University of Alberta  
Business Alumni Association  
Alumni Mentorship Program 2017-2018

Program Guidelines
This document is designed to be a reference guide, containing information that you will need throughout your mentorship.

On behalf of the Alberta School of Business External Relations Office and the Business Alumni Association, thank you for your participation. We wish you an enriching and rewarding experience!

Purpose and Goals of the Alumni Mentorship Program
• To connect recent graduates with experienced Alumni to strengthen the Alumni family and expand networks.
• To influence future business leaders through providing career guidance and sharing relevant knowledge and experience.
• To assist recent graduates to further develop their communication and networking skills.
• To share insight into the local business community.
• To facilitate the exchange of knowledge on new business trends and developments.

*Please Note: All participants are advised that this is not a job placement service.*

Process
• Register as a protégé or mentor via the online application forms available at [http://business.ualberta.ca/alumni/mentorship/alumni](http://business.ualberta.ca/alumni/mentorship/alumni) (Please register by May 5, 2017).
• The Alumni Relations Office and Business Alumni Association will work together to match protégés with mentors, attempting to address the goals set out in each application.

Expectations and Responsibilities
• The program will run from June 2017 to May 2018 (this will be a 1-year commitment for each mentor and protégé in the program). The timing of the program is built to allow protégés and mentors to make the most of their match.
• Minimum commitment: **4-6 meetings**.
• Maximum commitment is unlimited. Some mentorship relationships last years.
• **Protégé**: a recent grad from the Alberta School of Business (approximately 0-7 years out of school).
• **Mentor**: an experienced alumnus/a from the Alberta School of Business (approximately 5+ years out of school).
• While it is the protégé’s responsibility to initiate contact with mentors, we encourage a flexible, open relationship.
• Either party may ask to be re-matched with a new partner if the current partnership is proving to be unsuccessful; however, the change must first be discussed between the protégé and mentor prior to concluding the relationship through the organizers.
• Protégés are informed that this is not a job placement program and are precluded from asking mentors for a job.
• **Mentors** – Plan to share your experiences, perspectives and approaches to developing your career and gaining the skills and qualifications to become successful in your field of work.
An exploration of critical incidents can be particularly valuable. Consider sharing some of the key challenges you have been confronted with in terms of job search, important career decisions, skill acquisition and development; the options you identified for resolving issues you faced; your decision-making strategy; the actions you took; the outcomes you obtained; your analysis of the results; how you may have benefitted from your own alumni network.

- **Protégés** – Your mentor will be giving his/her time to share experiences, perspectives and approaches to developing personally and professionally. You should be prepared for each meeting and set the agenda for your meetings to ensure you get the most out of each interaction. You should actively seek feedback from your mentor and be receptive to the feedback you are offered. Be as specific as possible when asking for information, ideas and suggestions. *Since this is a volunteer program, it is paramount that protégés respect their mentor’s time and are prepared to make the most of the mentorship match.*

### Clarify Interests and Needs

This relationship will be most beneficial if both participants work to carefully identify their personal and professional goals before and during meetings. Protégés are encouraged to consider their questions pertaining to job search strategies, industry knowledge, career paths, time management or balancing work and family life. From the application process and first meetings, you should develop three to five specific goals for your participation in the program. You may wish to review these goals throughout the year.

Protégés may have difficulty developing questions to ask their mentor. Prepare to assist your protégé by giving some advance thought to what your own experiences have taught you. Think about key learning experiences and important insights you have gained. What aspects of the job search were particularly challenging for you? What support were you given that you can now pass on to your protégé? What discoveries did you make on your own and how can you ease the path for your protégé?

### Recognize the Value and Limits of the Relationship

Like any relationship, this match will be unique to the personalities, backgrounds and experiences of the participating individuals. You are not expected to respond to all of your protégé’s needs. Be thoughtful in how you spend your time together and clarify the ways in which you will choose to be of support.

