

# MENTOR HANDBOOK



## OVERVIEW

This mentorship program is designed to support current students in developing meaningful mentoring relationships, reflecting on their academic and career goals, and planning the next steps in their professional journeys. This guide has been developed to serve as a resource as you connect with your mentee.

Acknowledging varying commitments, the program is flexible and can be easily adapted to fit all schedules. Mentors and mentees are asked to meet at least once a block (month) through their chosen medium.

This program brings together mentors and mentees into a formal mentorship. The goal is to provide mentees with a supportive network that they can depend upon to seek guidance, develop skills, and help prepare them for their future. This program is designed to last 3 months, although the relationships formed could last well into the future and the connections could last a lifetime!

### What is mentoring?

Mentoring consists of a long-term relationship focused on supporting the growth and development of the mentee.

## WHAT IS A MENTOR?

Looking back at your career journey, there are likely key individuals who helped guide you along the way. They gave you feedback and a listening ear during a pivotal moment. Mentors helped shaped who you are today, and it's unlikely you'll forget the impact they had on you.

This might be the first time you'll be a mentor, but for others you may have served as a mentor many times over. In either case, this guide will serve as a resource for expectations, tips on how to best support your new mentee, and guidance on building an impactful relationship.

### A mentor is a...

Trusted guide

Connector

Will encourage exploration

Good listener

Helpful sounding board

Force of positivity and optimism

## MENTOR BENEFITS

---

Develop communication and active listening skills

Gain joy in sharing knowledge and experience

Build leadership skills by developing your ability to motivate, guide, and encourage others

Achieve personal fulfillment through meaningful connection

Become familiar with the new generation entering the workforce

## MENTEE BENEFITS

---

Develop communication, critical thinking, professionalism, and other skills important to their transition into the world of work and career exploration

Learn how to accept and grow from feedback

Get firsthand knowledge of a career, industry, or job

Expand their professional network

Gain an advocate who will encourage them to set and achieve goals

## GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS

Although there is no rulebook for mentoring, there are guidelines that will build successful mentoring relationships. Here are some general reminders for participants:



### **Discuss Communication Modes**

Decide how you would prefer to connect (video, phone, or message)



### **Make Contact Frequently**

Especially during the first weeks to build a trusting relationship



### **Follow Up**

When you make a commitment follow through



### **Be Appreciative**

Everyone is busy and it takes real courage to open up to someone new



### **Be Professional**

Language, style, appearance, and demeanor all make an impression



### **Maintain Confidentiality**

All discussions should be confidential in nature unless there is a safety concern, always speak up. See “Potential Challenges” for more info

# EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Successful relationships depend on effective communication. Both verbal and nonverbal communication is important for a healthy mentoring relationship.

## VERBAL & WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

These skills are essential in order to deliver and understand information quickly and accurately. It's important in an online environment when it can be harder to read body language and interpret non-verbal cues.

- Be professional, but not too professional - make sure your mentee gets to see you as a human
- Avoid technical and industry jargon
- Proofread to check for spelling and grammar errors
- Keep paragraphs short and easy to read

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Every day we respond to nonverbal cues and behaviors! Sometimes the words don't matter - our gestures, tone of voice, and cadence of delivery can communicate something entirely different than what we intended.

- Have a neutral background in video calls
- Maintain eye contact with the camera on your phone or computer
- Try to maintain a positive tone
- Watch your pace of delivery
- Don't underestimate the power of wait time - students might open up

## POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Like any program, you may come across challenges - below are some sample challenges and what to do if they arise. Of course, you can always contact the program administration for any assistance.



Mentee does not contact you after the initial match: You might want to give the student a week or so to get in touch with you. If you still don't hear anything feel free to reach out to the student to initiate the conversation.



Mentee talks about harming themselves or someone else: Contact CC Campus Safety immediately (719-389-6707) and provide the student with the contact info for CC Counseling (719-389-6093). In emergency call 911.



Mentee seems unmotivated in the program: You can gently bring this to student's attention and collaborate with them on strategies on how to make the program more beneficial for them. Or let the program administrator know.



Mentee does not show for meeting/stops responding: As you know the block can be tough, the student might have a full plate. Check-in and see if they are still interested in having a mentor - or let the program administrator know.

