Alumni Mentor Program Handbook

prepared by
Office of Alumni Engagement
Welcome

The USF Alumni Mentor Program first began in 2013 as a LinkedIn group called Dons Helping Dons, which quickly grew to more than 3,000 members.

Both the Office of Alumni Engagement and the Career Services Center sensed the need to “bring LinkedIn to life” and so began the good work of building an Alumni Mentor Program that facilitates relationship building and skill development while embodying core Jesuit values such as service to others and cura personalis.

MISSION STATEMENT

To facilitate meaningful mentor relationships between experienced alumni, recent graduates, and current students with a focus on community building, character development, and career advancement.

USF mentors “live the mission” by dedicating their time, talents and energy to helping fellow Dons achieve their personal, academic and career goals.

Building a mutually beneficial, open and trusting relationship with your mentor/mentee will take time, effort and a degree of patience. This handbook is intended to assist you with this process by explaining your responsibilities, providing suggestions on how to prepare for and conduct successful mentor meetings, and offering a plethora of suggested activities to complete with your mentor/mentee.

Of course, this handbook cannot cover everything. In working with your mentor/mentee, you must rely on your good sense and instincts while maintaining the highest level of personal and professional integrity.

I trust that your mentoring experience will prove rewarding and inspiring. Please contact me directly with questions, concerns, suggestions and/or feedback.

Now, in the words of St. Ignatius, “Go forth and set the world on fire.”

Sincerely,

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# Table of Contents

- Program Goals & Outline ................................................................. 4
- Mentor Responsibilities ............................................................... 5
- Mentee Responsibilities .............................................................. 6
- Meeting Your Mentor/Mentee .................................................... 7
- Maintaining Momentum ............................................................... 8
- Distance Mentoring ................................................................. 10
- Online Community Forum ....................................................... 11
- Career Services Center ............................................................ 12
- Appendix ................................................................................. 13

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**If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.**  
–Booker T. Washington
Program Goals & Outline

The USF Alumni Mentor Program facilitates meaningful connections between experienced alumni, recent graduates and current students across a wide variety of industries and fields of study; specific program goals:

- **Equip** the mentee with skills and tools needed to make sound career decisions;
- **Assist** the mentee with establishing and accomplishing short and long-term goals, both personal and professional;
- **Improve** the mentee’s leadership, teamwork, creative thinking, decision making, and interpersonal skills;
- **Explore** and discuss with the mentee different career paths, companies and industries;
- **Facilitate** community building, character development and career advancement for both mentors and mentees.

The USF Alumni Mentor Program is a curated two-semester program that provides the mentor and mentee the flexibility to decide mutually on both the timing and the content of meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Featured Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, November 1st, 2016</td>
<td>AMP Kickoff Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Meeting #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>Meeting #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Meeting #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Meeting #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>AMP Closing Luncheon</td>
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Mentor Responsibilities

Community Building

As a USF mentor, your first responsibility is to help foster a mentorship community based on trust and mutual respect. Lead by example in all things:

- Attend and be social at university events and featured activities.
- Be punctual and come prepared to mentor meetings.
- Be an active member of Dons Helping Dons and other LinkedIn groups.
- Have your own mentor(s) and professional network.

Character Development

One of USF’s core values as a Jesuit institution is *cura personalis*, or “care for the whole person.” Thus, your second responsibility is to help your mentee become a complete human being.

- Be a positive role model (both online and in person).
- Be genuinely interested in your mentee as an individual.
- Acknowledge achievements and offer positive reinforcement.
- Help your mentee to maintain a positive attitude and an open mind.

Career Advancement

Your third and main responsibility will be to help prepare your mentee for the “world of work.” How you go about doing this will depend on the individual personality, skills and interests of your mentee. Here are some tried and true ways to support your mentee’s career growth:

- Be responsive to your mentee when they reach out for help or advice.
- Be open and generous in sharing your ideas, experiences, resources and network.
- If possible, invite your mentee to meet your colleagues and peers
- Encourage your mentee to take risks and seize opportunities.
Mentee Responsibilities

Mentoring is an equal partnership between two individuals and USF mentees are expected to put forth as much effort as their mentors.

