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About the CCAPS Mentor Program

Background Information

The purpose of the College of Continuing and Professional Studies (CCAPS) is to inspire and serve an expanding population of learners in all stages of life. Our collegiate values (z.umn.edu/CCAPSaboutus) are Access, Learning, Inclusivity, Collaboration, and Excellence.

The CCAPS Mentor Program (ccaps.umn.edu/mentor) connects CCAPS students to industry professionals to help with career and professional development. Mentoring relationships can benefit both mentors and mentees. For mentees, the program can have a key impact on future career choices. For mentors, helping the next generation of leaders can be rewarding and impactful. The program formally runs from October through April of each academic year.

Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion

The CCAPS Mentor Program aims to create an inclusive climate that’s open and welcoming to everyone. The program is committed to providing additional support and resources to mentees and mentors as needs emerge. For more information regarding this please see the Resource section located on page 16, in the Resources section of the virtual platform, or contact the CCAPS Mentor Program Staff at ccapsmentor@umn.edu or 612-625-5276.

Important Dates for Mentors

- Mentor Recruitment: August 13 – September 13
- Mentees/Students Favorite Mentors: September 23 - 29
- Matching Selection Period: September 30 - October 11
- Match Notification: October 14
- Mentor Orientation: October 16
- Kick-Off Breakfast w/ Mentee: October 29
- Mid-Year Check In with Program Staff: January/February
- UMAA Mentor Appreciation Dinner: March 30
Matching Process

To allow for a close working relationship, most mentoring relationships will consist of one mentor and one mentee. However, if the mentor is open to it, some mentoring groups will have one mentor and two mentees (you could meet either as a group or one-on-one. During the application process, students indicated a commitment to initiating, developing and maintaining a mentoring relationship. When making matches based on the available pool of mentors and mentees, the matching staff do their best to make appropriate matches based on interests, experiences and preferences selected on the applications. However, it is important to note that all individuals in the CCAPS Mentor Program have a passion for their industry and developing professionals, and this alone is enough of a similar interest to build a mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Fundamentals

What Mentoring Is and Is Not

Mentoring IS:

- a commitment
- being open minded
- sharing experience
- improving communication skills
- increasing networking opportunities
- strengthening professional skills
- expanding one’s worldview

Mentoring IS NOT:

- a guarantee of a job, internship or job recommendation for your mentee
- therapy or counseling
How Can Mentors Support Their Mentees?

Mentors are expected to be able to:

- take time and provide attention;
- be a role model and an informal advisor;
- demonstrate commitment, competence and a willingness to extend knowledge and serve as a resource;
- offer suggestions and feedback, and communicate input respectfully;
- maintain open and honest lines of communication with the mentee;
- demonstrate CCAPS values of Access, Learning, Inclusivity, Collaboration and Excellence
- Be familiar with the University of Minnesota Student Development Outcomes: sdo.umn.edu/
- Contact CCAPS Mentor Program staff if there is any concern with the mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Do’s and Don’ts

Do:

- Encourage your mentee to take initiative with the mentoring relationship.
- Be open to the mentee’s ideas and discussion topics.
- Listen to the needs of your mentee.
- Be explicit about your own needs, limits and time constraints.
- Ask before making a suggestion or giving feedback.
- Encourage self-directed reflection, analysis and problem solving.
- Remember personal safety. Face to face meetings should take place in public places.
● Be prepared to end the mentoring relationship at the end of the program, unless you both agree to continue in a capacity outside of the CCAPS Mentor Program.

● Keep the door open for your mentee in the future.

Don’t:

● Assume your advice will be followed.

● Simply provide solutions, but instead advise or identify resources to assist the student to make their own decisions.

● Assume responsibility for the student’s academic or career success. Rather, provide feedback on job search tactics, tips on networking successfully and comments on various strategies to succeed.

● Expect that the mentee will be enrolled in the major or program you graduated from.

● Expect that the mentee hopes to have the job or exact career path that you have or have taken.

● Offer “personal” counseling or life coaching that is not related to professional and personal development.

● Neglect agreed commitments without explanation.

● Assume your mentee does not need encouragement or reinforcement.

