SCHOOL *of* INTERNATIONAL SERVICE
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON, DC

2010 - 2011 SIS ALUMNI-STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAM
MENTOR TIPS & TALKING POINTS

Overview:

Once the mentor-mentee matches are confirmed, and information is sent to each participant, mentees are responsible for contacting their mentors as soon as possible. Contact between participants can be in the form of mailings, phone calls, e-mails, or personal meetings. The initial contact should be informal. In many cases, the first face-to-face contact will occur at the Kick-Off Reception on September 15th. The goal in the first meeting is to foster an environment in which both participants are at ease. Additionally, at the end of every meeting, arrangements should be made for subsequent meetings. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to discuss issues related to expectations and goals of the relationship at the outset.

The outline below is intended to assist mentors with the mentoring process. Mentors are not expected to address all stated areas and this is by no means an exhaustive list, merely a guide. Please also take into consideration the specific information that you can share with your mentee that they are not likely to learn from any other sources.

Questions for Mentors and Mentees to ask each other:

1. What do you expect from this relationship?
2. How often would you like to meet?
3. Where should our meetings take place?
4. What is your preferred method of communication (i.e. telephone, email, in person)?
5. Discuss any concerns.

Questions for Mentors to ask Mentees:

1. What are your plans for your professional future?
2. Do you need help in learning how to network?
3. What kind of network would you like to develop?
4. What are your overarching, or long terms, goals?

Possible Meeting Topics:

The outline below is intended to assist mentors and mentees with the mentoring process. You are not expected to address all stated areas and this is by no means an exhaustive list, merely a guide. Please also take into consideration the specific information that your mentor can share with you that you are not likely to learn from any other sources.

1. Discuss the overall goals and expectations of the program:
    - Address specific communication preferences for the mentor and mentee
    - Discuss how to handle changes in plans
    - Mentor describes current job, early/first job(s):
        - What is a day-in-the-life like for you?
        - What do you like most about your profession?

- What skills matter most?
- What do you and your employer look for when hiring a new employee?
- What skills do you/your employer wish more applicants had?
- What skills are best learned on the job?

2. Discuss networking:

   - Ask your mentee what they know about effective networking.
   - Discuss the value of networking.
   - Discuss your approach to networking.
   - Explore your contact circle by utilizing the mentor spreadsheet.
   - Help your mentee identify networking opportunities.

3. Resume and cover letter:

   - Review your mentee's current resume.
   - Review a cover letter your mentee has written/ask them to write a sample cover letter in advance of this meeting.
   - Provide suggestions when needed.
   - Discuss elements of a strong resume and cover letter.

4. Job interviews:

   - Discuss your interview experiences.
   - Discuss interview strategy.
   - Role-play interviews.

5. Fields of Interest:

   - Discuss your mentee's current interests.
   - Help your mentee to expand their awareness of related fields and areas of employment.
   - Discuss realistic expectations for entry level positions.

6. Job shadowing or interning (when possible):

   - Provide the opportunity for your mentee to shadow you for a day.
   - Facilitate introductions to colleagues.