

# TRI-MENTORING PROGRAM

Student Handbook



a place of mind  
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Centre for Student Involvement and Careers



## Welcome to the Tri-Mentoring Program

Mentorship is a great opportunity for you to develop professional skills and build a strong network of relationships both within the UBC community and beyond.

This handbook is a companion piece to your training and will help you develop your relationship with your mentor.

Congratulations on the start of your exciting journey.

## Inside this handbook

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# OVERVIEW & BENEFITS

## Program Overview

The UBC Tri-Mentoring Program connects you with industry and faculty mentors in order to introduce you to the professional world. It also enables mentors to promote their industries, network with other mentors, develop new skills, and maintain a connection with the UBC community.

Senior students (generally third- or fourth-year students) are matched with mentors working in various industries and UBC faculties. In some groups (clusters), the senior students in turn mentor more junior students (generally first- or second-year students). The program incorporates face-to-face mentoring with online contact, networking events, and connections to career development resources. Students and mentors commit to the program for a specific length of time, usually one academic year.

Tri-Mentoring at UBC is offered through individual faculty, department, or student groups called Tri-Mentoring clusters. The Centre for Student Involvement and Careers supports these clusters and oversees this collaborative, cross-campus initiative.

## Benefits of Tri-Mentoring

The UBC Tri-Mentoring Program was created to support students as they start building their careers. Students report that they find the experience invaluable. Our mentors tell us that they also learn and grow within the program.

### Top five benefits for you

1. Receive an introduction into the professional world.
2. Share life experiences and learn from your mentor's challenges and achievements.
3. Start building your professional network.
4. Develop time management, leadership and communication skills.
5. Gain clarity on career, academic, and personal plans.

### Top five benefits for mentors

1. Give back some of the support and inspiration they have received throughout their career.
2. Make contacts within their industry and build their professional network.
3. Improve their communication and leadership skills.
4. Develop and maintain connections to UBC and contribute to efforts to build a stronger industry and community.
5. Contribute to the future of their field or industry by assisting the next generation of leaders.



# TRI-MENTORING ROLES

The Tri-Mentoring model features three types of participants:

- the faculty or industry mentor
- the senior student mentor/mentee
- the junior student mentee

Cluster Coordinators and the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers play vital supporting roles.

## Faculty or Industry Mentor

Faculty or industry mentors support the career development of a student. Mentors generally commit to the program for one academic year (eight months). Mentors assist students in three key areas:

### Building a supportive and encouraging relationship

- Encourage their mentees to ask questions, voice opinions, and be clear about their program goals and expectations
- Share professional anecdotes and wisdom gained from experience

### Providing professional development opportunities

- Provide guidance on workplace expectations, professional relationships, and career paths
- Model professional behaviour
- Attend industry events and other networking opportunities; provide referrals to other professionals when appropriate

### Actively participating in the Tri-Mentoring Program

- Attend program events
- Meet with their students and communicate via phone and email as agreed upon at the beginning of the program
- Communicate any problems or issues to the Cluster Coordinator so they may be resolved quickly
- Complete an online exit survey and share feedback to contribute both to the ongoing development of Tri-Mentoring on campus and across Canada

## Senior Student Mentor/Mentee

**Senior students can be both mentors and mentees:**

- As mentors, their role is to help junior student mentees get the most out of the UBC experience and on-campus professional development opportunities.
- As mentees, they initiate activities and discussions with the faculty or industry mentor to get ready for their entrance into the professional world. Senior student mentees may ask their mentor for advice and guidance on how to be a mentor. They might also learn professional behaviour and mentoring techniques modelling their mentor's techniques.

## Junior Student Mentee

Some clusters have junior mentees, who talk with senior student mentors about campus life and career development opportunities. In most clusters, junior students work primarily with the senior students and may only have contact with the faculty or industry mentor at the kick-off and end-of-year events.

An important Tri-Mentoring goal is to build community at UBC by having junior students continue in the program as senior students and, eventually, as faculty or industry mentors.

## Cluster Coordinators

Cluster coordinators administer the Tri-Mentoring program and other student development projects within individual faculties, departments, or student groups. They recruit mentors, match them with mentees, monitor participant progress, and assist with overall program evaluation. Because coordinators adapt the tri-mentoring program to meet their goals, the program differs slightly from cluster to cluster.

