Potential Mentors 2025-2026

The following table contains information from previous year's mentor list as well as recently updated information provided by faculties – empty cells in columns 1-4 likely indicate that information was not yet provided by faculties in our recent survey at the time of creating this table (Jan 9, 2025):

Name, Title, Department Email, and Lab website (if provided)	**Brief research summary/interests**	**Keywords about research**	**Available to serve as a mentor for the 2025-2026 year?**	**Previous or current fellows**
Jeff Bush, PhD Associate Professor, Department of Cell & Tissue Biology jeffrey.bush@ucsf.edu bush.ucsf.edu	Our lab studies mammalian morphogenesis, with a particular focus on craniofacial development. Projects include the study of gene function relating to craniofacial structural birth defects.	development, morphogenesis, signaling, mouse, genetics, trachea, craniofacial, lip, palate, cleft	Yes	Alina Hyunh, Jothan Sadan
Wenhan Chang, PhD Professor, Department of Medicine wenhan.chang@ucsf.edu	My lab investigates perform translational research to understand the molecular actions of Ca2+ and its receptor (CaSR) in mediating (1) parathyroid gland functions; (2) skeletal Development and maintenance; and (3) induction of dementia using transgenic mouse models, aiming to develop new therapies by targeting this receptor to treat aging-related hyperparathyroidism, osteoporosis, bone fractures, and cognitive declines.	hyperparathyroidism, osteoporosis, bone fracture repair, calcium-sensing receptor, CaSR, dementia, aging diseases, animal models.	Yes	
Jing Cheng, MD, PhD, MS Professor, Department of Preventive & Restorative Dental Sciences jing.cheng@ucsf.edu	Epidemiology, genetic and environment association studies, and causal inference in oral health			
Kelsey Collins, PhD	Delineate fat-cartilage signals that contribute to osteoarthritis susceptibility and pain to			Celine Ngo

Assistant Professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery kelsey.collins@ucsf.edu	generate a new class of regenerative medicine-based therapies.			
Stephen "Thad" Connelly DDS,MD,PhD,FACS HS Clinical Instructor, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon stephen.connelly@ucsf.edu	Tempormandibular joint surgery, botox for tmj/facial pain, advanced tmj imaging, sleep apnea, oral cancer, facial pain			
Elizabeth Eve Assistant Health Sciences Clinical Professor, Division of Orthodontics Elizabeth.eve@ucsf.edu	Orthodontics		Possibly in the future	Chung-Wei Jasmine Chien
Stuart Gansky, MS, DrPH Professor, Department of Preventive and Restorative Dental Sciences stuart.gansky@ucsf.edu	Disparities; health equity and health policy; health disparity measurement; health literacy; behavioral economics; precision population health; biostatistics; data science			
Akshay Govind, DMD, MD, MPH Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Akshay.govind@ucsf.edu	Benign pathology, dentoalveolar surgery, maxillofacial trauma, neurosensory recovery and repair, surgical education, temporomandibular joint disorders			Isabelle Lao-Ngo
Rishi Jay Gupta, DDS, MD, MBA	TMJ, Obstructive Sleep Apnea	OSA, TMD, Reconstruction	Yes	

Staff Surgeon/Assistant Professor Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery rjgupta@ucsf.edu				
Stefan Habelitz, PhD Professor, Department of Preventive & Restorative Dental Sciences stefan.habelitz@ucsf.edu	Understanding biomineralization in dentin and enamel. My lab performs in vitro studies on collagen and amelogenin proteins and their ability to control mineral formation. Current applications involve repair of dentin caries through remineralization.	Biomineralization, self-assembly, polymer-induced liquid precursor method.	Yes	Deborah Tan, Hannah Mora
Phillip Harrison, DDS, MD Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Phillip.harrison@ucsf.edu	Benign pathology, dentoalveolar surgery, malignant pathology, maxillofacial trauma, reconstruction			
Sunita Ho, MS, PhD Professor, Division of Biomaterials and Bioengineering Department of Preventive and Restorative Dental Sciences sunita.ho@ucsf.edu	Temporomandibular Joint and Jaw biomechanics in patients with TMJ disorders, Oral Surgery and Orthopedics, Schools of Dentistry and Medicine. Acquired skill set - MRI and X-ray CT, Ultrasound, Human motion capture, correlate measurements with physicochemical properties of the temporomandibular discs.			
Erica J. Hutchins, PhD Assistant Professor, Department of Cell & Tissue Biology erica.hutchins@ucsf.edu www.devbiorna.com	The goal of my lab is to parse how post-transcriptional regulation controls developmental pluripotency and cell fate decisions in vivo, using vertebrate neural crest as a model and through the lens of craniofacial development. Current research projects explore how RNA-binding proteins and their targets control	Neural crest, developmental biology, chick embryology	Possibly in the future	

