

# Chapter 3 Resources

## Choosing a Thesis Advisor: Surprise and Success



### Preparation Steps for Chapter 3 Discussion and Activity

- This *Facilitator's Guide* will lead you step-by-step through the chapter 3 discussions and activities.
  - Duplicate as appropriate the needed handouts for the activity section.
  - During the group activity, participants will need to take notes. Arrange to have a pen available for each participant.
- Return to the [chapter 3 homepage](#).
  - Watch the chapter 3 video and download it in preparation for leading the session.
  - To **download** the video, scroll to the bottom of the chapter 3 homepage and click on the .mp4 link under “Additional Files.”

# Chapter 3 *Facilitator's Guide*



## → Summary of facilitation steps:

1. Lead the discussion of chapter 3
2. Prepare the group for the chapter 3 video
3. Watch the chapter 3 video
4. Lead the chapter 3 video discussion
5. Lead the chapter 3 group activity

### ***Practical Points***

- The time estimations provided for the discussions and activities may vary significantly, depending on the number of students and the group dynamics.
- Information contained in this document that is intended to be read verbatim to the participants is italicized.

## ***Step 1. Lead the chapter 3 group discussion (15 minutes)***

### → Read aloud and discuss with the participants.

1. *Was there anything in Kermin's story that seemed interesting or surprising to you?*
2. *What qualities would you seek in your graduate thesis advisor?*
3. *What steps should you take to find your ideal thesis advisor?*
4. *Have you investigated how the graduate program at the institution you are attending handles thesis advisor selection? Does the process seem to be fair and well organized?*
5. *Would you pursue graduate study at the institution where you earned your undergraduate degree? What are the pros and cons of doing so?*

## ***Step 2. Prepare for the chapter 3 video***

### ***Note to Facilitator***

The purpose of this video is to illustrate that although changes beyond the control of the students can occur in graduate programs, they can adjust and even benefit from such changes.

→ Read the following video introduction to the participants.

*Having just received major funding along with an offer from McGinley University, Dr. Harrison has decided to move his lab to McGinley. This decision seriously impacts his graduate students: Alicia Trudeau, who is in her second year; Elena Rivera, just finishing her first year; Max Henderson, in his third year; and Robert Dudley, in his fifth year. Take a look at the video, which is titled Changes.*

### **Step 3. Watch the chapter 3 video (6 minutes)**

### **Step 4. Lead the chapter 3 video discussion (10 minutes)**

→ Ask the participants the following questions.

1. *Which characters in the video were most negatively impacted? Why?*
2. *What did the students say or do that you liked or that made sense to you?*
3. *Did you dislike or disagree with any of the students' comments?*
4. *How would you respond if your advisor was going to leave and you had to decide what to do?*

### **Step 5. Lead the chapter 3 activity (20 minutes)**

→ Read the following to the participants.

*The video Changes showed that graduate school can involve risk. It can present unexpected circumstances that require shifting and reorganizing one's planned course of action. In this activity, you will reflect on and discuss unexpected changes you have experienced as college students or in your lives in general.*

→ **Distribute a copy of the handout to each person.** If your group is large (twelve or more), you may wish to split the participants into two groups, have them work independently, and then bring the groups back together to have them share their responses.

→ **Here are some suggestions to bring into the discussion about strategies:**

- Make a list of your options
- Make a pros and cons list for each option: determine the risks for each one
- Get information from outside sources about the options
- Find out whom to talk to about this particular type of change and talk to them
- Make a to-do list of all the things you need to look up and people to talk to
- Follow up and keep track of your success with the points on your to-do list
- Go talk to the recommended people who can give you informed advice
- Add their advice to the to-do list and follow up on it

# Chapter 3 Activity Handout (one copy per participant)



## *EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS*

1. Have you gone through a change in your life as a student that impacted you in a significant way? Describe the effects of the change you experienced.
2. When you found out that this change was going to happen, how did you feel?
3. What did you do to adjust to or mediate this change? Were your preparations effective?

## *Experiences of Unexpected Change*

- Changing your major or adding/dropping a class in your undergraduate program
- A family move from one house or from one city/state/country to another
- Dealing with a sudden physical injury and its impact on your studies
- Changing schools (college or elementary or high school)
- Changing jobs while you are in school
- A change in family income and your ability to pay for school
- Any major change that happened in your life or the life of someone you know

*Notes:*