## The Centre for Student Involvement and Careers

The Centre for Student Involvement and Careers coordinates the Tri-Mentoring Program and provides support and guidance to clusters within faculties, departments, or campus associations.



# MILESTONES & TIMELINES

<b>Timelines</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
August to September	Recruitment and information sessions
Mid-September to Mid-October	Information sessions Student orientation Mentees complete objectives sheets and review with mentors
Mid-October to Mid-November	Kick-off social event for mentors and mentees
November to March	Meetings with mentors Cluster coordinator follow-up re: mentor match
March to April	Wrap-up social event for mentors and mentees Online exit survey completion Mentees complete reflections sheets and review with mentors

*Note: Specific dates and event times will vary for each Tri-Mentoring cluster. Your cluster coordinator will advise you about dates and times.*



# CODE OF CONDUCT & EVALUATION

## Guidelines for mentoring relationships

The following Code of Conduct provides important guidance to both mentors and mentees regarding their mentoring relationships. These boundaries protect the rights of all mentoring participants. Both mentors and mentees are asked to sign a contract agreeing to the following points:

1. Trust and confidentiality are critical components of a successful mentoring relationship and will be maintained at all times.
2. The Student Declaration and Responsibility (<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,285,0,0>) and the UBC Respectful Environment Statement (<http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/>), including policies on discrimination and harassment, will be strictly adhered to.
3. No illegal drugs will be promoted or consumed within the mentoring relationship or related to mentoring partnership activities.
4. No alcohol will be promoted or consumed within the mentoring relationship or related to mentoring partnership activities where students are below the legal drinking age. Where students are over the legal drinking age, alcohol consumption within the mentoring relationship or related to the mentoring partnership activities will only take place in licensed establishments, and no excessive alcohol consumption will be promoted.
5. Students must be enrolled for the duration of the program and must remain in good academic standing. Where applicable, students must maintain a minimum GPA determined by their department or faculty.
6. Attendance and active participation in all Tri-Mentoring Program training sessions, meetings, and events is required.
7. Romantic or intimate involvement between mentees and their mentors during the term of the mentoring program is not allowed.
8. Professional conduct will be maintained at all times throughout the mentoring relationship.
9. Commitment to the mentoring relationship is an important part of the Tri-Mentoring Program. Those unable to fulfill their responsibilities or who are having difficulty in their mentoring relationship should contact their Cluster Coordinator to discuss the appropriate course of action.
10. Failure to comply with any of the above can lead to the termination of the mentoring relationship and individual participation by either the mentee or mentor.
11. Participants will develop and maintain connections to UBC and contribute to efforts to build a stronger industry and community.
12. Mentors will contribute to the future of their field or industry by assisting the next generation of leaders.

## Evaluation

We are committed to improving the Tri-Mentoring Program at UBC and are responsive to participant feedback. You will be asked to evaluate the program through exit surveys. You will be asked to comment on program structure, the success of your match, and what you feel is working or not working throughout the process. Your Cluster Coordinator will also be in touch with you for occasional, informal program monitoring.



# THE POSSIBILITIES

## What students get from Tri-Mentoring

### Junior students

- Discover networking/volunteering/involvement options on campus
- Gain clarity about your educational path
- Make contacts with other students in your same program
- Strengthen your academic habits and learning skills
- Learn how to manage being a student on a large campus
- Find out how a senior student became clearer on their educational and occupational path
- Receive tips on finding part-time and summer jobs
- Receive tips for succeeding in your courses
- Observe a role model (senior student being a mentor)

### Senior students

- Make contacts with faculty or industry mentors in your field of study
- Learn about real life work experiences
- Job shadow someone from your area of study
- Enhance interview skills
- Improve your resume and cover letter
- Develop mentoring and leadership skills
- Observe a role model
- Learn about networking
- Receive advice on gaining career-related experience and finding job openings