● Avoid discussion of “touchy” or taboo subjects (check out: z.umn.edu/convos)

● End the mentoring relationship prematurely.

Managing the Mentor Relationship

Define Expectations

During your first meeting (at the welcome breakfast or during your first conversation), it is suggested that you clearly define the relationship to meet the needs of both your mentee and yourself. Use the CCAPS Mentorship Agreement Template on page 14 as a mutual contract for managing the relationship. Taking the time to discuss and determine the following will help to ensure a successful mentoring relationship.
Time Commitment
Mentor-mentee pairs are encouraged to have one quality interaction per month for at least one hour, October–April. For most mentor pairs, a successful relationship is developed through these regular meetings and conversations. However, the commitment should be determined by the pair and is subject to the pair’s scheduling needs.

Goals and Activities
Establish goals for the relationship and how you will achieve those goals. For example, if your mentee is local, a good activity for networking could be to invite your student to a meeting at your place of employment. If your mentee is long-distance, a practice interview could be done via Skype, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, or phone.

Mentors’ Best Experiences with Mentees
- Offering career advice, preparation and planning to mentees
- Offering academic planning advice and course feedback (it is fine to offer suggestions to your mentee, but keep in mind that it is the academic advisor’s role to provide academic advice about their program)
- Discussing industry topics
- Attending professional development opportunities together whether in person or virtual
- Attending social events together

Best Practices
- Pick your preferred mode of communication (email, text, phone).
- Set specific times to connect (remember time zone difference if applicable).
- Collaborate on a project using internet collaboration tools such as Google Drive.
- Attend a webinar together offered by the CCAPS, UMAA or other reputable resource.
- Connect mentee with colleagues to help them expand their network.

More Best Practices & Remote/Distance Mentoring
Engaging in mentoring from a distance can lead to phenomenal opportunities, but does present some challenges. Here are some tips for making the most of your mentorship, whether you are meeting in person or are a remote/distance mentoring partnership.
- Discuss expectations up front
Complete the CCAPS Mentoring Agreement page 14. Determine who is responsible for initiating contact. How often will you meet? How will you meet? How will you set up your meetings? When using email, what is the appropriate “turn-around time” for responding? Establishing basic ground rules will clear the way for a focus on discussion and the exchange of ideas and advice.

- Make it personal

Instead of only using phone and email, use video chat to make your conversations feel less virtual and more “real” and to show that you are truly investing the time to get to know one another.

Remote/distance: You don’t need to use video chat every time, but you are encouraged to try it at least every other meeting. Remember time zone differences if applicable.

- Switch it up

Diversify your activities or conversation topics. If you have a great conversation over video chat one month, maybe the next month you can focus on reviewing resumes or a class project. Students can send materials over email and the mentor can offer feedback by marking up the documents themselves or discussing them over the phone.

Remote/distance: Job and internship screening interviews often take place via Skype or phone: mentors can offer great practice interview opportunities. Attend a webinar together offered by the CCAPS, UMAA or other reputable resource and discuss it together.

- Remote/distance: Grow your networks both in the Twin Cities and in the mentor’s location

Mentors can connect students with contacts in the Twin Cities to engage in informational meetings, site visits, or job-shadowing. If the student is interested in opportunities in the mentor’s area, local contacts can also benefit the student’s experience.

- Tips on using phone, Skype, and email (applicable to local or distance mentorships!):
  
  - Avoid multitasking
    
    When on the phone, FaceTime, or Skype, give the conversation your full attention. Try to avoid interruptions and listen actively. Let your mentor or student know in advance if you are taking notes or may be interrupted by a meeting or phone call.
  
  - Be spontaneous
    
    Between your scheduled check-in’s, allow yourselves the time to send a quick email or make a phone call to share news, ask a question, or send a thank-you or
hello. Spontaneous contact helps build rapport. However, Mentees should not be sending quick emails to get your help on something that they could easily solve themselves.

○ Lost in translation

Phone and email limit our abilities to both express and interpret body language and tone. Be attentive to one another, and check in if you are unsure of either your tone or your mentor/student’s tone. Do not make assumptions about a perceived tone when you receive emails.

○ Set a topic of discussion in advance

Deciding on a topic or agenda ahead of time will ensure you are making the most of your time together, whether in person, at an event or over the phone.