While sharing your expertise, refrain from telling a protégé what to do. Instead, assist your protégé in recognizing the options available for action and selecting the one that will work best for him/her. Recognize that some advice you offer may seem irrelevant to your protégé at this time, but may prove to be useful later on. It will ultimately be your protégé’s choice as to how s/he will utilize your guidance. Look for opportunities for your own enrichment, as mentors often find value in the questions or fresh perspectives of protégés.

### Setting Goals

A copy of the protégé’s application will be shared with their mentor. Protégés are encouraged to bring a list of questions or prospective goals to the first meeting. After learning more about your protégé's career plans, work together to finalize the list of goals that you believe can be adequately addressed during this experience.

### The First Meeting

People often begin a mentoring relationship with high expectations and some uncertainty about how to proceed. To that end, it can be helpful to structure the first meeting and to give some
thought as to how you would like the meeting to go. Consider the following ways in which you can contribute to the first meeting:

- Show genuine interest in each other.
- Create a list of your goals and expectations.
- Listen and share ideas.
- Share your professional background along with personal information (as you feel comfortable) and your interest in participating in the program.
- Identify and clarify areas where you believe you can support one another.
- Help each other develop a focus and agenda for your next meeting.
- Suggest other resources, as appropriate, in preparation for your next meeting.
- Agree upon the duration, frequency and locations of each of your meetings.

Mentors are encouraged to set aside an hour for the first meeting with your protégé. Review his/her resume and application form prior to this meeting so that you already know pertinent professional information. Use this hour to get to know other aspects of your protégé. Is he/she married? Any children? Any hobbies? Share similar information about yourself. You may want to conduct this first meeting away from the office. At the conclusion of the first meeting, set the next meeting date or determine a regular time to meet.

Sample Questions and Discussion Topics

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>Plans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What are your expectations of this mentoring relationship?</td>
<td>• Why do you want to pursue a career in this specific area / industry?</td>
<td>• Do you have any plans in place to reach your goals?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do you think a mentor can help you?</td>
<td>• What challenges are you currently facing with your professional development?</td>
<td>• What activities are you participating in to reach your goals?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What are your strengths and weaknesses?</td>
<td>• Networking tips</td>
<td>• Have you considered taking some professional designation courses?</td>
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<td>• Important life skills</td>
<td>• Resume tips</td>
<td>• Are there networking events that you can attend together?</td>
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<td>• Obtaining work/life balance</td>
<td>• Alternate career options</td>
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<td>• Sharing personal background (family, hobbies, travels, etc.)</td>
<td>• Key success factors in your mentor's chosen industry</td>
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<td>• Things your mentor would do differently if given the chance</td>
<td>• How your mentor acquired those skills</td>
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Managing the Relationship
Since this is a volunteer program based around building a personal relationship, we cannot stress how important it is to be prepared for each meeting with a prioritized list of topics or questions that you want to discuss.

While face-to-face meetings are suggested, you can also use e-mail, phone or instant messaging as methods to maintain communication with one another. Be sure to show up for scheduled meetings on time. If necessary, offer to reschedule a meeting, shorten it, or handle via e-mail. Be flexible but remain committed to achieving your goals from the relationship. Return messages to one another in a timely manner; no one likes to feel ignored.
Clarify Confidentiality
Complete confidentiality in the relationship is a must in the program since we are providing all participants with a safe environment to share their thoughts and experiences.

Bringing Closure to Your Relationship
This program is specifically time-limited to allow the mentor to support the protégé's learning without long-term obligations from either party. After the program's conclusion you may continue your relationship informally, if you wish. Support each other in recognizing the positive achievements and benefits from the partnership. Recognize the value of your respective roles in supporting this Alumni program and building a stronger Alumni Family. Be sure to celebrate the experience at our wrap-up event (details TBA).

At the conclusion of your mentoring relationship, we ask that you complete the online feedback form to help us advance the Alumni Mentorship Program. Your feedback is confidential and will be used only to improve our program. Thank you for your support!

Additional Support Appendices:

1. Setting Expectations
2. Goal Setting
3. Strategies on Strengthening the Relationship
4. Trouble Shooting