GRAD 700/701 – Introduction to Professional Development
(2 semesters, 1 credit each semester)

Mission:
To provide training, experience and generational mentoring in the core competencies of scientific professionalism for graduate students and postdoctoral research assistants.

Rationale:
Success in research and research-related fields requires a solid background in a specific discipline and extensive practical experience. However, for individuals to develop into accomplished professionals, training in a wide range of core professional competencies is also needed. These skills include communication, teaching, networking, the ability to work in teams and an ability to perform a realistic evaluation of strengths and weakness in preparation for a competitive job market. Integral to professional development is an appreciation of ethical consequences of our professional actions. In addition, because an increasing proportion of students and postdoctoral fellows make their careers in non-academic positions, training should include exposure to these career paths. This training should also appreciate that mentoring of graduate students is a complex process that—in addition to the team leader (PI or laboratory head) — includes contributions from postdoctoral researchers, other faculty, students and staff.