Remote/distance: Some long-distance mentoring pairs find reading an article to discuss at the beginning of a video chat to be a good way to break the ice and get the conversation flowing.

Suggested Activities/Topics

First Meeting: Getting Acquainted

● Use the CCAPS Mentorship Agreement template on page 14 to develop goals and set expectations for the mentoring relationship together. This includes how often you will meet, what you both hope to get out of the relationship, and how to contact each other.

● Establish a schedule for future meetings and discuss preferences for communication in-between such as phone, email, Skype

● Share your story and background

● Discover common interests

● Learn about student’s career goals and interests

Conversation Topics

● Talk about the student’s skills and talents and how these can be applied in the industry

● Explore the needs and current trends of the industry and discuss qualifications for different types of positions in the field

● Talk about how your values have impacted your academic and career choices
● Discuss work/life balance
● Talk about training and skill development that would be helpful
● Explore professional associations and relevant organizations
● Discuss employers and work environments
● Talk about the transition from school to work
● Discuss professional standards and workplace etiquette

Networking Opportunities
● Attend a conference or professional association meeting together
● Help arrange meetings/coffee/lunch with your colleagues, either informally or as informational interviews.
● Attend a lecture or event on-campus such as a CCAPS Headliners lecture (ccaps.umn.edu/headliners) - free and low cost events can be found on events.umn.edu.
● Participate in informal outings, such as sporting events, volunteering, UM-affiliated events, or meeting up for coffee, lunch, or dinner.
● Connect with fellow CCAPS Mentor Program participants through the online platform and plan a coffee or lunch to expand practice networking.
● Connect mentee with colleagues to expand their network.

Professional Skill-Building
● Conduct an informational interview and/or a practice interview
● Provide feedback on resume or cover letters
● Practice proper professional etiquette for an interview, business lunch, or networking opportunity
● Participate in a webinar and have a discussion - free webinars and recordings are available through the U of MN Alumni Association (umnalumni.org) and CCAPS.
● Search the internet together for job resources and other information related to your field
● Review a class project or assignment and talk about applying the content or skills to the workplace
● Help mentee practice for a class presentation
Discuss industry relevant books, web resources, articles, or other resources. Resources on career development, especially ones that focus on skills you may want to develop (such as cross-cultural communication, conflict resolution, creativity, organization, etc.)

- Check out the Career & Internship Services website (http://www.careerhelp.umn.edu)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get a mentor/student?
All mentors and mentees (even those who participated in previous years) must apply by the application deadline to be considered for participation in the program this year. The program is open only to participants who sign up by the deadline.

**NOTE: Due to this being a pilot program in 2019-2020, we cannot guarantee a mentee or mentor for every applicant.**

What is the time commitment?
The time commitment is determined by the mentor and student during initial meetings. Most mentor pairs choose to communicate/meet for approximately 1-3 hours per month, using the communications tools that work best for them or by meeting in person. The program officially runs from late October (when matches are made) through the end of April.

What is the Maroon & Gold Network?
The Maroon & Gold Network is the online virtual mentor platform hosted by the University of Minnesota Alumni Association, and hosts the CCAPS Mentor Program and our application process. This FAQ is designed to help you navigate our registration process on the Maroon and Gold Network: [z.umn.edu/mentorFAQ](http://z.umn.edu/mentorFAQ)

What is expected of mentor pairs?
Mentors and students who apply should be committed to engaging with their match and developing a professional mentor/mentee relationship. This includes communicating on a monthly basis. The mentor program is NOT a job placement program for students. There are no expectations that a job or internship will develop out of this experience.

Can I participate as a mentor or mentee if I don’t live locally?
Yes. Many of our mentees and mentors do not live locally in the Twin Cities. Mentors who live outside of the state of Minnesota, or even outside of the United States, are encouraged to apply.
I haven’t heard from my mentee. What should I do?  
Mentees are strongly encouraged to initiate the relationship with their mentor. It is up to the mentor if they would like to reach out to initiate the relationship. If you have tried to connect with your mentee and they haven’t responded, please reach out to us at ccapsmentor@umn.edu.

