

## ***Graduate Mentoring Philosophy***

*Michael J. Ross, Ph.D., ABPP*

My philosophy of graduate mentoring is grounded in a developmental, competency-based, relational approach in recognition of each student's unique talents, interests and experiences to maximize their fullest potential in both the science and practice of clinical psychology. Moreover, it is a philosophy in which I am of service to each student's professional growth, well-being and development throughout their training and subsequent career as a clinical psychologist.

My mentoring of graduate students is focused on the processes of learning and attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes for successful and meaningful professional contributions in both research and clinical practice. Using a developmental approach, I strive to work with each student in a systematic and supportive manner in which skills are developed sequentially and synergistically to ensure a well-rounded, integrated professional clinical psychologist. Providing an environment of enthusiasm and reassurance, the student gradually experiences, develops and demonstrates the competencies of a scientist-practitioner of clinical psychology. Utilizing an individualized, student-centric approach to mentoring allows students the opportunity to develop competencies through varied means consistent with their own unique interests and strengths. Through my SLU Sport Psychological Sciences and Consultation Lab, students are afforded a unique opportunity to integrate the scientific enterprise with consultation services to our Billiken student-athletes, coaches and staff to maximize athletic performance through mental skills training while also generating student research in sport psychological science for professional presentations and publications.

The foundation of my mentoring with graduate students is establishing and maintaining a meaningful reciprocal relationship for learning and professional development. Creating a culture and environment of mutual caring, trust and respect provides for opportunities in which the student and I can both learn, grow and develop professionally. I encourage and value a sense of teamwork among the students working under my mentorship such that they are supported by each other and share in each of our successes and challenges as we progress in our research and clinical endeavors. I strive to provide a caring, trusting and supportive ear for students to help manage the various stresses and challenges that they encounter both personally and professionally throughout their training and careers. Although clinical research and practice with dysfunctional and disordered persons can be challenging, difficult and distressing, the graduate mentorship provides the space for students to communicate openly and learn to grapple, cope and ultimately grow professionally in their competencies for self-care in service to their clients' welfare and interests. I truly enjoy and cherish the many opportunities that graduate mentoring offers not only when seeing the students' professional achievements (e.g., degree conferral, publications) but also being a part of and sharing in their personal lives (e.g., weddings, children, etc.) well beyond their time at Saint Louis University and throughout their careers.