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"Expert Disagreement in Research and Advising"

What makes for a good expert advisor? This paper explores the characteristics of a good advisor in one context: disagreement between experts on an advisory panel for policy decisions. I argue that the context of policymaking and the nature of the expert panel as an elicitation forum mean that a good advisor is sensitive to disagreement and conciliatory in both their belief formation and their communication. As a contrast, I consider disagreement between experts in a research setting. There, I argue, different virtues are needed. Experts need to cultivate a certain insensitivity to disagreement in order to make progress, and this is turn promotes more steadfast norms of belief formation and communication (at least in some stages of the research process). This creates a puzzle. The (disagreement-relevant) virtues of a good researcher do not match the virtues of a good advisor. Yet our instinct is to select "the best scientist" as our advisor, where this typically means the leading researcher. I consider two implications of this tension: that experts need to learn to "code-switch" between the research and advisory context, and that different individuals might make for good advisors and good researchers.