## EXPECTATIONS OF MENTORS

As a mentor, it's good to understand what's involved and how much of a time commitment is expected. If you cannot commit to being actively involved in the life of a mentee, please reconsider participating in the program.

- Be professional and respectful.
- Establish expectations with your mentee regarding the mentoring relationship. For example, if you are comfortable talking about your personal life (is your mentee), do the two of you prefer to set up meetings over text instead of email, how and when will you be in contact. Having this type of conversation in the beginning will allow you both to enter the conversations with more confidence.
- Actively listen during your sessions with your mentee.
- Help your mentee set and achieve personal and professional goals.
- Reflect on what assumptions you might bring to the mentorship. Invite conversation around identity, your mentee may not always want to talk about it, but communicating that conversations about identity are welcome will leave the door open. Be curious about who you both are in the mentor relationship and what identities matter to each of you and why.
- Reinforce important competencies and skills valued across industries. Students don't recognize the skills and competencies they already have or are developing that are valued outside of higher education.
- Notify the program administrator if there are any concerns with your mentee.

## WHAT IS NOT EXPECTED OF A MENTOR:

- To have all the answers.
- To initiate all contact with your mentee.
- To offer jobs or internships (you are welcome to but it is not an expectation.)

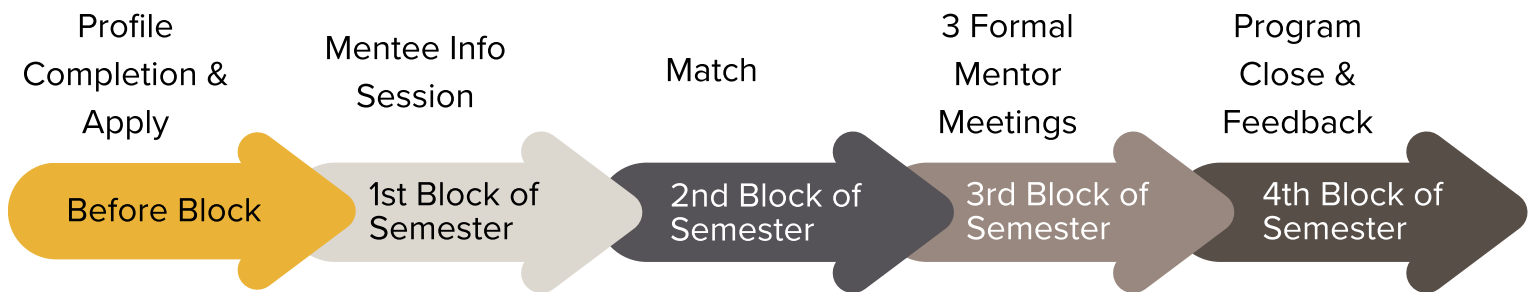
### Commitment

Meet with your mentee at least 3 times throughout the program!



## PROGRAM TIMELINE

---



## HOW IT WORKS

---

- The mentorship will take place over 3 formal mentoring sessions.
- Matching is conducted by a program administrator using an algorithm that includes a variety of factors such as mentee industry interests, skills, and educational interests.
- You are encouraged to initiate contact and schedule the first meeting with your mentor. Ideally, this would happen within the first two weeks.
- The program has resources specifically designed for you - helpful activities and handouts to assist with goal setting, suggested conversation topics, and reflection exercises.
- You can message and video call directly through the platform. If you would like to speak over the phone, you can certainly exchange numbers.
- After the structured program concludes, feel free to continue connecting with your mentor through the platform or other communication channels if you wish to extend the relationship.

## COMMUNICATION TIMELINE:

---

You will receive communication from the program administrator around the following topics:

Match Day

Reminder about scheduling 1st formal mentor meeting & reminder to help set program goal(s)

Initial Program Check-In

Reminder about scheduling 2nd formal mentor meeting

Mid-program check-in

Reminder about scheduling 3rd (last) formal mentor meeting

Program close and collecting feedback

Please note you are welcome to reach out to the program administrator whenever you need!



Colorado College Career Center  
14 E. Cache La Poudre St. | Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
[careercenter@coloradocollege.edu](mailto:careercenter@coloradocollege.edu) | [coloradocollege.edu](http://coloradocollege.edu)