

Why is it important to create shared goals?

Creating shared goals sets clear expectations for both the intern and the supervisor, helping to ensure a meaningful and productive experience for everyone involved. The shared goals can be recorded in a living document that the preceptor and intern use as a blueprint for the internship experience, returning to it regularly to confirm continued alignment.

Here's why it matters:

- **Clear Expectations:** Everyone understands what needs to be done and what success looks like. Writing it all out reduces incorrect assumptions, misconceptions, and confusion.
- **More Motivation:** Interns feel more focused and excited when they are working towards something and know their efforts have purpose.
- **Helpful Feedback:** Supervisors can give better advice and support when goals are clear.
- **Stronger Results:** When everyone works toward the same goals, the internship is more successful.

This toolkit includes several examples of tools to help preceptors and interns create shared goals. We recommend that students and preceptors fill out a shared goals document, then meet to review it and discuss any points of confusion.

A shared goals document can include:

- The final deliverables, goals, or desired outcomes of the internship
- A timeline for completing deliverables
- What is expected of the preceptor and the intern (i.e. project roles)
- Communication frequency and how to best reach each party
- Performance evaluation (e.g., a midpoint and endpoint check-in)
- A professional development plan for the intern