

2021

WOP-P

PEER MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM

MENTOR
HANDBOOK

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RATIONALES & OBJECTIVES

THE LIFE AS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING TIME OF ANY YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE.

Beyond studying to achieve your dreams, our social life is of equal importance. Networking, mingling, site seeing, have adventures with your peers and creating memories for years to come are all aspects that any university student will look forward too.

However, for the many highlights of university life, there are equal if not more challenges students face. Some challenges students face includes, but are not limited to, feelings of homesickness, depression, anxiety, procrastination, poor time management skills, poor financial management, networking and social problems and administrative challenges.

These issues are more prevalent for international students who not only have to face the challenges of the average university student, but must also leave their country, culture, and language behind to face a foreign world.

Without an anchor to stabilize these students, many may be overwhelmed by the storms of the international student life. Thus, it is imperative for the psychological and physiological health of the students that they find some form of support to act as a source of stability during that this time. One such source of stability can be a peer mentorship program, where senior students help incoming students to adjust to the international student life.

Peer mentorship can be defined as a relationship between individuals who are the same age or at the same stage in their career, in which one person has more knowledge, skills and experience and is willing to transfer these experiences to another. Traditional mentorship programs, which can occur for example between "senior" lecturer or tutor and a student, are characterized by a power difference between mentor and mentee, which can undermine the natural rapport and trust that should exist between participants

Peer mentorship provides a more balanced approach as mentees perceived mentors to be on the same level as themselves but with more experience. Peer mentorship can facilitate more organic relationship development which offers greater opportunity for empathy, trust, and open communication. Mentees are more likely to disclose the challenges they are facing which enables mentors to offer greater assistance.

Indeed, studies have shown that mentees of peer mentorship programs experience a series of psychosocial benefits through friendships, role modelling, identity development, socialization, and academic advice. Although this program does not provide direct communication with lecturers or coordinators, mentors can provide tacit academic knowledge and detailed practical advice that allow mentees to develop essential competencies and social skills in their new environment.

Since the mentors are at similar stages in their education, they can offer greater degrees of practical social and emotional support than professors or administrative student liaisons. These factors of peer mentorship can be considered essential in reducing the impact of acculturation and social connectedness issues.

OBJECTIVES

- TO PROVIDE ORIENTATION, EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR INCOMING YEAR 1 STUDENTS
- TO PROVIDE SOCIALIZING AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN THE YEAR GROUPS
- TO PROVIDE ORGANIZATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE FOR SETTLING IN TO STUDENTS (*I.E. HELPING WITH ACCOMMODATION, SETTING UP BANK ACCOUNTS, BUS CARDS, SIM CARDS ETC*)
- TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YEAR 2 STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THEIR LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS WHILE HELPING OTHERS

SHARED VALUES

Our values, objectives, and philosophy are a direct reflection of the kind of project we want to be: where everyone involved is driven to deliver meaningful, positive impact to their fellow students

INCLUSION

- You intervene if someone else is facing social challenges
- You recognize we all have biases, and work to grow past them to promote diversity, gender equality and cultural appreciation
- You nurture and embrace differing perspectives to make better decisions

HONESTY

- You are known for candor and directness
- You are non-political when you disagree with others
- You only say things about fellow students you will say to their face
- You are quick to admit mistakes

FUN

- You revel in the collaboration you bring to the project
- You understand the process is meant to be enjoyed

PASSION

- You expect the best from yourself and others to achieve good results
- You are able to inspire others through your enthusiasm
- You celebrate wins and take advantages of failures to learn

COMMUNICATION

- You actively listen and seek to understand before reacting
- You adapt your communication style to work well with people from around the world who may not share your native language
- You provide candid, helpful, timely advice to your mentees and other volunteers

SELFLESSNESS

- You seek what is best for others, rather than best for yourself or your group
- You are ego-less when searching for the best ideas
- You make time to help colleagues
- You share information openly and proactively

COMMUNITY

- You easily find things in common with others and solve quickly solve conflicts for the good of everyone
- You know how to enact a positive mood and spirit within your others

