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# Successful mentoring at a Faith-based institution: Walking in the footsteps of the Master Teacher

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Advising and mentoring are the key components of a successful college experience. However, mentoring becomes more prominent in a graduate student's life. Loma Linda University (LLU), a faith-based institution, fosters strong student-faculty relationships through its unique values of compassion, excellence and integrity. The purpose of the study was to identify factors that led to successful professional careers of students who worked under the mentorship of an LLU professor, who received several excellence in teaching and research awards. This study comprised of 30 graduate students who were of diverse ethnicities including Caucasian, African American, Indian, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Fijian and Parsi. They belonged to diverse religious backgrounds that included Seventh-day Adventists, Protestants, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. Data was collected over a period of 15 years. Approximately, 40% of the students were environmental health majors; 67% of the students became physicians, dentists or Public Health professionals, 13% became researchers and 13% environmental health professionals. Some pursued careers in environmental toxicology the area of expertise of the mentor. Factors identified for their success in the mentor were: spirituality that encompassed the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ; passion for teaching and research; broad knowledge base and expertise in the specialized discipline, connecting with each student on their own terms-even if those terms may have been foreign to the mentor; compassion, integrity, excellence, teamwork, kindness, trustworthiness, authenticity and honesty. Successful faculty members are not just channels of knowledge and wisdom but rather those who walk in the footsteps of the Master Teacher, serving as a tutor, a professor, a counselor, a spiritual leader, a mentor and a friend.