Your mentor will help you make progress towards both your personal and professional goals, but only if you keep an open mind and adhere to these basic recommendations:

- With your mentor, **decide on preferred method and frequency of contact**; listen and respect the opportunities, limitations and format of the relationship.

- **Be proactive** in reaching out to and scheduling 1:1 meetings with your mentor.

- **Create an agenda** for each mentor meeting (e.g., prepare questions; suggest discussion topics).

- **Establish and continuously review your goals** (see p. 16), assess progress and determine next steps with your mentor.

- **Respect your mentor’s time** as you do your own; respond to messages or calls within two business days and notify your mentor no fewer than 24 hours in advance if you expect to miss a scheduled meeting.

- **Seriously consider all advice or suggestions** you receive; demonstrate when you have followed advice at every opportunity and express appreciation for every form of assistance you receive.

- **Engage in reverse mentoring**; share information and ideas that may help your mentor with his/her own personal or professional development.

- **Ask for honest feedback**; don’t respond defensively.

- **Provide positive feedback** to your mentor and do not disparage your mentor to others.

- **Assume the mentoring relationship will be strictly professional**; be friendly, but do discuss, agree on and respect personal boundaries.

- If you are a current student, **keep your mentor informed** of academic progress, achievements or difficulties.

- Be active on LinkedIn and other professional networking sites.
Meeting Your Mentor/Mentee

Once you have been successfully matched with your mentor/mentee, you will be introduced to each other via email and will receive a formal invitation to the fall AMP Kickoff. (Mentors/mentees located outside of the Bay Area will receive separate instructions based on their geographic region.)

The AMP Kickoff is the first opportunity to meet your mentor/mentee. The reception will include a brief workshop on mentoring, time for goal setting, and, of course, socializing.

From there, you are expected to connect with your mentor/mentee an additional 4 times over the course of the program. Getting off to a strong start is critical, so here are a few things to consider when preparing for your first mentor meeting:

• First, decide on the date, time, length and location of your first meeting at least one week in advance.

• The first 1:1 meeting should be casual and relaxed, so consider going for coffee or lunch, meeting on campus, or attending one of the featured activities. (Be prepared to pay your own way at all times. You’re not expected to pay for your mentor/mentee.)

• Share personal and professional interests with each other.

• Review basic documents such as the mentee’s resume and cover letter.

• Write/review 3-5 goals (see p. 16) for the mentee to accomplish/work towards.

**Kick-Start the Conversation!**

What was your childhood like? What were your dreams and schemes?

Where did you go to high school? What is/was your favorite class at USF?

What are your hobbies and interests? What are you passionate about?

Where in the world have you been? What have you learned from your travels?

Who do you admire and respect? Why?
Maintaining Momentum

Getting connected is easy, but staying connected is hard. Like all relationships worth pursuing, mentoring relationships demand time and energy.

The USF Alumni Mentor Program requires that you meet with your mentor/mentee a minimum of 4 times over the course of 8 months (not including the reception). To ensure that happens, we encourage you to be flexible with your schedule, be honest about other commitments, and respect each other’s time.

People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing. That’s why we recommend it daily.
–Zig Ziglar

USF helps facilitate regular communication between mentors and mentees by sending monthly emails chock full of timely content, reminders and suggested activities, including:

Community Building

- **Attend** USF-sponsored events such as basketball games, guest lectures, career fairs.
- **Invite** fellow mentors and mentees to an informal group lunch or dinner.
- **Engage** in community projects together such as volunteering.

Character Development

- **Enroll** in soft-skill enhancing programs (e.g., Toastmasters International).
- **Select** a book to read and discuss together over the course of the program.
- **Compete** in a team activity together (e.g., pickup game of basketball; trivia).
- **Help** one another achieve personal goals (e.g., maintaining a healthy lifestyle).
- **Attend** Mass or other religious/spiritual services (as appropriate).

Career Advancement

- With the mentee, **decide** on 3-5 SMART goals (see p. 16) for them to work towards.
- **Help** polish the mentee’s resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile and elevator pitch.
• **Ask** your mentee to shadow you (or a close and trusted associate) at work for a few hours or an entire day.

