



**Department of
Chemical Engineering**

Mentoring Program

Mentee Guidebook

(Updated: Fall 2018)



Mentee Guidebook

Mission

Our mission is to foster meaningful professional relationships between our current chemical engineering students and our alumni, to prepare students for their future careers, and to foster responsibility and excellence in the next generation of Red Raider chemical engineers.

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." *Winston Churchill*

"If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." *Isaac Newton*

Program Overview and Goals

The Chemical Engineering mentoring program is envisioned to include one-on-one alumni mentoring, one-on-one peer mentoring, and seminars, webinars, and panel discussions. The heart of the program, being launched as a pilot program in spring 2018, is one-on-one mentoring of our engineering students by successful alumni. The goals of the Department of Chemical Engineering's Mentoring Program include

- Professional growth and development
- Career counseling
- Understanding how one fits within the chemical engineering community
- Enhanced communication and interviewing skills
- Successful navigation of the job market and the early years of the engineering career
- Transformation of students into responsible and engaged engineers

Mentee Responsibilities

As a mentee, you will have access to valuable resources from your mentor – their knowledge, experience, wisdom, guidance, and time – which will inspire you and facilitate your career and personal achievements. The responsibilities and expectations of a mentee include the following:

- Commit to meeting with your mentor for at least one hour per month via phone, video conferencing, email, or in person for the academic year, and commit to preparing adequately beforehand.
- Be punctual and keep mentor informed of potential scheduling conflicts.
- Recognize that the mentorship is a professional relationship.
- Exchange ideas and experiences with mentor in a collegial manner and develop measurable goals for the academic year/semester; be open to constructive feedback from your mentor.
- Keep the content of discussions within the mentoring relationship confidential; all your exchanges with your mentor—both personal and professional—are subject to the expectations of professional confidentiality.
- Be up front, and let your mentor know what your goals are and what you hope to take away from the program.
- Commit to the mentoring relationship for at least one academic year/semester.
- Protect the confidentiality of contact information.
- Provide feedback to the Department of Chemical Engineering concerning the mentoring experience.

Time Commitment

- One hour per month via phone, video conferencing, email or in person for the academic year.
- Prepare for meetings in order to use your mentor's time wisely; be sure to do the "homework" that you agreed to do in the prior meeting.
- Keep set appointments and be punctual.

Communicating with your Mentor

- Visit with your mentor about your goals this will allow them to learn more about you.
- Be honest and open with them let them know what you hope to learn.
- Be quick when responding to emails or phone messages from your mentor. Try your hardest to respond within 24 hours.
- Plan meeting agendas ahead of time.
- Be open when receiving feedback or constructive criticism from your mentor. They are there to help you through your professional journey.
- Never be afraid to ask for advice and help with goal setting. Your mentor is an experienced professional and has been in your shoes at one point in time.
- Do not expect the mentor to offer you a job or an internship, and do not ask them to do this for you; remember they are there to help and guide you in your transformation from a student to a responsible professional.

Program Application and Criteria for Acceptance

Applications will be solicited for the mentoring program. Although mentors will make the final selection of their mentees to ensure a good match, a triage will first be made by a faculty mentoring committee. Criteria for selection by the faculty committee will include satisfactory progression through the Chemical Engineering program, maturity and fit for the program as judged by responses to questions on the application, and conduct and behavior in the classroom. A resume must be uploaded as part of the application process.

How to Get Started

Mary Harris, Department Manager/Marketing/Engagement, will facilitate the first introduction via email, but it will be the MENTOR's responsibility to initiate the conversation. The first meeting should be planned by phone, in-person or Skype. Allow at least an hour to get to know one another, during this time set expectations and goals for the relationship. We highly recommend that at the end of each meeting you plan when you will meet next.

Potential Topics for the First Meeting

Once you have been assigned a mentor and you have set a first meeting time, think about your goals and aspirations and how your mentor can help you accomplish them. The first meeting forms the basis of your professional relationship with your mentor and will help you build communication for future meetings. Remember to be a good listener! You will not be able to cover all of these topics, but some suggestions for the first meeting are listed below:

- Ask your mentor to share their “story” with you. What was college like for them? Did they know what professional field they wanted to major in when they arrived? Share your story with your mentor.
- Ask them about their career progression, where they started, and how their career evolved.
- Ask them what they think are the keys to succeeding in the job market and in an engineering career.
- Discuss any experiences that you may have previously had with mentoring. Discuss what you each hope to get out of the experience.
- Take time to review the mentor/mentee agreement. Discuss expectations of how you will meet and how often. Agree to be respectful of each other’s time and respond promptly to emails or other correspondence. Remember to establish accountability to do what you say you are going to do.
- Discuss and set your goals for the relationship. Remember that your mentor will have his or her own goals for the relationship. Put these in writing so that you can review them frequently and assess progress.
- Lastly, plan the next meeting time and day. Communicate to your mentor what you would like to discuss during your next meeting. Create an agenda and send it to your mentor prior to your next meeting. This will help guide your next discussion as well as build the relationship.

Additional Potential Topics and Activities for Future Meetings

- Ask your mentor to review your resume, cover letter, interview skills, and overall job finding strategies.
- Discuss how to develop "soft skills" and what types of activities and/or professional organizations might help your marketability.
- Discuss academics and ask for advice on how to balance the demands placed on you.
- Discuss your goals and aspirations and ask for feedback on how realistic they are and how to achieve them.
- Discuss your intern, co-op, and/or career options; ask what you should look for in a company and a position.
- Ask them what they wish they had known when they were in college and what they might do differently if they were to do it all again.

Program Support

We want both mentees and mentors to have the best mentoring experience possible. Please do not hesitate to contact the director at any time if you have questions or concerns. We will keep in regular contact with you to see how things are going and to gather any feedback or suggestions you may have. We encourage the mentoring relationship to last for the academic year (September through May) or one semester if the pairing is made in the spring. However, we are also aware at times personalities or schedules may not be compatible or other issues may arise that result in termination of the relationship; in these special cases, please contact the director.

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