

Tips for CSP applicants:

- 1) Getting a mentor on board ahead of time is probably best in terms of framing what you want to study and finding a mentor who has similar interests;
- 2) The research will most probably change over time;
- 3) Be prepared when approaching faculty members e.g. do your research on who you feel is best for you, have a resume with you, book an appointment with the potential mentor, have an idea of what you want to study and the “pitch” you will be making;
- 4) Feel free to use my name when requesting a time to meet a mentor e.g. Frances Chandler suggested I contact you...;
- 5) Remember the “win-win” thing e.g. the faculty member’s role is to mentor students but also do research so you need to understand that you need to be self motivated, organized, eager to learn and aware that this program is for both the faculty member and you;
- 6) This meeting is a “feeling-out” process to see if the partnership is compatible;
- 7) Be prepared that the faculty member might say no due to other commitments e.g. sabbatical etc. or that you might feel the match is perhaps not a good one;
- 8) Faculty members love keen organized students who show a passion and drive to learn more, so this quality should be shown in the “pitch”;
- 9) Students need to be collaborative as well as self motivated so methods of communication should be developed between the two, not necessarily at this stage but after you are in the program;
- 10) If the faculty member is amenable to this partnership then it might be a good time to talk about any significant issues that might arise e.g. if you are not able to work in the summer etc.;
- 11) Follow up with an email thanking the faculty member and if necessary address any follow up tasks from the discussion.

Questions to consider:

If you meet a potential mentor and you are not convinced this is a good partnership, how do you bow out gracefully?

What kinds of information do you want to glean from this first meeting? Prepare these ideas ahead of time.

What do you want to get from this program? What do you think the professor wants from it?

How will you frame your “pitch” (e.g. the elevator speech)?

Do you already know who you might approach because you have taken a course with him or her?
