



Alumni Mentoring Program Mentee Handbook

Mission of the Alumni Mentoring Program

The mission of the program is to foster a culture of mentoring at SUNY Morrisville that encourages productive conversations around academic, professional, and life goals to encourage student enrichment and expand alumni engagement.

I. What is a mentor?

Origins of "Mentor"

The term “mentor” derives from a character in Homer’s epic tale, *The Odyssey*. After leaving to fight the Trojan War, Odysseus, King of Ithaca, leaves Mentor in charge of his household. In this role, Mentor also taught Odysseus’s son, Telemachus. The goddess Athena later disguised herself as Mentor in order to support Telemachus in his quest to reclaim Odysseus’s throne.¹

Over time, the term came to mean an experienced and trusted adviser, especially one who advises those with less experience. Mentors are those who help us move toward our full potential.

The intended outcome is that the mentee gains greater insight and is better prepared to make informed strategic decisions regarding their professional life.

II. Benefits of the program:

For Mentees:

- Gain a wealth of insider knowledge in your fields of interest and the types of jobs and companies in this area.
- Broaden your professional network.
- Learn how someone previously in your shoes has transitioned into the professional world and works on achieving professional goals.
- Foster a sense of professionalism.
- Focus on career plans and career exploration

¹ Garvey, B. (2017). Philosophical origins of mentoring: the critical narrative analysis. In D. A. Clutterbuck F. K. Kochan & L. Lunsford *The SAGE Handbook of mentoring* (pp. 15-33). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications Ltd



For Mentors:

- Make a significant impact on current students
- Impart on students a sense of professionalism and maturity
- Share advice learned from your educational journey and professional career
- Give back SUNY Morrisville in a rewarding and satisfactory way

III. Structure of the Program:

Mentee:

- Complete Mentee Profile Form and return to Institutional Advancement office
- Institutional Advancement office will match mentees with a mentor
- Sign Alumni Mentoring Program Agreement once matched with a mentor
- Initiate first contact with mentor with an introductory email to discuss first meeting (please see Appendix II for template)
- Attend Alumni Mentoring launch event (TBD- November 2018)
- Communicate monthly with your mentor at agreed times and dates (please see Appendix I for Monthly Discussion Topics)
- Complete half-way point check-in with program directors.
- Complete evaluation summary at the end of the program.
- Attend Alumni Mentoring wrap-up event (TBD- May 2018)

IV. Expectations and Responsibilities:

- To participate, mentors and mentees are expected to commit to at least one school year contract (November 2018 – May 2019)
- Each pair is expected to meet in person at least once. (This will most likely be at the initial program launch event)
- Commit to one to two contacts per month via pair's agreed mode of contact.



- Initiate first contact with mentor with an introductory email (see template in Appendix II)
- Respond to mentor in a respectful and timely manner (within 72 hours).
- Complete half-way point check-in with program directors
- Attend Alumni Mentoring Program launch and wrap-up events.
- Be professional and respectful
- Actively listen and respond to all feedback with gratitude and respect
- Report any issues from the first instance to the Alumni Engagement Coordinator
- Complete evaluation summary at the end of the program.

Evaluation Plan:

SMART Tracking (Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely):

- Mentees respond to one half-way point check-in email with Student Representative and/or Alumni Relations Coordinator
- Mentees write a short summary about their experience at the end of the program before wrap-up event and give any necessary feedback.
- Mentors answer one check-in email with Alumni Board and/or Alumni Relations Coordinator
- Mentors complete final feed-back evaluation sheet

Monthly Discussion Topics:

November – Introductions

- Discuss both of your career and educational backgrounds
- Discuss your goals and objectives for the mentoring program
- Decide on the best forms of communication for scheduling future meetings and staying in touch (e.g. telephone, e-mail)



December – Career Planning

- Discuss short term and long term career planning and how you both plan to achieve your goals
- Discuss skills and on-going professional training necessary to achieve these goals
- ❖ Discussion Question: What skills and abilities do you believe are essential to have in your career field?

January - Resumes/Cover letters

- How to write a resume and cover letter: what employers look for, ask for your mentor to critique of your resume/cover letter
- LinkedIn: Connect with your mentor/mentee on LinkedIn and ask for feedback
- ❖ Discussion Question: How has networking been useful for you in your career, and/or meeting your goals?

February- Interviewing Skills

- Discuss way to prepare, answer questions, and follow up with interviews. Request a mock interview for practice
- ❖ Discussion Questions: How do I make myself stand out as a candidate in the job search, how to target companies/jobs?

March- Industry Advice

- Discuss projects, developments, ethics and trends of the mentors and mentees career industries.
- ❖ Discussion Question: What has changed in your industry over the years?

April- Upcoming Professional Challenges

- Discuss issues you have faced over the course of this year and any you see on the horizon
- Discuss lessons that you each have learned from challenges met



- ❖ Discussion Question: If you could start all over again launching your career, what steps would you take?

May – Wrap-up

- Discuss what you have learned and re-evaluate your goals and career plans.

More Example Discussion Questions:

- How do you handle obstacles, roadblocks or setbacks in your professional life?
- What do you see as upcoming trends in the industry?
- What are the most satisfying and most frustrating parts of your work?
- What other careers do you believe are connected or closely related to your career field?
- Discuss your educational background and the role of educational preparation in your field?
- In what ways have you continued your professional development in your career?
- Share your SUNY Morrisville experiences
- What should I be focusing on and perfecting now in my college experience that will prepare me for my professional career?



Introductory Email Template

Dear [Mentor's First and Last Name],

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is [student first and last name] and I am a [study year] student in the [program field] here at SUNY Morrisville. Thank you for dedicating your valuable time and energy into the Mustang Mentoring program to help increase my preparedness, confidence, and knowledge towards my future career.

I would like to set-up a time to discuss our partnership moving forward, including our goals during the program, preferred contact method, and setting a consistent meeting time if possible.

I have listed a few dates and times below that I am available for our first discussion. If you are not available during these times, please let me know a few dates and times that suit your schedule.

I look forward to learning more about you and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

[Student's First and Last Name]

[Email address]

[contact number if necessary]