example: Elliot, a fourth-year undergraduate, is a first time mentor to Priyanka, a second-year student who is seeking guidance about how to become more confident with her public speaking. In order to be the best mentor they can be, Elliot follows the all of **Ethical Expectations of Mentors** and establishes a relationship of honesty and trust with Priyanka.

## **5. Goals - Creating goals that are measurable and have timetables for completion.**

Example: Annabelle is a recent graduate who has been working in the Communications department for a few months. She is being mentored by Mx. Lee, an alum, on how to use her experience in this university department to transition into a career in Student Affairs. Together, the two of them establish **SMART goals** for Annabelle and track her progress.

**6. Group Development - Helping team members develop a shared sense of purpose, commitment, and trust.**

Example: Minyang is an Honors student who is working in a Biology lab alongside three other undergraduates, all being mentored by the head of the lab, Dr. Abboud. She participates in weekly meetings with Dr. Abboud and the research team, exchanging feedback and thoughts on the week's work in an intentional, productive environment. Dr. Abboud provides various points of discussion and encourages the undergraduates to work together to find solutions, building a shared commitment and sense of purpose within the team.

**7. Problem-Solving - Identifying a variety of potential solutions to a problem and determining the best possible course of action to solve the problem.**

Example: Westley is a first-year doctoral student who is experiencing burnout with regards to his thesis. As soon as he becomes aware of his new pattern of behavior, he sets up a meeting with his mentor, Dr. Moreno, to discuss his issues with her. Together, the two of them discuss several solutions to this obstacle and build a new, realistic schedule for Westley to complete his work. The new plan allows him to take time to restore his energy, but still keeps him on track.

**8. Productive Relationships - Developing relationships with others that are healthy, trusting, and respectful.**

Example: Dr. Grange is a senior professor in the Chemistry department who is being mentored by Dr. Andino, a member of the junior faculty. The two of them have set monthly feedback-focused meetings to reflect on their mentoring relationship and set goals for the next period before their next conversation. Together, they have established a professional and productive working relationship.

**9. Self-Development - Seeking opportunities to better oneself both personally and professionally.**

Example: Layla is a second-year graduate student getting her degree in Educational Measurement and Statistics. She wants to more actively prepare for life after graduation and asks her mentor, Ms. Taylor, about others in her network who may be able to share their career experiences. By further connecting with other professionals, Layla is laying the foundation for her future success.

**10. Verbal Communication - Verbally communicating clearly and concisely.**

Example: Salma is a fourth-year undergraduate who is being mentored by Lorelai, a second-year graduate student. In their monthly meetings, the two of them actively listen to each other, communicating effectively and clearly through their conversations.

**11. Writing - Expressing thoughts in writing in a manner that is clear, logical, and understandable.**

Example: Evelyn is a new hire within the Marketing department; her mentor is Max, a more senior hire. In their mentoring relationship, Evelyn is growing her professional skill set and her career network. Before their meetings, Evelyn typically takes about 20 minutes to reflect on various talking points and share a brief agenda with Max through email. This practice helps Evelyn clarify her thoughts and also strengthen her written communication skills.