



Winona State University Alumni Mentoring Program

The objective of the new WSU Alumni Mentoring Program is twofold. First, it provides mentors with a meaningful volunteer opportunity to learn about the current student experience while also becoming a more engaged Winona State University ambassador. Secondly, it allows students (mentees) to gain valuable networking experience that will be critical to their future success, while also exposing them to the Winona State University Alumni Society. Mentors can provide specific information regarding career paths, goal setting, occupations and industries, as well as provide general advice for students for life after college.

The program is based on a network of alumni professionals willing to volunteer their time on behalf of WSU and motivate students eager to prepare themselves for success with the help of fellow Warriors. For both the mentor and the mentee, it is a win-win situation.

The goal of the program is to foster effective and beneficial partnerships between students and alumni. The mentor and mentee relationship will be based on networking and information sharing through online, telephone, social media and potentially in-person communication. The expectation is that each pair will communicate at least once monthly.



Winona State University Alumni Mentoring Program

Expectations:

Mentor

What is a Mentor? A mentor facilitates personal and professional growth in an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights that have been learned through the years.

All mentors participating in the program are required to follow and abide by the expectations listed on the mentor agreement form.

A WSU Mentor must be a Winona State University graduate, and must apply using the Mentor application process.

The mentor should be willing to share information about his/her life and experiences as to assist the mentees with their own career exploration and career decisions.

The mentor will need to **commit to 1-2 hours per month** in order to participate in this program.

The mentor is responsible for dispensing general career advice and guidance in any form appropriate for the student. The mentor is NOT responsible to conducting a job search for the student or offering the student an internship or full-time position with the company for which the mentor works. If possible, the mentor may choose to allow the mentee to shadow him/her on a workday.



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Expectations:

Mentee

What is a mentee? A mentee is an achiever- “groomed” for advancement by being provided opportunities to excel beyond the limits of his or her position.

All mentees participating in this program are required to follow and abide by the expectations listed on the mentee agreement form.

A WSU Mentee must be a current, full-time Winona State University student, and must apply using the Mentee application process.

Mentees should take an active role in the relationship by being prepared to discuss what will be most beneficial to their career development. Mentees should be prepared to ask questions, reflect on their meetings, share their WSU experience with their mentor and show their appreciation for their mentor’s time.

Mentees should understand that a mentor can give general career advice and guidance, and this programs offers networking opportunities as well. A mentee should also understand that it is NOT the purpose of the program for a mentor to conduct a job search for the mentee, nor to offer the mentee an internship or full-time position.

Mentees should make themselves available to connect with their mentor for a minimum of 1-2 hours per month.



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Mentor Agreement

I wish to participate as a mentor in the Winona State University Alumni Mentoring Program and therefore agree to the following:

1. Create or update a relevant LinkedIn profile
2. Connect with my mentee at least once a month (in person if possible). **1-2 hours per month is the commitment.**
3. Communicate with and respond to my mentee in a timely manner.
4. Notify my mentee if I cannot meet/connect with him/her for any reason and reschedule any cancelled meetings.
5. Be a resource to my mentee between our regular scheduled monthly meetings.
6. Communicate in a timely manner with program coordinator, Tracy Hale, if I feel uncomfortable or experience any issues or problems during my participation in the program.
7. I will share resources with my mentee, including, but not limited to: short term career exploration experiences, informational interviews and shadowing experiences as my situation permits.
8. I am aware the Winona State University Career Services has resources and services for my student mentee to use for additional assistance in their career development.
9. I will treat all information exchanged as confidential unless both parties agree it can be disclosed to others.



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Mentee Agreement

I wish to participate as a mentee in the Winona State University Alumni Mentoring Program and therefore agree to the following:

1. Create or update a relevant LinkedIn profile
2. Connect with my mentor at least once a month (in person if possible).
3. Understand that it is my responsibility as the mentee to initiate communication with my mentor at least once a month and to make sure I am communicating with and responding to my mentor in a timely manner.
4. Notify my mentor if I cannot meet/connect with him/her for any reason and to reschedule any cancelled meetings.
5. Communicate in a timely manner with program coordinator, Tracy Hale, if I feel uncomfortable or experience any issues or problems during my participation in the program.
6. Be an active participant in my career development, working to establish mentoring goals that align with my career interests.
7. Adhere to the Winona State University Student Standards of Behavior and Code of Conduct.
8. Treat all information exchanged as confidential unless both parties agree it can be disclosed to others.
9. Be available 1-2 hours per month to connect with your mentor.



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HANDBOOK

FIRST MEETING:

Your first meeting is an opportunity to get to know each other and identify goals you wish to pursue throughout the program. For your conversation, here are some topics you may want to include:

- Share information about each other's background and interests
- Discuss mentoring goals and reasons for participating
- Discuss student's career interests and goals
- Identify interest in mentoring activities (see list below for some suggested activities)
- Exchange contact information and schedules. Identify best times to connect and schedule future meetings
- Establish communication expectations

TIME COMMITMENT:

We recognize that you are exceptionally busy. A good mentoring relationship forms by consistent of frequent communication. This will most likely occur through a series of emails exchanges or phone calls. The Winona State University Mentoring Program is structured and designed with the limited scheduled of a busy professional in mind. **This program is a 1-2 hour commitment per month.**

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- Identify student's talents, skills and interests and discuss his/her application to various career options
- Discuss how mentor's personal and professional life fit together
- Discuss employer types and organizational culture
- Discuss professional standards and unspoken rules of etiquette that exist in your field or workplace
- Discuss the transition from school to work and identify struggles and things you wish you knew when you graduated
- Critique the student's resume and/or cover letter
- Practice for an interview, role play through questions
- Arrange or participate in a company tour
- Participate in a job shadow day
- Connect with other WSU Alumni on LinkedIn
- Practice for a presentation , help student refine presentation skills
- Investigate professional networks that would be beneficial for the student to join
- Attend a Winona State University Alumni event and network together to make important connections with other alums
- Attend any other WSU event; sporting, speaker series, theater, etc.
- Have the mentor join the mentee for a day of classes on campus

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- What qualities do you look for in people you hire?
- How do you handle obstacles, roadblocks or setbacks?
- Who has the most impact on your life?
- What do you see as upcoming trends in the industry?
- If you could start all over again in launching your career, what steps would you take?
- What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating parts of your work?
- What are the professional organizations in your field?
- Discuss your educational background and the role of educational preparation in your field.
- What are some of your personal goals?
- Share your WSU experiences

LISTENING TIPS:

Good mentoring requires good listening by both parties.

- Show interest
- Be open
- Let your mentee/mentor know when your time is limited
- Ask open-ended questions that result in more than a “yes” or “no”
- Ask clarifying questions that encourage more conversation
- Avoid distractions (such as email, television, music, roommates/family)
- Be willing to offer or accept feedback

GIVING FEEDBACK TIPS:

- Be direct and straightforward
- Be non-judgmental
- Be candid
- Be specific, focused and timely
- Be non-personal (focus on a behavior, not on the person)
- Encourage the mentee to take responsibility for his/her own actions
- Deal with behaviors or actions, not people or personalities
- Be fair, professional and balanced
- Offer help, support and suggestions

THE PROCESS:

Once participants have reviewed the expectations, requirements and decided they are able to commit to active participation, they may begin the online application. Application information is thoughtfully reviewed by the WSU Mentoring Coordinator and participants are matched up based off commonalities in their personal and professional profiles.

Once a match is made, a match notification email is sent to the pair introducing mentor and mentee and providing some basic information. **The mentee (student) is asked to make the first contact with the mentor (alumni).**