• **Invite** your mentee to join you in a social activity where other professionals or clients are involved.

• **Research** and join professional and/or student organizations; subscribe to appropriate magazines and trade journals.

• **Arrange** informational interviews for your mentee so he/she can hear multiple perspectives on different career paths and companies.

• **Give** your mentee an assignment (e.g., researching a specific industry or company; reading a certain magazine or newspaper article).

• **Go** shopping! If your mentee is open to the idea, help them to select “business professional” and “business casual” outfits.

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**Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.**

—Winston Churchill
Distance Mentoring

The USF Alumni Mentor Program is not limited to the San Francisco Bay Area. Alumni living/working outside the Bay Area are encouraged to join the program.

Distance mentoring is a mentoring relationship in which the mentor and mentee are in different geographic locations. Distance mentoring relies almost exclusively on email, video conferencing, and online meeting software and platforms.

Of course, this type of mentoring relationship is not without its challenges. To ensure a successful mentoring experience, keep these suggestions in mind:

- **Use videoconferencing software** (e.g., Skype), especially for your first meeting. This will help you pick up nonverbal cues and get a better sense of your mentor/mentee. Yes, you still have to dress professionally!

- **Get personal.** Consider sharing photos of your family members, friends, favorite places, etc. This will go a long way towards building a trusting relationship.

- **Email sparingly.** Email is best for scheduling meetings, sharing resources, and asking non-urgent questions. Avoid using email to give critical feedback.

- **Stick to your word.** Distance mentoring sometimes makes it seem easy to postpone or cancel a mentor meeting. This is quick way to corrode trust. Instead, show up to each session fully prepared for a productive conversation.

- **Listen for nonverbal cues.** Sometimes you can tell how people feel not by what they say but how they say it. Keep your ear tuned for a rising or lowering of voice; a change in tone; silence; a quickening or slowing of speaking pace; sighs, pauses, and similar expressions.
Online Community Forum

Also new to the program this year is the Online Community Forum.

http://usfblogs.usfca.edu/mentorprogram/

Password: amp2015

Here you are encouraged to share ideas, advice, resources, stories, pictures … even plan outings or group mentor sessions! You will also find important program updates and event announcements.

When you’re ready to contribute to the discussion, visit the “Submit” page. You can submit a simple question, a blog-style post, a link to a great resource… the floor is yours.
Career Services

The university’s three career centers support both students and alumni in their career endeavors. While not required, we encourage all mentees to visit their career center at least once during the program to supplement the good advice and suggestions of the mentors.

**Priscilla A. Scotlan Career Services Center**
University Center, 5th Floor
W: [https://www.usfca.edu/career/](https://www.usfca.edu/career/)
E: careerservices@usfca.edu
T: (415) 422-6216

**School of Law – Office of Career Planning**
Kendrick Hall, 230
W: [https://www.usfca.edu/law/career](https://www.usfca.edu/law/career)
E: lawcareer@usfca.edu
T: (415) 422-6757

**School of Management – Graduate Career Services**
University Center, 5th Floor
W: [https://www.usfca.edu/management/student-life/career-services](https://www.usfca.edu/management/student-life/career-services)
E: SOMCareers@usfca.edu
T: (415) 422-5033
## Alumni Mentor Program: Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Respect &amp; Harassment</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet Your Match</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Rules</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.M.A.R.T. Goals</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Staff</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Respect & Harassment

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT POLICY

In order to advance its fundamental value of “creating a culture of service that respects and promotes the dignity of every person”, the University of San Francisco (“University”) is committed to an environment that is free of sexual and other unlawful harassment. Sexual harassment is unlawful under Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act. As a matter of University policy, sexual or other unlawful harassment occurring in the course of any University activity is prohibited. This policy provides complaint procedures to assist the University in its efforts to implement this policy.

Harassment on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic-related), sexual orientation, sex, age, or any other protected status under federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation applicable to the University, is a violation of this policy.

Any such harassment of any individual in the course of any University-administered program, job or activity is prohibited and shall not be tolerated. The University shall take prompt and effective corrective action to address unlawful harassment. The policy explicitly applies to University students, faculty, staff, administrators, independent contractors and all other individuals engaged in University activities.