ETHICS & CONFIDENTIALITY

ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR MENTORS

- Act as a positive role model for both fellow peer mentors and your mentee by not participating in questionable or unethical behaviors.
- Consider sensitive issues that may make you less approachable to certain students (politics, religion, etc.).
- Refrain from gossip, complaining or negative comments about your mentees, professors, or other University representatives, especially in public places.
- Work cooperatively with you other peer mentors when possible.
- Do not show preferential behavior towards any of your mentees.
- Demonstrate mature responsible behavior, and decision-making skills.
- Avoid situations that may be considered unethical or that may have negative ramifications in the future.
- Demonstrate respect, dignity, and courtesy always.
- Be professional, but do not offer professional advice.
- Do not lecture, work together.
- Respect and identify specific needs of each student
- Practice what you preach

CONFIDENTIALITY TIPS

- Be careful with whom you share information. Is that person directly involved with the student's education? Does that person have a right to know?
- Be careful about using student names and/or talking about their issues within hearing of non-involved staff or students. Be aware of those around you when engaging in conversations.
- Do not point out or label students outside of the University and/or in public that visited the Counseling Office, or any other assistance office.
- If you are asked about your role as a mentor, do not use specific student names.
- Suggest that questions about a student are best directed to the Program Coordinator
- Be careful not to distort, exaggerate, or confuse information.
- .Never use information about a student as gossip or a joke..
- Be prepared to respond to questions. No matter who asks you a question about a student, if you do not feel comfortable answering it...don't. You can do this gently and politely. Be direct and honest, "I'm sorry, I can't say. I would be breaking confidentiality."
- Electronic Messages: When texting, emailing, instant messaging, or having confidential notes on your computer, ensure you are using the information in exact form and that the messages are sent in a secure manner to only appropriate information.

WHAT IS A PEER MENTOR?

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A **Peer Mentor** is a fellow student from the second year of WOP-P who offers support to respective mentee of first year of WOP-P.

A **Mentee** is a first- year WOP-P student who receives support from a mentor belonging from the second year of WOP-P.

An effective mentor is respectful, reliable, patient, trustworthy, and a very good listener and communicator.

Often new students confronted with various challenges will seek out advice first from a Peer Mentor and only with encouragement will that student contact others in the university, such as counselors, faculty, or administrators.

To become a Peer Mentor, an experienced student does not have to do extra work but to think about their interactions with fellow students in a new way.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A Mentor will enact a number of common roles and responsibilities. A mentor is:

- **A knowledgeable and experienced guide:** who teaches (and learns) through a commitment to the mutual growth of both mentee and mentor.
 - **A caring, thoughtful, and humane facilitator:** who provides access to people, places, experiences, and resources outside the mentee's routine environment
 - **A role model:** who exemplifies in word and deed what it means to be an ethical, responsible, and compassionate human being.
 - **A trusted ally, or advocate:** who works with (not for) the mentee and on behalf of the mentee's best interests and goals.
- Current WOP-P students can use their experience, insight and support
- Share your insights on how to best adapt to the program based on your experience
 - Provide logistical support to ease the mentee's settlement in their welcoming country (accommodation, pickup at the airport)
 - Giving advice on Visa requirements (if needed)
 - Promote group events organized by Mentorship crew
 - Offer recommendations on specific products/services that they might need for their everyday life (supermarket, stores, bars, restaurants, health care service, dentists, barbershop)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- If you volunteer for an event or service, you are required to show up.
- Show respect for your coordinator and other mentors.
- If you have any issues with your mentee or other mentors that you cannot resolve between the two of you, you have the right to discuss your problems with the coordinators.
- Must commit to spending at least a minimum of 4 hours per month with mentee
- Must be willing to communicate with mentee weekly.
- Must attend all required Mentor training sessions and meetings
- Keep all records of your Mentor to Mentee activities in a secure location
- Keep information between you and your mentee confidential
- Mentors will strive to be positive role models for their peers.
- Class is a priority. By attending and actively participating in class, you maintain the respect of your instructors and your peers.
- An open, non-judgmental attitude regarding the views, beliefs, or actions of other participants.
- Demonstration of mature, responsible behavior and use of respect towards others.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES OF MENTORSHIP

There are boundaries in virtually any and all relationships, and the mentor/mentee relationship is no exception.

There are guidelines for what a mentor is (or should be) and for what a mentor is not (or should not be):

A mentor is **NOT**:

- A (surrogate) parent.
- A professional counselor or therapist.
- A flawless or infallible idol.
- A social worker.
- A lending institution.
- A romantic partner.

Helping a person once or twice with a task teaches them, but by the third time they need to be set free to try it on their own. If they make a mistake, then we help them see what it is and how to correct it.

