Preparing University of Calgary Graduate Students for Post-Academia Life
Table of Contents

Program Objectives, Goals, and Expectations 1

Process 1

Establishing Your Mentor - Mentee Relationship 2

Outline for Industry Professional Mentors and Graduate Student Mentees 2

Time Commitment 3

Participation for Graduate Student Mentees 3

Confidentiality Agreement 4

Program Feedback 4
Program Objectives, Goals, and Expectations

MENTORSHIP GSA introduces students in graduate studies to a professional industry or academic mentor. Mentors provide students with guidance in successful business and academic strategies that will prepare them for success in their future career.

MENTORSHIP GSA is NOT intended to procure jobs. Students should understand that this program is for mentees (students with at least 8 months left in their program prior to graduating) to learn about proper business conduct, industry information, career decisions, and developing networking skills.

Mentees should not solicit their mentor for a possible job at any point during the program.

Participation in MENTORSHIP GSA is voluntary for both the mentor and the mentee. However, once participants enter a mentor-mentee relationship, there are some expectations:

- Mentors and mentees are expected to maintain the relationship for 6 months
- Mentors and mentees may decide to foster an on-going relationship after the 6-month period
- Mentors are not expected to provide internships or job offers to mentees
- Mentors are not to be used as a source for training a mentee in a position they may currently be holding in industry
- It is the responsibility of the student mentees to establish and maintain contact with their mentor
- Mentees are expected to prepare for each meeting with their mentor with an agenda and relevant questions for discussion
- Mentors and mentees should identify any areas of possible confidentiality at the outset of the relationship
- Mentees are ambassadors of the University of Calgary Graduate Students’ Association and must act appropriately

Process

MENTORSHIP GSA consists of 9 cohorts, one each in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, May, and June. Students can join at any month of the year (that a cohort is held) and at any point during their studies, as long as they have at least 8 months left of their program.
Establishing the Mentor - Mentee Relationship

Registration Process

All prospective graduate student mentees will complete an application form and attend an informal interview with the Employer Liaison.

In accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) for Private Sector organizations in Alberta, information collected will be accessible only to the Employer Liaison and selected information to each participant’s future mentor/mentee.

Matching Process

As part of the application process, graduate student mentees will identify three people they might like to have as a mentor. Students will have support in this process if needed. Students will provide the name of the company, institution, organization, or hospital etc. that their desired mentor works at in Calgary. There is a workshop in which the Employer Liaison will provide you with the process of identifying companies and potential mentors that students can name in their application. Should the student be unable to attend the workshop, they may schedule a time with the Employer Liaison to learn this process one-on-one. Simply email the Employer Liaison at julie.brown@ucalgary.ca or click here to book an appointment. The Employer Liaison is responsible for contacting the mentors listed and requesting their participation.

The first meeting with the mentor and mentee involves the Employer Liaison debriefing the Insights© profiles, a behavior analysis tool, completed by both mentor and mentee, followed with time between the mentor and mentee to fulfill the agenda for the first meeting.

Outline for Industry Professional Mentors and Graduate Student Mentees

Once the mentee application and the Professional Mentor Intake form are submitted, the next step for all industry professionals and graduate students who are accepted into the program, is to complete an Insights© Evaluator. Insights© is a behavioural analysis tool that will assist mentor and mentee in effective communication as they move forward in their collaboration.

The Insights© profiles will be reviewed in the first meeting between the mentor and mentee.

It is requested that both mentor and mentee provide feedback on the program through a survey at the end of month 6.
Time Commitment

The format and frequency of the interactions between mentors and mentees will vary. It is expected that mentor and mentee meet once a month, face-to-face.

It is recommended that:

- The mentee email or call their mentor between meetings
- The mentor indicate their preferred method of communication and what response time the mentee can expect when they initiate contact

The format and frequency of meetings is something each mentor and mentee should discuss and agree upon at the beginning of the program.

Participation for Graduate Student Mentees

Students interested in applying to the program are encouraged to attend an introductory orientation, which is a brief meeting with the Employer Liaison to go over the program and learn how to identify a potential mentor. This orientation will address questions and concerns the student may have and ensure understanding of the program. The orientation prepares students for their initial mentor meeting. The applicant can schedule an orientation appointment with the GSA Employer Liaison by emailing julie.brown@ucalgary.ca or click here to book an appointment. Failing to complete this orientation may exclude a student from participating in the Mentorship program.

There is a follow-up email sent to all mentees at the end of month 2 and 4 of the program. The information in these emails will be used to ensure the mentee is comfortable in the relationship with their mentor and is an opportunity to provide feedback that may improve the program.

Mentors and mentees should develop a clear understanding of their expectations for their relationship and develop an action plan or contract:

- Agree on the frequency, duration and place of meetings if different than the minimum described herein.
- Decide on whether or not the mentor will have an “open door” policy or if the student should wait to be contacted by their mentor. It is important that the relationship parameters between the mentor and mentee be set in the beginning to ensure the most positive experience for both.

The mentee should clearly understand if and/or when it is permissible to call the mentor at their place of work, home, etc. This is up to the discretion of the mentor. If the mentor decides the student should not contact them, but should wait to be contacted, it is very important that the mentor adheres to their commitment and contacts their mentee on a regular basis to nurture the relationship.
Ending the relationship

This is an important issue and should be discussed early in the mentoring relationship.

As in any relationship there will be fits and misfits. It is the policy of this program to have a “no fault” withdrawal policy. The Employer Liaison will not assign blame to either a graduate student mentee or industry professional mentor for an unsuccessful relationship. However, since these types of “mis-matches” may occur in your future work environment, take this opportunity to learn from the experience and exit gracefully.

Should you wish to withdraw from the program before completion, please do the following:

- Contact the Employer Liaison either by email julie.brown@ucalgary.ca or telephone 403.210.7870
- Based on your situation, the Employer Liaison will determine the best course of action and assist you in making a graceful exit from the program and details will be kept confidential

For successful relationships, after six months determine whether you would like to continue contact with your mentor. Should you wish to stay in touch, discuss with your mentor if they would have time to continue your relationship.

For those who enjoyed their relationship but do not want to continue, arrange for a coffee or a lunch to thank your mentor and signify the end of your pairing.

Confidentiality Agreement

If your mentor chooses to have a meeting with you in an office setting where you may be privy to confidential or sensitive company information you may be requested to sign the company’s standard confidentiality agreement. By signing a confidentiality agreement, you indicate you understand the expectation in that work environment.

Program Feedback

The GSA Employer Liaison would like to hear from mentees about their experience in the program; what was effective, and what needs improvement. It is important to have continual feedback in order to improve the program based on your suggestions and feedback. Please feel free to offer this information at any time during the program. Also, mentees will be asked to participate in an survey at the completion of the program each 6-month period from date of entry.

For additional information please contact: Julie Brown, Employer Liaison, 403.210.7870, julie.brown@ucalgary.ca