I just received my mentee/mentor information. I don’t think I have anything in common with them. What do I do?  
When making matches based on the available pool of mentors and mentees, the matching staff do their best to make appropriate matches based on interests, experiences and preferences indicated on the applications. However, it is important to note that all individuals in the Mentor Program have a passion for their industry and developing professionals, and this alone is enough of a similar interest to build a mentoring relationship. We encourage matches to go in with an open mind and see what you might have in common.

I’m having problems with my mentor/mentee. What should I do?  
If you’re unable or uncomfortable having a conversation with your mentee/mentor about the situation, please reach out at ccapsmentor@umn.edu or 612-625-5276 to discuss the situation.

Where can I find more resources on resume and cover letter writing, networking, informational interviews, etc.?  
You can find great resources on the Career & Internship Services website - careerhelp.umn.edu. Feel free to contact the office for additional information. Mentor Program staff would be glad to connect you with these resources as well.

How can mentors help expand the mentee’s professional networks?  
Introduce the mentee to colleagues and provide their contact information so the mentee can follow up and set up an informational interview with them. The mentor can also set up a group lunch or coffee meetings with colleagues.

Mentors can invite mentees to conferences, professional association meetings, or trainings. Sometimes, mentees can sign up to volunteer for part of the event and receive free entry/registration. Please be mindful of potential activities that may be cost prohibitive to mentees.

Attend CCAPS and University events and lectures. CCAPS alumni activities and events can provide great opportunities for you to network for both you and your mentee.
Does the mentee expect to get a job or internship from this experience?

There is NO expectation that internships or employment will result from this experience. However, mentors may learn about potential jobs and internships over the course of the year and share postings with their mentee matches, as well as support them with constructive feedback as they apply for opportunities.
CCAPS Mentorship Agreement

Use this document to establish the relationship that you will have with your mentor/mentee as part of the CCAPS Mentor Program. This is your agreement and does not need to be shared with anyone else, but you may refer to it as needed during your Mentorship. You may each fill out your own or share a copy.

Preferred Contact Information For Mentee/Mentor:

Name: __________________________ Name: ____________________________
Email: __________________________ Email: ____________________________
Phone: __________________________ Phone: ____________________________

Desired Communication Frequency:
- Weekly
- Every Other Week
- Monthly
- As Needed
- Other

Preferred mode(s) of Communication:
- Phone
- Text
- Email
- Video Chat
- In-Person
- No Preference

Desired Response Time:
- One Day
- Three Days
- One Week
- Other
What are the mentee/student’s goals this year?

- __________________________________________________________________________
- __________________________________________________________________________
- __________________________________________________________________________

What resources can the mentor provide to assist in reaching these goals?

- __________________________________________________________________________
- __________________________________________________________________________
- __________________________________________________________________________

Plan your next two meetings:
1. Date/Time: ________________________________
   Location: __________________________________

2. Date/Time: _________________________________
   Location: __________________________________

Planning for the Upcoming Year:
List possible activities/events, future meeting dates, or possible topics you’d like to discuss at future meetings.

Other questions you may want to review and discuss as part of your mentorship agreement:

- What happens if one of us cancels or postpones a meeting?
- Will we create a written agenda and document action items?
- How will we evaluate our meetings?
- How will we measure the success of our partnership?
- In addition to date/time/location of next two meetings, what do we need to prepare for the next meeting?
Contact Information & Key Resources

CCAPS Mentor Program Staff
612-625-5276
ccapsmentor@umn.edu

* Please utilize this general email to ensure the quickest response *

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CCAPS Mentor Program - CCAPS Website
ccaps.umn.edu/mentor

CCAPS Mentor Program - Virtual Tool
z.umn.edu/ccapsmentor

Career & Internship Services
careerhelp.umn.edu

CCAPS & U Student Resources
ccaps.umn.edu/college-and-university-resources

University of Minnesota Alumni Association
www.umnalumni.org/
Gold Mind (a collection of University faculty and expert talks)

umnalumni.org/Goldmind

Office for Equity and Diversity

diversity.umn.edu/

University of Minnesota Events

events.umn.edu

Boynton Health

boynton.umn.edu/

Student Counseling Services

counseling.umn.edu/

z.umn.edu/CCAPSLI

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