Individuals who know of harassment, or believe that they have been harassed, in violation of this policy are encouraged to contact the USF Alumni Mentor Program Coordinator immediately.

To read the full policy, visit: http://www.usfca.edu/templates/hr_inside.aspx?id=4294970599
Meet Your Match

These questions will help you and your mentor/mentee learn about each other.

- What is important to you? (E.g., social justice, a healthy lifestyle, volunteering, money…)
- What is your background and professional experience? (I.e., what internships/jobs have you held?)
- What skills do you have and are proud of? (E.g., public speaking, math, writing)
- What training or courses have you taken recently, or plan to take?
- Which professional journals do you subscribe to, or want to subscribe to?
- Which skills do you desire to develop?
- How will a mentoring partnership help develop those skills?
- What attracted you to this program?
- What one thing can I do to ensure a positive experience for you in this partnership?
- What should I expect from you in this mentoring partnership?
- Would you rather be a celebrity for 1 week in modern times, or a king or queen for 1 year in olden times?
- Star Wars or The Lord of the Rings?
- Summer or winter?
- Dogs or cats?
- Tell me about your most recent vacation.
- If money weren’t an object, where in the world would you buy property?
- What is your favorite restaurant in San Francisco?
Ground Rules

Use this handout to set ground rules, agree on limits, and develop a plan for your mentoring partnership. **Items to consider as you set your ground rules:**

- Who will take responsibility for setting up meetings?
- Should the person who breaks a meeting appointment be responsible for rescheduling?
- Are meeting reminders necessary?
- If one of us is unhappy with the relationship, what is the best way to deal with it?
- How will we handle confidentiality?
- How will we proceed if one of us needs to withdraw from the relationship?
- How will we meet? In person, by phone, via Skype/Hangouts?
- Should we meet during the workweek or on weekends and evenings?
- Are there any other norms/expectations we need to clarify?

**OUR GROUND RULES**

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2. 
3. 
4. 
5.
**S.M.A.R.T. Goals**

During the first mentor meeting, we recommend establishing 3-5 SMART goals for the mentor and mentee to accomplish/work towards. So, what are SMART goals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SPECIFIC</strong></th>
<th>Answer as many of the six W's as possible: Who, What, Where, When, Which, Why. At minimum, the goal must outline what needs to be accomplished and by when. Use action verbs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEASURABLE</strong></td>
<td>Decide on how you will you measure your success. Set quantitative benchmarks by asking yourself “How?” How will you know when you’ve made progress towards your goal, and how will you know when you’ve accomplished your goal?</td>
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<td><strong>ACHIEVABLE</strong></td>
<td>The means to achieve your goal must be within your control and influence, and the necessary resources must be accessible. Ask yourself if the goal is achievable given the available resources and timeframe.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REALISTIC</strong></td>
<td>Your goal must be one that you are both <strong>willing</strong> and <strong>able</strong> to work towards and accomplish. Outline a clear path to achieve to achieve your goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TIME-BOUND</strong></td>
<td>Decide on when you will accomplish your goal (and any necessary sub-goals). Use specific dates, calendar milestones and/or timeframes.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Not SMART</strong></th>
<th><strong>SMART</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore different careers.</td>
<td>Within 2 months, I will research 4 media companies and will work with my mentor to schedule informational interviews with employees from at least 2 of the companies. Based on what I learn, I will decide with my mentor what skills I may need to gain/improve and how I will gain/improve them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get an internship/job.</td>
<td>I will secure a job/internship before June 2015. I will do this by visiting the Career Services Center to review my resume, cover letter and LinkedIn profile before my second mentor meeting; attending 1 career fair and 2 social networking events before my third mentor meeting; and applying to a minimum of 50 internships before my final mentor meeting.</td>
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S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Use this handout to clarify 1-3 mentee goals and 1-2 mentor goals—both short and long term, personal and professional.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFIC. MEASURABLE. ACHIEVABLE. REALISTIC. TIME-BOUND</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. MENTEE GOAL</td>
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<td>4. MENTOR GOAL</td>
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<td>5. MENTOR GOAL</td>
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Program Staff

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