	cranial neural crest epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition and cell migration during early embryonic development.			
Christine (Yeumin) Hong, DMD, MS Associate Professor, Department of Orofacial Sciences, Division of Orthodontics Yeumin.Hong@ucsf.edu	Orthodontic research lab, interested in investigating the epigenetics that regulate cartilage and bone development. Current ongoing projects include characterizing an epigenetic signaling pathway that regulates cartilage growth, and studying how specific genes regulate orthodontic palatal expanders.	Chondrocytes Osteocytes Palatal expansion Epigenetics	Yes	Jey Kim
Matthew Kutys PhD Assistant Professor, Department of Cell and Tissue Biology Matthew.kutys@ucsf.edu kutyslab.org	Modeling human developmental processes in engineered systems	organ-on-chip, morphogenesis, vasculature, cell adhesion	Yes	Tara Boroumand
Brent Lin, DMD Professor, Department of Orofacial Sciences linb@dentistry.ucsf.edu	Pediatric dentistry, community and public health, treatment outcome assessment, hospital dentistry, geriatric dentistry, inter-professional education, optical imaging, restorative materials, systemic disease and oral health, infant oral health, adolescent oral health behavior, maternal oral health, and local anesthesia	Clinical Research, Pediatric, Public Health.	Yes	
Ralph Marcucio, PhD Professor, Department of Orthopedic Surgery ralph.marcucio@ucsf.edu	Cell and tissue interactions that regulate stem cell differentiation during skeletal development and repair			
Elizabeth Mertz, PhD	At Healthforce Center, we believe that people are the most important element in health care. Our mission is to equip people with the	health workforce, health quality and	Yes	Lia Inadomi,

Professor, Department of Preventive & Restorative Dental Sciences elizabeth.mertz@ucsf.edu healthforce.ucsf.edu	workforce knowledge, leadership skills, and network connections to create a collective force for health, equity, and action. We envision an effective and responsive health care ecosystem that is driving progress toward more equitable health outcomes for all. We provide research, programming, consulting, and evaluation in support of these goals.	equity, delivery system design		Roaa Saadeh
Snehlata Oberoi, DDS Professor of Clinical Orofacial Sciences, Department of Orofacial Sciences sneha.oberoi@ucsf.edu	Craniofacial anomalies	CBCT, cleft lip and palate, craniofacial, orthodontic treatment	Yes	Iris Lai
Joel Palefsky, MD Professor, Department of Medicine joel.palefsky@ucsf.edu	Virology: papillomaviruses and Epstein Barr virus			
Richard Schneider, PhD Professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery rich.schneider@ucsf.edu https://orthosurgery.ucsf.edu/research/laboratories/Schneider-Lab-at-UCSF	Our lab is focused on understanding how individual components of the craniofacial complex such as bones, cartilages, muscles, and tendons achieve their proper size, shape, and functional integration during development and evolution.	neural crest biology; craniofacial development; avian model systems	Yes	Emily Yang, Yilin Piao
Jean Star, DDS, MPH Assistant Professor, Department of Orofacial Sciences, Division of Pediatric Dentistry	My research focuses at the intersection of pediatric dentistry and public health. Overarching aims include innovating pediatric dental care delivery to improve access to care and enhance oral health outcomes for children from undeserved groups such as those with special health	Caries, pediatric dentistry, health disparities.	Likely Yes	Kimia Tavassoli

jean.star@ucsf.edu	care needs, low socioeconomic status and children with a history of severe early childhood caries.			
Sharof Tugizov, PhD Professor, Department of Medicine sharof.tugizov@ucsf.edu	HIV and HPV interaction with oral mucosal epithelium			
Torsten Wittmann, PhD Professor, Department of Cell & Tissue Biology Torsten.Wittmann@ucsf.edu	Role of local cytoskeleton control in cell dynamics and neuronal morphogenesis using optogenetics and live cell microscopy			
Nathan Young, PhD Department of Orthopaedic Surgery nathan.young@ucsf.edu	Craniofacial variation and growth, morphogenesis, evolution and development.			Susi Le, Iris Lai
Yan Zhang, PhD Department of Orofacial Sciences yan.zhang2@ucsf.edu	Transcriptional regulation of ameloblast polarity and extracellular matrix protein secretion, and dental epithelial cell regeneration.			Alexia Campbell

Other Faculties who have previously mentored students:

- Kamel Al-Eryani, DDS, PhD
    - Previous/current fellow(s): Dania Alkoraishi
- Sarah Knox, PhD
    - Previous/current fellow(s): Hope Berry, Alyssa Kong