Anytime we find ourselves doing things that our mentees should be doing, then we make them dependent on us. We should examine ourselves to see if we are not controllers

Because being supportive is to encourage people to stand on their own feet, to do their own work. If you do for others what they can do for themselves, it cripples them

STAGES IN MENTORSHIP

1. BEGINNING OF THE MATCH

Your first few months will focus on getting to know each other, exploring similar interests, discussing expectations, and starting to form norms and bonds that will shape the rest of your first year together. During this phase mentors should work with their mentees to set parameters for the match, such as when to meet and for how long, what kinds of activities will take place, and how to contact each other

Actions: Ask open-ended questions, use body language that is open and not guarded, demonstrate empathy, use prompts, speak with language that you feel comfortable with, don't be afraid of silence

2. CHALLENGING AND TESTING

Once the mentoring relationship is off the ground, it is normal for your mentee to start testing boundaries of the relationship. Though you've spent time affirming that you appreciate and enjoy your mentee, he may still want to see how far your commitment really goes. Rethinking first impressions. Difficult feelings or emotions may surface.

- **Actions:** Be consistent in your communication even if it is difficult, demonstrate respect, build in problem-solving techniques in your open-ended questions, raise sensitive issues at the beginning of your interactions, make sure to separate behaviors from who the mentee is, disclosure of personal feelings and experiences when appropriate

3. "REAL" MENTORING

In this stage, the mentoring relationship has reached full maturity. Trust and closeness have been established and the match is comfortable having fun and relating to one another. It is during this phase that mentors can use the trust they have built to move their mentees along the developmental pathway. Relationship may become deeper or mentee may start pulling away.

Actions: Reflect and provide feedback that describes growth that you observed, be prepared to listen and affirm fears that your mentee may have

4. TRANSITION – TOWARD CLOSURE

As the end of your match approaches, work closely with your mentee to end on a high note and make sure that the transition leaves the mentee feeling positive and fulfilled about the experience. The relationship may become deeper or mentee may start pulling away.

- **Actions:** Reflect and provide feedback that describes growth that you observed, be prepared to listen and affirm fears that your mentee may have

THE MATCHING PROCESS

Mentors and mentees will be matched according to the following matching criteria

- **Country/Region of Origin**
- **Language**
- **Gender**
- **Professional experience/aspirations**
- **Hobbies/Interests**

Mentees will be presented with the profiles of 2 mentors and will be encouraged to rank them by order of preference

NOTE:

Mentors and mentees asked to stay with their assigned partner through the mentorship program. **Changes will only be allowed under extreme circumstances.**

LISTENING SKILLS

THERE ARE FIVE KEY ELEMENTS OF ACTIVE LISTENING:

1. Pay Attention: Give the speaker your undivided attention, and acknowledge the message. Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly. Look at the speaker directly. Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal! Avoid being distracted by environmental factors. "Listen" to the speaker's body language. Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

2. Show That You're Listening: Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention. Nod occasionally. Smile and use other facial expressions. Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting. Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh huh.

3. Provide Feedback: Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions. Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is." and "Sounds like you are saying." are great ways to reflect back. Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say." "Is this what you mean?" Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.

Tip: *If you find yourself responding emotionally to what someone said, say so, and ask for more information: "I may not be understanding you correctly, and I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XXX; is that what you meant?"*

4. Defer Judgment: Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message. Allow the speaker to finish. Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

5. Respond Appropriately: Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down. Be candid, open, and honest in your response. Assert your opinions respectfully. Treat the other person as he or she would want to be treated

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Mentors act as a sounding board for mentees. A sounding board is a person you run things by, or someone you turn to for advice. A mentor can practice two techniques as a sounding board, mirroring using prompts and mirroring using paraphrasing.

- **Mirroring using prompts:**

Prompt is a spoken instruction or questions that provide the mentee with direction on completing the task or understanding a situation. A direct prompt which is when you plainly give the mentee the correct response or answer. Indirect prompts which are just giving more of a subtle hint but not the exact answer.

This can look more like asking questions, highlighting options, and so on.

- **Mirroring using paraphrasing**

Paraphrase what has been said, rather than offering unsolicited advice or opinions. You might start this off by saying "In other words, what you are saying is...". The paraphrase should be shorter than the original comments made by the other person. If the other person responds to your paraphrase that you still don't understand him/her, then give the other person 1-2 chances to restate his position. Then you might cease the paraphrasing; otherwise, you might embarrass or provoke the other person.

GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS CHECKLIST

Use the checklist of good communication practices below to help you think about how you will communicate with your mentees.

- Plan all communications.
- Make sure you have your message clear in your own mind before you try to pass it on to others.
- Phrase your message in a language others can understand.
- Be yourself—natural and relaxed.
- Keep to the point and avoid rambling.
- Be positive.
- Put yourself in your mentee's shoes—what would you need to hear?
- Keep asking yourself, “Is he/she interested in what I'm saying?”
- Illustrate points by using examples, anecdotes, and visual aids.
- Don't be condescending or patronizing.
- Avoid distracting mannerisms.
- Ask plenty of questions (What? Why? Who? When? Where? How?)
- Resist distractions and listen for ideas.
- Don't overreact and overwhelm your mentees with excessive talk and explanation.

SENSITIVE SITUATIONS

When you build trust with someone, you may find that you hear intimate, unexpected, and even shocking or upsetting revelations. As a mentor, your job is to listen, to avoid being judgmental, and to defer to program staff or other recommended professionals when you know that a mentee needs help.

Before you find yourself in a situation like this, it is helpful to define ground rules for confidentiality. Early on in your relationship, you and your mentee can talk about what you expect from each other.

Explain that you will be an open listener, but you will always try to do what is best for your mentee. Talk generally about physical and emotional health and safety issues that might require help from other people. Assure your mentee that you will always act with her or his best interests in mind. If there comes a time when you need to seek outside help for your mentee, you can refer back to the promises you made in this early conversation.

TEN HINTS FOR HANDLING SENSITIVE SITUATIONS

- Sit at eye level with the other person.
 - Don't act surprised, shocked, or angry when hearing about the situation. But at the same time be honest and understanding that it is a difficult situation.
 - Remain calm and compassionate about her experience in the situation.
 - Don't pressure the individual to tell more than he is comfortable telling but instead use "open-ended" questions (questions that won't elicit a "yes" or "no" response) to allow him to continue if he is comfortable.
 - Don't make judgmental statements about the situation (e.g. "How could they...").
 - Acknowledge that he/she trusted you enough to tell you.
 - Reflect back to the person what feelings she is expressing ("That sounds scary.").
 - Affirm the person for using his coping skills and surviving.
 - Be honest about what you need to do with the information.
 - Brainstorm her options with her and offer appropriate resources.
-

PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS

If your mentee raises a health concern or you become aware of a serious health concern that the mentee is not sharing with you, such as clear signs of drug/alcohol abuse, depression, or suicidal thoughts:

- Report your concerns to your program coordinator and international student liaison immediately.
- Encourage your mentee to have an honest discussion with you about the concern.
- Remind your mentee that you have limited training in dealing with this issue and suggest that a trained professional could offer more support
- Let the mentee know that the mentoring program staff can help him/her obtain assistance if necessary
- Continue meeting with your mentee, listening and providing encouragement and praise for facing the problem and working on it

'WHAT IF' SCENARIOS

1

WHAT IF A MENTOR/MENTEE DOESN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE/DOESN GET ALONG WITH HIS/HER MENTOR/MENTEE?

Talk to the Program Coordinators of the project to state your issues with your mentor/mentee so that they can evaluate the best course of action, i.e. if it is something that could be solved by conflict resolution, suggestions, or reassignment

2

WHAT IF A MENTOR FEELS THEY CANNOT HELP OR ANSWER THE QUESTION OF THE MENTEE?

As long as it is not a matter of your mentee that is too personal, first, try to seek advice with fellow mentors. If this is not sufficient, ask your supervisor for help. If it is in fact a personal issue, talk directly with your supervisor to safeguard your mentee's privacy as much as possible

3

WHAT IF A MENTOR DOES NOT/CANNOT MEET HIS RESPONSIBILITIES?

For this, different levels of offenses are described below. For lower offenses the mentor supervisor will be in charge of documenting the ignoring of responsibilities from the mentor's part. The supervisor will notify the mentor of their shortcomings and will offer feedback on how to improve their contribution. If the mentor continues to ignore their responsibilities, they will eventually be let go from the project.

For low offenses, it will take 3 incidents for the Mentor to be let go. It will take 2 offenses for the Mentor to be let go when it comes to moderate offenses. If the offense is high, the Mentor will be let go immediately. If the Mentor incurs in a combination of low and moderate offenses, then the supervisor together with the coordinators will apply their judgement to determine how many incidents will be tolerated before incurring in termination of the mentor.

High Offenses: Incurring in sexual harassment/assault, endangering the health or well being of the Mentee.

Moderate Offenses: Not complying with the necessary information that their supervisors ask of them, generating a hostile environment for the rest of the mentors or mentees, unjustifiably ignoring their Mentee's requests for guidance, bullying their mentee

Low Offenses: Giving poor or inaccurate guidance to their Mentee, disrespecting their colleagues.

WHAT IF A MENTOR HELPS HIS/HER MENTEE WITH THE ASSIGNMENTS?

4

Doing an assignment for their mentee or sharing their own past work is a high offense that would lead to being immediately terminated from the project. What a mentor can do at most is to offer personal advice based on their past experience, for example, discussing things that worked for them or not, or suggest resources that the mentee might not be aware of yet.

WHAT IF THE MENTEE SHOWS SEVERE SIGNS OF BEING OVERWHELMED WITH THE PROGRAM/ADAPTING TO A NEW COUNTRY?

5

At first, the mentor can try to talk with the mentee in order to evaluate the seriousness of the issues. Based on that, the mentor can get advice from their supervisor or fellow mentors on what to recommend to their mentee. If there is no improvement, then the volunteers will refer the mentee to a healthcare professional, delaying or ignoring the problem will only make it worse.

WHAT IF A MENTOR DISRESPECTS THEIR MENTEE?

6

Since disrespecting any of your colleagues is considered to be a low offense, if the individual incurs in this behavior 3 times, it will be documented and they will be terminated from the project.

WHAT IF A MENTEE DISRESPECTS THEIR MENTOR?

7

The incidents when this happens will be documented in the same way it is done for the mentors. Additionally, after each incident the mentor supervisor will intervene to find conflict resolution. However, in the event that this happens on 3 separate occasions, the Mentor will have the right to request a change in Mentee.

WHAT IF A MENTEE ASKS THE MENTOR ABOUT HOW TO GET HEALTHCARE?

8

First of all, the mentee should ask for guidance to the assistance coordinator of the respective institution. Nonetheless, the mentee could also contact their insurance provider directly to confirm the policies of their coverage and how to get reimbursement. The Mentors could also suggest information on how they can get healthcare from the public institutions, such as issuing the CatSalut card in the case of Barcelona. Moreover, the Mentorship Project will keep a list of private healthcare providers that the Mentees could turn to if they want to and then they can get their reimbursement.

WHAT IF A MENTOR NOTICES THAT A MENTEE IS DOING SOMETHING THAT GOES AGAINST THE UNIVERSITY'S POLICIES?

9

The mentor should warn them not to incur in such behavior, and if it persists then they should notify the coordinators of the project and they will in turn notify the coordination of the university depending on the seriousness of the issue.

ADDITIONAL ROLES

Project Manager Coordinator

- Responsible for smooth running of the whole project
- Responsible for planning certain parts, monitoring the progress of project, coordinating meetings, overseeing members of the project team

Administrative Support Coordinator

- Responsible for all administrative issues
- Certificates for mentors
- Communication with the university staff
- Maintain organized file systems/database/project management platform

Social Events Coordinator

- Responsible for social activities, events, trips
- Creating event/trip proposals fitting project requirements
- Organizing the project activities
- Promoting the activities

Research Coordinator

- Responsible for controlling the research related to this project
- Conduct statistical analysis and make interpretation
- Enter data into a database

Mentor Supervisor

- Responsible for supervising all mentors
- Responsible for resolving any issues or doubts, provide guidance & support, identify development needs, manage reciprocal relationship between mentors and mentees, train mentors, report issues, provide feedback to mentors

Business/Logistic Coordinator

- Responsible for business and logistic issues
- Making new partnerships related to the mentorship project (sim card, transport cards, entrances)

Design Coordinator

- Plans and oversees the aesthetic elements of a project
- Responsible for creating different kinds of designs (flyers, posts, logos, presentations etc..)
- Collaborating with all members who needs any kind of design

Copy-editor Coordinator

- Proofreading of all documents
- Offering help to other colleagues with English writing, correction

MEET THE TEAM

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO DEVELOPED
THE WOP-P MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

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2021

WOP-P MENTOR TRAINING HANDBOOK

*ADAPTED FROM PIERCE COLLEGE, PEER TO PEERS TRAINING
MANUAL*