

# Peer Mentoring Reference Manual 2009



University-Wide Mentoring  
California University of Pennsylvania

“A mentor is a person whose hindsight can become  
your foresight.” ~Grey Owl~

## Goals of the Mentoring Program

- Provide caring mentoring relationships between new students and upperclass students, most likely within the same academic department.
- Extend the orientation process by providing the necessary information to Cal U's first semester students when they actually need it. This process will help make the new students' transition to Cal U easier.
- Encourage and support new students in achieving student success through their academic and personal goals.
- Promote involvement in the Cal U campus community.



## What is a Cal U Peer Mentor?

An upperclass student who assists a new student within his/her academic department, by...

### 1) Providing friendship

- Sharing your Cal U experiences
- Relieving anxieties of the unknown

(Contact during the summer to describe what college is really like.)

### 2) Explaining in's & out's of college life

- Who's, what's, where's, how's and when's

### 3) Taking them under your wing

- protecting them from not knowing how to do things
- (basically they don't know what they don't know.)

### 4) Providing them with information at the "right" time.

(Registration, financial aid, study habits, etc.)

### 5) Serve as an advocate

# Mentoring Program Expectations

***\*\*If you remember nothing else, remember this!\*\****

This is the document you signed in your mentor training, which outlines what our office expects of the mentors in the program:

## Your Mentoring Relationship

You are expected to assist a new student by providing friendship, explaining the campus, taking them under your wing, giving them information & insight, and serving as an advocate throughout their first year at Cal U.

Be available to your protégé!

DON'T say "Call me when you need me" and wait for them to call you. They won't do that, so check in with them regularly (weekly).

Don't give up on your protégé if he/she becomes withdrawn. Keep trying through all contact methods & notify the Mentoring office.

Do your best to meet your protégé as often as possible (ideas include: showing them around campus, eating lunch/dinner together, going shopping, being involved in same club, introducing to your friends, etc.).

Anything your protégé tells you should be considered **confidential**.

Let the Mentoring Office know as soon as possible if you are not able to keep your commitment to the program and your protégé(s), so we may reassign them.

## Communication

Contact your protégé immediately after receiving their information (try email, phone, IM—all methods, if needed). They should be contacted *before* they arrive to campus. Please maintain contact with them throughout their first year.

Respond to your Peer Mentor Coordinator quickly (within one week of date sent) & answer their questions *truthfully*.

Use & check your Cal e-mail daily and be sure your protégé knows how to check their e-mail frequently as well.

## Referrals

Refer your protégé to Cal U officials when necessary (counselors, advisors, resident directors, mentoring director, etc.).

You're *not* expected to know everything! Feel free to ask us questions and/or refer your protégé to an office on campus.

Serve as an advocate for them when needed.

By signing this document, I attest that I have read and understand the expectations above regarding how to be an effective mentor. I understand that I may be removed if I fail to comply with the guidelines above.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

## But I already know how to communicate!

Employers consider Communication Skills to be the top skill they look for in job candidates, sometimes even ahead of content knowledge! Here are some tips to help you be a better communicator. We hope these tips will help you in your daily life, as well as your mentoring relationship.

- ◆ Be there, both physically & mentally.
- ◆ Try open-ended questions
  - ◆ Avoid “Why” questions, they may seem confrontational
- ◆ Listen
  - ◆ Really listen! Don’t think about your to-do list or anything else. Just listen!
- ◆ Note nonverbal cues
  - ◆ Arms crossed means they may feel defensive or closed off.
  - ◆ Look at their face...are they saying “I’m okay” while fighting tears? Chances are, they’re trying to believe they’re okay.
- ◆ Be nonjudgmental
- ◆ Communicate clearly
- ◆ Collaborate on solving problems
- ◆ Unless it’s an easy answer, don’t tell them what to do. Instead, help them figure it out themselves (for example, choosing a major, deciding where to live, etc.)

## But my protégé is different than me!

Is your protégé a different major than you? A transfer student? A non-traditional student? A commuter?

Don’t give up on your protégés because they aren’t exactly like you! If we matched you, you should have *something* in common, whether it’s your major, your interests, your age, etc.

Remember this:

- \* The student is in a new and unfamiliar environment.
- \* They may not be on campus often or long enough to know procedures.
- \* Many questions they have will be the same you had as a freshman: where buildings are, how to register, use email, etc.
- \* They may be unfamiliar with campus resources.
- \* They most likely still want to connect with other students-especially you!