## Creating memorable moments

### Activities that senior students can do with their industry or faculty mentors:

- Participate in a mock interview with your mentor
- Ask to have an informational interview
- Spend some time or the day at your mentor's workplace
- Attend a workshop or conference together
- Go for coffee or a meal and talk about career interests and accomplishments
- Ask them if they mind sharing personal stories about their work life
- Tour a facility in your field of interest
- Discuss the goals you have set during your orientation training with the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers
- Ask your mentor how they went about finding a job
- Discuss the types of employment that are possible with your degree
- Look at job websites together to explore potential job opportunities
- Ask about how they maintain a work/life balance
- Share your cover letter, resume and LinkedIn profile with your mentor and ask for feedback
- Ask your mentor about possible past experiences they have had as a mentee

### Activities that senior students can do with their junior student mentees:

- Go to lunch and discuss some of the courses you have taken or are planning to take
- Go to dinner with your industry mentor, as a triad
- Share your cover letter, resume and LinkedIn profile with your mentor and ask for feedback
- Discuss books that have been helpful to you in your discipline, for studying, or personally
- Tour a facility together that is pertinent to your disciplines
- Attend a workshop or conference together
- Discuss and review projects that you are working on
- Explain how you have made decisions in your life
- Share information about UBC services that you think may be helpful for your mentee
- Find a professor who would be willing to participate in an informational interview
- Volunteer or participate in a campus event together
- Research associations that pertain to your area of interest and go to a networking event
- Participate in the Reading Week Program together
- Attend the Student Leadership Conference together



# BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL MENTEE

## Mentors expect you to:

- Meet as often as originally agreed upon
- Ask for advice
- Listen thoughtfully and advise the mentor about results
- Keep confidences
- Be prepared for meetings

## Cultivate a professional attitude

### Tips for maintaining a professional attitude

- Ask for advice. Be as specific as possible when asking for advice. Rather than relying on your mentor to tell you how you are doing, be an active mentee. An active mentee reflects on their own conduct, asks for feedback, analyzes what they have done well, and looks for ways to improve and contribute more to the process.
- Take the initiative. Don't sit around and wait for your mentor to look after you. Initiate conversations, make requests, suggest activities, keep in contact and take responsibility for your own commitments. Your mentor expects you to take this initiative.
- Prepare in advance for your meetings.
- Review your objectives for the mentoring program (see page 11).
- Research the types of positions or industries you're interested in.
- Develop questions to ask your mentor based on your goals and research.
- Be courteous and respectful. Remember that your mentor is busy and is volunteering his or her time to assist you. Respect your mentor's time by never being late for a meeting and by replying to phone calls and emails promptly.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you believe you have a fundamental difference with your mentor, let them know. Try and talk things out. If you continue to have problems, ask your cluster coordinator for help.
- Acknowledge suggestions and advice. Ask clarifying questions and make specific requests for information and resources. Even if your mentor's suggestion is not in line with your initial way of thinking, be open to your mentor's ideas and take time to reflect on what you are being told. Show appreciation for the time and assistance given to you by your mentor. Mentors need encouragement and acknowledgement, too.
- Follow through on any commitments you make in a timely manner. Your mentor may make specific requests of you (e.g., to bring a resume or work sample to your next meeting for review). When the unexpected happens and you can't follow through when you said you could, communicate this clearly to your mentor.
- Take the time to get to know your mentor. As you meet with your mentor, share information and get to know each other, trust will build and your exchanges will become more effortless. Try not to put too much pressure on yourself or your mentor to steer this process.

## Communication etiquette

### Tips for maintaining professional communication

- Reply to emails within 24 to 48 hours, even if you just confirm receipt of the email.
- Have a professional-sounding email address (using your name or derivation of it).
- Return phone messages as soon as you get them, within 24 to 48 hours.
- Don't wait until late in the day to make business phone calls. Try to make calls before noon so if you have to leave a message the other person has time throughout the day to get back to you.
- Introduce yourself every time you call. Do not expect your mentor to recognize your voice.
- Leave your phone number every time you leave a message. Even if you know the other person has your number it will save them the time of looking it up repeatedly.

## Effective listening skills

Successful mentees listen to what their mentors have to say with attentiveness and interest, and connect the mentor's knowledge with the things they need to learn. They are open to new ideas and experiences.

