

MENTOR HANDBOOK
MLS Online Programs
Weber State University

Mentoring is the art of helping and empowering others to shape their learning behaviours. The concept of mentoring has a long history, one that comes to us from Greek mythology. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. However, a Mentor was more than a teacher. Mentor was half-male and half-female and was wisdom personified. Literature on higher education identifies effective mentoring as an influential factor in student success. Mentoring integrates the student into the organization/and or department and fosters:

- Self-esteem
- Affirmation of potential
- Orientation to the culture of the institution and/or department
- Access to information and resources;
- Empowerment.

Good mentoring practice empowers students by encouraging and supporting each student in successful achievement of goals, and adapting to the academic, social, political and cultural mores of the institution.

The Importance

Transition to an online university program is a challenging experience. Students benefit from the assistance of more experienced individuals and Mentors have the gratification of helping a student and acquiring multiple skills for themselves.

The Goal of a Mentor

The goal of the mentor is to give students a supportive environment that will motivate and assist them to improve performance while promoting a cohesive culture.

Objectives of the Mentor

- Provide positive role models
- Provide a framework for positive interaction between students, and CLS staff
- Orientate students to their laboratory department culture
- Enable students to understand the challenges and opportunities of the laboratory setting and enhance opportunities for success
- Encourage students in the development of leadership and interpersonal skills
- Have continual evaluation integrated into the MLS program thereby continually improving the program.

Purpose

- Provide a sense of belonging within the laboratory culture
- Develop a stronger sense of community within the laboratory
- Help counter any initial feelings of isolation and/or anxiety

Strategies

- Establish an contact base within the laboratory for the MLS Instructors
- Provide mentors who will assist students with tactical competency skills leading towards academic success
- Recruit new mentors to perpetuate the ideals and practice of the program
- Support mentors and acknowledge their contribution to the MLS Educational and Laboratory Community
- Establish, support and maintain relevant technology and contact to assist the mentoring process

The Nature of the Mentor Relationship

Establishing a positive mentoring relationship is very much like establishing other valued human relationships in a number of respects. Both parties have a genuine desire to understand the values and expectations of the other, and to respect and become sensitive to one another's feelings and needs. At the same time, mentoring relationships differ in an important way from other personal relationships because they are professional in nature. Mentors are responsible for conveying and upholding the standards, norms, and values of the facility they are representing. They are responsible for offering support and challenge to the recipient of their mentoring while the recipient strives to fulfil the facility's expectations.

Healthy mentoring relationships are evolutionary rather than static in nature. They change because the purpose of the relationship is to enable the recipient to acquire new knowledge, skills and standards of competence. The perceptions of both members of the relationship progress as the recipient's performance evolves to new levels of competence under guidance and support. The end result for the student is developing into well trained 'home grown' laboratory professional.

The Benefits of Being a Mentor

Mentoring is a two-way street, and the Mentee is not the only one who benefits from a mentoring relationship. The act of mentoring provides significant interpersonal and leadership skills development.

Mentor Qualities

- Demonstrate an ability to share knowledge, skills and experience with the student;
- Listens well;
- Recognise and encourages excellence in others;
- Be sensitive to the needs of others;
- Offer support, patience, and enthusiasm;
- Expose the student to new ideas, perspectives, and standards;
- Apply ethical principles in all facets of mentoring;
- Demonstrate tolerance and an understanding of cultural diversity.
- Serve as role models to students by providing support and information;
- Possess a positive attitude;
- Must be mature, responsible, and trustworthy;
- Display a genuine interest in the success of students;

Generic Skills of Mentors

1) Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- The ability to adapt knowledge to new situations
- The ability to define and to solve problems in at least one discipline area
- Interpersonal Understanding
- The ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences
- The ability to lead, manage and contribute effectively to teams

2) Literacy and Numeracy

- The ability to speak and write logically, clearly and creatively
- The ability to calculate, produce, interpret and communicate numerical information in ways appropriate to the discipline area(s) studied

4) Learning Achievement

- A coherent and disciplined body of skills, knowledge, values and professional ethics in at least one discipline area
- The ability to use a variety of media and methods to retrieve, analyse evaluate, organise and present information
- The ability to reflect on and evaluate learning processes and products
- The ability to learn independently and in a self-directed manner
- A commitment to lifelong learning and intellectual development

What Does a Mentor Do?

- Meets with student at the start of the semester and develop a schedule for the time spent in the laboratory environment both can adhere to
- Provide support and encouragement for the Mentee
- Provide feedback for the student on progress obtained
- Attend continued education training and professional development seminars
- Clarify, where necessary, laboratory policy/procedures
- Check off students in attaining competency skills for the checklist
- Assist students in acquiring lecture/tutorial/workshop practical and research skills
- Network and liase with students and faculty when necessary

What a Mentor Does Not Do

- Mentors are not academic advisors, instructors, tutors, or counsellors.
- Most importantly, Mentors are not expected to know all the answers.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The MLS Online Program seeks to ensure that all students are able to work and study in an environment free from violent, abusive or disruptive behaviours. In recognising, that such behaviours may take place mentors are committed to the proper recognition and the sensitive handling of such complaints.

Workplace Health and Safety Procedures

Students have a statutory obligation to follow Workplace Health and Safety directions specific to safety procedures involved in training activities.

DECISION MAKING

Should I Become a Mentor?

This checklist is designed to guide the self-reflection of individuals who are thinking about becoming Mentors. On each question below, please determine if you see yourself in this role:

- ☐ I see myself as being people oriented
- ☐ I am a good listener and respect my colleagues and peers
- ☐ I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others
- ☐ I recognise when others need support or independence
- ☐ I want to contribute to the academic development of others
- ☐ I am able to support and help without smothering, parenting, or taking charge
- ☐ I am able to explain things at various levels of complexity and detail

Scoring your Mentor Abilities

There is no single ideal profile, but respondents who possess many of these qualities are likely to serve well as Mentors. If you have serious doubts about the strength of your qualifications, it might be useful to seek a second opinion from a colleague. It is also important to recognise that many of the qualities listed here are developed or learned and the result of practice.

PROCEDURE FOR BECOMING A MENTOR

- 1) Fill out the Affiliated Faculty Fact Sheet at the end of the Handbook or ask the laboratory manager for one
- 2) Update your continuing education credits
- 3) Give the completed form to the WSU student for submission

Your Faculty Fact Sheet then be filed with your institution's paperwork which is kept in the MLS department at WSU



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

AFFILIATED FACULTY FACT SHEET

Date:

Name:

Position:

Title:

Phone #:

E-mail:

Employed By:

Certified By:

Certification #:

Year Certified:

Proportion of Time (%) Spent in:

Clinical Services:

Administration:

Teaching:

Education:

Institution	Field of Study	Degree	Year

Prior Experience:

Institution	Department	Title	Dates

List principle functions in the educational program: