Dartmouth Grad-Undergrad Mentoring Program - Statement of Purpose

The program
The primary goal of the Graduate-Undergraduate Mentoring Program is to expose undergraduates to the graduate school experience by connecting them with a graduate student in the field they are interested in. This will give Dartmouth undergraduates interested in going to graduate school and prospective students wanting to learn more about it, a contact that will be an approachable resource to get advice and answers to specific questions that could be useful if they eventually decide to apply. The undergraduate could also spend a few hours shadowing this graduate student to see what they do first hand. For graduate students it will be an opportunity to be a "low pressure" mentor to someone who could one day be a colleague.

Our motivation
We recognize that there is a need to foster graduate-undergraduate relationships at Dartmouth. There is also a need for undergraduates interested in graduate school, to have the opportunity to meet/talk to someone who is currently doing what they are considering. There is also a need to expose students who may not have considered graduate school to an opportunity to find out if it could be the right choice for them. Finally, we recognize that graduate school is a unique path. Other post-graduate paths provide opportunities for experience beforehand, such as internships and shadowing. We hope this will be one way to provide this to Dartmouth students interested in pursuing a graduate degree after graduation.

Our Progress
We have a list of over 50 graduate students in various departments and programs who are willing to meet with undergraduates that are interested in their field of study to give advice, answer questions (by email or over coffee) or show them what they do (shadowing). We started small with a pilot program during the summer of 2012 with the Office of Undergraduate Research and Advising (Contact: Kathy Weaver), Graduate Women in Science (Contact: Anna Prescott and Aarathi Prasad) and the Women in Science Program (WISP) to see how much interest we could garner and work on the best structure for the program.

Implementation
We now plan to open it up to the larger Dartmouth undergraduate community and possibly beyond to prospective students interested in applying to Dartmouth. We have the list and now need to work on ways to disseminate it to a wider audience. Our target is to reach out to Dartmouth undergraduates through their Dean's office and Career Services and beyond Dartmouth through the Graduate Studies Office.

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