- **Focus** – Put all of your attention on the speaker and make eye contact. Ensure your body language communicates interest, as opposed to the disinterest implied by fidgeting, doodling, and crossing of arms or turning away.
- **Be an active listener** – Communicate your interest through expressions and mannerisms such as nodding, smiling, frowning, or shaking your head and soft verbal cues such as “uh huh” or “really?” These show the speaker you are paying attention and help your brain to stay engaged and process the information being presented.
- **Ask yourself questions** – The rate of thought is generally four times faster than the rate of speech. Keep yourself tuned-in by asking mental question such as “What is the main point here?” and “How will I respond to this?”
- **Acknowledge** – Paraphrase your understanding of what has been said as well as the feelings expressed. Clarify/Probe – If you need clarification or more specific information, wait for a natural break in the speaker's train of thought and pose your question in a concise format.
- **Finish listening before you speak** – Beyond waiting for the speaker to finish, be sure you have processed the message before you jump in. This is especially true with emotional topics in which you are anxious to state your own view. Pause to think about what you'll say and ensure you haven't misconstrued anything you have heard.

Probably the greatest challenge faced by mentoring relationships is finding enough time and energy to meet. In addition to face-to-face meetings, use phone calls, email, etc., to stay in touch when your schedules are the busiest.



# GIVING ADVICE AND SUGGESTIONS

## Tips for Senior Student Mentors

When offering advice and suggestions, it helps to be clear about what your goal is in imparting this information. Identifying your goal will help you to offer advice and suggestions that mentees can actually act on.

For example, your goal in offering a specific suggestion or piece of advice may be:

- To help your mentee change a behaviour.
- To persuade your mentee to consider a problem or issue.
- To get your mentee to try a new perspective on a specific issue.
- To encourage a new activity, approach or attitude.

Once you have determined why you are offering this information, you can use the techniques below to assist with your delivery.

### Break suggestions down into concrete steps

When making a suggestion to your mentee, take the suggestion to the next level by working with your mentee on identifying the steps to make this happen. For example, if you suggest that your mentee volunteer at an upcoming event, your mentee may have to:

- Talk to the volunteer organizer.
- Fill out an application and/or submit a resume and cover letter.
- Attend an orientation session.
- Make a specific time commitment.
- Organize his or her schedule in order to be available for the event.
- Follow-through with all commitments - attending the event, acting professionally and carrying out the agreed-upon responsibilities.

### Provide enough information

Give concrete information (e.g., email addresses, phone numbers, websites, tools, resources) to help your mentee act on your suggestions.

For example, you might suggest to your mentee that he/she should attend a conference. Do not assume your mentee will know when and where the conference is. Provide some concrete information (e.g., website, brochure) to assist your mentee.

### Consider "What if..."

Another useful way to deliver advice and suggestions is to ask "What if..." questions. Questions such as "What if you approached the situation like this..." or, "What might happen if you volunteered for..." can open a dialogue that leads your mentee to the advice or suggestion you are making but includes them in the process.

While "You should..." and "If I were you..." statements are more direct, they often provoke a defensive reaction. "What if..." statements can lead mentees to make the realization on their own - and these are far more likely to be acted on.

### Ask questions to spark action

Part of the process of offering advice and suggestions is helping your mentee move beyond hearing your words to taking some specific action. You can assist your mentee in moving towards action by asking questions such as, "Where do you think you could find this information?" and "By what date do you think you will be able to do this?"

### The sandwich technique

When your advice or suggestion includes some kind of corrective feedback or constructive criticism, it helps to sandwich the negative in between two items of positive feedback. Begin and end by talking about something your mentee is doing well or something you admire. Then address the area that needs improvement in the middle. This will assist your mentee in hearing the information without becoming defensive or feeling attacked.

### Follow up and debrief

When your mentee has made a commitment to you to act on a piece of advice or suggestion, follow-up with your mentee to find out if the task was completed. If he or she has not followed through, talk about why and explore ways to move from talk into action. As you discuss what worked and what didn't work, accept your mentee's feedback in a constructive and non-defensive manner.



# OBJECTIVES & REFLECTIONS

## Maximize your mentoring relationship

To get the most out of your mentoring relationship, it is essential that you discuss your learning objectives with your mentor. This will add focus to your meetings and provide you with a context for your mentoring relationship. Return to this plan frequently during your mentoring relationship.

- During your first meeting with your mentor initiate a discussion around your learning objectives.
- After your first meeting with your mentor, email your learning objectives to your mentoring coordinator.
- Prior to your last meeting with your mentor, review your learning objectives and reflect on what you have accomplished. Share your reflections with your mentor.

## Tips for Developing Learning Objectives: SMART goals

When considering your learning objectives and goals for the program, you will most likely need to make your goals more SMART (specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and timely) in order to start working on them.

Specific	What am I trying to accomplish? Is it in my best interests?
Measurable	How can I measure whether or not I've achieved my goal?
Action-oriented	What concrete results or skills will I have as a result of my time and energy? Does it require investing feedback and effort? Is it a challenge for me?
Realistic	Are my goals realistic with the resources and timeframe available?
Timely	When will I aim to have accomplished this goal?

When setting SMART goals, move from the general to the specific. Ask yourself: What would this goal mean if it were achieved? What would I be able to do? How would I be different from how I am now?

### Download Objectives and Reflections Sheets

Visit [www.students.ubc.ca/careers/students/find-a-mentor/](http://www.students.ubc.ca/careers/students/find-a-mentor/) to download your Learning Objectives and Reflections sheets.

## Tri-Mentoring journal

The journal is provided to you as a place to record your thoughts and experiences in the Tri-Mentoring Program. It will hopefully provide you with a valuable permanent record of the insights and growth you experienced as a result of this program, some of which you can share with your mentor. It is highly recommended that you send a thank-you card or letter to your mentor to show professional courtesy, but also because your mentor will appreciate your feedback. See the following page for a thank you letter template.

### 1. Activity with Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

What did you learn?

How did your mentor help you?

What are the next steps you can take to meet your personal goals for this program?

### 2. Activity with Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

What did you learn?

How did your mentor help you?

What are the next steps you can take to meet your personal goals for this program?

### 3. Activity with Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

What did you learn?

How did your mentor help you?

What are the next steps you can take to meet your personal goals for this program?



# THANK YOU LETTERS

## Why should I write a thank you letter?

Writing a thank you letter is a sign of professionalism and it shows that you appreciate what someone has done for you. It is a skill that you can use again and again in mentoring relationships, networking situations and interviews.

Be memorable. People remember small gestures like thank you letters.

## How should I write a thank you letter?

The preferable format for a thank you letter is a typed formal letter or a neatly hand-written letter/card. It should be no longer than one page and can include the following:

**Your Name**

**Address**

**Date**

**Mentor's Name**

**Job Title**

**Organization Name**

**Address**

**Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,**

(Note: If you are on a first-name basis with your mentor, you may use their first name.)

**First paragraph**

Thank the mentor for meeting with you and for any activities they engaged in with you. Two to three sentences are sufficient.

**Second paragraph**

Mention two to three specific things that the mentor did that were helpful to your academic/professional/personal development (e.g., provided information, shared experiences, gave you printed/online resources, referred you to a contact person).

**Third paragraph**

Final thank you. If you would like to explore the possibility of incorporating your mentor into your network, indicate your interest in staying in touch. Note: You and your mentor are not obligated to remain in touch after the Tri- Mentoring Program is over.

## When should I write a thank you letter?

You should send your thank you letter within a week of your last encounter (e.g., meeting or social event) with your mentor.



# SAMPLE LETTER

Joe Mentee  
1238 University Blvd.  
Vancouver, BC V8H 1Y6

March 3, 2011

Jane Mentor  
Operations Coordinator ABC Company  
9837 Richards St.  
Vancouver, BC V6V 8N5

Dear Jane,

Thank you for the time you have spent with me in the last few months. I greatly appreciate the information you have provided because it has helped open up my mind to the variety of possible careers that are available to me.

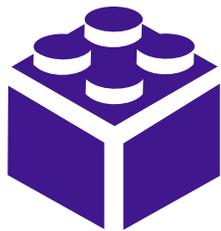
What I found particularly useful was the opportunity you gave me to job-shadow you for a day. It was a definite eye opener and helped to demystify some of the assumptions I had about working in this industry. I've learned that I should delve deeper to find out more about the various positions involved in this industry instead of taking everything at face value. I also found the professional association you referred me to is a great resource. Not only will it give me a chance to learn more about this industry, but also meet people who are doing the work that I hope to do one day.

As discussed in our last meeting, I will email you in a few months to let you know how I am progressing with my research. Thanks again for all your help.

Sincerely,

Joe Mentee





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