California University of Pennsylvania, Karen Posa, 2009

## Other resources for Peer Mentors:

[http://www.cup.edu/directories/offices\\_alphabetical.jsp](http://www.cup.edu/directories/offices_alphabetical.jsp)

[http://www.cup.edu/nu\\_upload/2007CAP-Students\\_copy1.pdf](http://www.cup.edu/nu_upload/2007CAP-Students_copy1.pdf)

## Resources

California University of PA's Advising, Placement Testing Center Advisement Handbook.

Ditkoff, G. (1998). Cal Campus Connection Mentors' Manual. California University of Pennsylvania.

Gaff, J. G., Pruitt-Logan, A. S., Weibl, R.A. (1993). Building the Faculty We Need: Colleges and Universities Working Together, Association of American Colleges and University (2000)

Galbraith, M.W. & Cohen, N.H. (1995). Mentoring: New Strategies and Challenges. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

James, D.P. (1999) A Guide to Development and Designing a Mentoring Program in Higher Education. Diversity in Mentoring Conference, April 1999.

The University Mentorship Program at the University of Michigan.



## A Calendar of Help

### Summer Before School Starts

Issues for new students:

Uncertainty of what to expect

Fear of the unknown

To help your protégé(s) with these issues, you can:

- ◆ Contact your protégé *immediately* after receiving his/her information from the Mentoring Office (this will occur before the end of the spring semester or during the summer months)
- ◆ *Contact Mentoring Office* to inform us if you were or were not able to reach your protégé.
- ◆ Maintain contact with the protégé throughout the remaining summer months (via e-mail, IM and/or phone)
- ◆ Explain how college is different than high school
- ◆ Answer questions about Summer Registration
  - ◆ Summer Registration is required. At this event, students will get their fall schedules
- ◆ Prepare for Fall Semester
  - ◆ resident students (what to pack, not to pack; can you have a car on campus; places to shop; getting involved).
  - ◆ commuters (where to park and not get a ticket; parking permits; how early should they should arrive to get a parking spot; how to get involved; where to eat).
- ◆ Answer questions about Fall Orientation
  - ◆ Fall Orientation is also required for all new students, including commuters. Fall orientation has undergone some changes for the 2009-10 academic year. It's designed to introduce new students to the university and get them excited about their next four years at Cal U.
- ◆ Prepare them for how to buy books

### August

Issues for new students and how you can help:

- ◆ Homesickness & loneliness
  - ◆ Encourage them to get involved with clubs, organizations, or Residence Hall activities, if living on campus
  - ◆ Take them shopping or do an activity with them (scrapbooking, sports, etc.)
  - ◆ Encourage them to participate in campus activities and/or invite them to do so with you
  - ◆ Don't forget to contact them on a weekly basis throughout the first year
- ◆ Difficulty making new friends/shyness:
  - ◆ Introduce them to your own friends, help them make new friends
- ◆ Campus familiarization (they may feel lost)
  - ◆ Show them around campus: the buildings where they'll have class (and their abbreviations), their department office, campus resources, etc.
- ◆ Getting used to not having parents around
  - ◆ Help them with setting goals, time management skills, and show them how to use a planner
  - ◆ Share your own experiences of how you adjusted to your newfound independence
  - ◆ Talk to them about being safe if they choose to socialize
- ◆ Long distance relationships are navigated
  - ◆ Share personal stories
  - ◆ If they are having difficulty, they may want to consider the counseling center
- ◆ Academic environment adjustment (large lectures, etc.)
- ◆ Roommate conflicts; sharing room may be new experience
  - ◆ Ask them about how it's going; share personal experiences
  - ◆ Refer them to their CA or Hall Director, if needed
- ◆ Indecision about major/courses/career: pressure to choose courses
  - ◆ Refer them to their advisor, Career Services, or the Mentoring office
- ◆ Financial adjustments: managing money, finding employment, etc.
  - ◆ Talk to them about work study (jobs go very quickly!) or other part-time jobs

## September

Issues for new students & how you can help:

- ◆ Continuation of August issues (See August Issues)
- ◆ Freshmen have high need for reassurance, affection, and approval
  - ◆ Be sure not to allow them to think you are rejecting them; answer their questions
- ◆ Test anxiety develops with first exams: professors' expectations, test design, etc.
  - ◆ Refer to appropriate resources: Tutoring Center, Math or Writing Labs, Reading Clinic (for study skills)
- ◆ Dissatisfaction with school: newness and glamour of college begin to wear off
- ◆ High pressure from having active social life
  - ◆ Remind them to be safe socially
  - ◆ Talk to them about how you (appropriately!) ease stress
- ◆ Time management problems arise as students balance social and academic life
  - ◆ Remind them to use their planner and prioritize their tasks
- ◆ Value crisis: students are confronted with questions of conscience over values
  - ◆ Suggest that it may be helpful to see a Counselor to process this

## October

Issues for Students:

- ◆ Academic stress from mid-terms builds with demand for studying and preparation; possible sadness if they do poorly on exams
  - ◆ Send them a note of encouragement around mid-terms
- ◆ Alcohol problems may become evident
  - ◆ See the Resource Referral list on the next pages
- ◆ "Small fish in a big pond" feeling
  - ◆ Continue to encourage them to get involved on campus
- ◆ May be experience self-esteem/self-concept issues
  - ◆ Help them see their strengths
- ◆ Might be thinking "College may not be for me"
  - ◆ You may want to refer them to the Counseling Center or the Office of Student Retention
- ◆ High activity: Homecoming, Halloween
  - ◆ Encourage them to take part in activities and possibly invite them to Homecoming game
- ◆ Career decisions/major decisions are in question OR if undeclared, may feel pressure to declare major
  - ◆ Suggest your protégé see Career Services

## November

Issues for Students:

- ◆ Registration usually happens this month; protégés may be unsure how to register
  - ◆ Explain holds on account, how to find advisor, how to register (have many backup classes, be prepared that morning, get up early, and know that the system will crash)
- ◆ Academic pressures increase: pre-finals stress, projects due, etc.; may be trying to bring up grades or keep grades high
  - ◆ Remind proteges to manage their time effectively & prioritize tasks
- ◆ Burn-out: long period before a break to go home
  - ◆ Send them an encouraging note to remind them to stay motivated
- ◆ Anxiety over Thanksgiving break: longing for break or no desire to go home because of family problems or study pressures
  - ◆ Share any personal experiences you can that may help
- ◆ Apathy: due to academic pressures, lack of initiative to find new friends or activities because social groups are already formed
  - ◆ Encourage them to join clubs and make new friends, despite the semester being almost over
- ◆ Roommate/floor tensions due to academic pressures, unresolved conflicts
  - ◆ Suggest they resolve conflicts in a healthy manner
  - ◆ Encourage them to see their CA or Hall Director, if needed
- ◆ Health problems emerge due to pressures, stress, late night socializing, poor eating habits, bad weather
  - ◆ Remind them to take care of themselves to avoid illness

(November, cont.)

- ◆ Some students have ceased to make attempts at establishing new friendships
  - ◆ Encourage them to leave their room and participate in activities or invite them to events

## December

Issues for new students & how you can help:

- ◆ Final exam pressures including anxiety, fear, and guilt increase as exams approach and papers become due
  - ◆ Encourage healthy stress management skills; continue to offer help with time management
- ◆ Increased use of alcohol and drugs as a means of coping with pressure
  - ◆ Provide a referral if needed to CHOICES or the Counseling Center
- ◆ Financial worries increase with the thought of gifts and travel costs
  - ◆ Maybe suggest some money-saving ideas for gift-giving (maybe have a craft party)
- ◆ Health problems increase as a result of stress, little sleep from all-nighters, irregular eating, bad weather
  - ◆ Continue to encourage them to live healthy to avoid illness
- ◆ Fear/anxiety of long break with parents/family/old friends: awareness of changes in old relationships
  - ◆ Share your own personal experiences, if appropriate

## January

Issues for new students & how you can help:

- ◆ Anxiety about second semester begins because some students did not do well academically first semester and have pressure from parents/peers
  - ◆ Encourage protégés to get the semester started on the right foot by avoiding procrastination, and planning out the semester in advance for projects, tests, and papers.
  - ◆ Offer referrals to campus resources if needed
- ◆ Post-holiday depression due to being away from home
  - ◆ Talk about how it feels to be back at school
  - ◆ If depression continues, encourage protégé to see someone in the Counseling Center
- ◆ New students feel out of place and like they are intruding on established friendships and community
  - ◆ If your protégé is new, introduce them to others and invite them to activities/events
- ◆ Indecision about majors/career
  - ◆ Have them talk to their advisor & Career Services

## February

Issues for new students & how you can help:

- ◆ Academic pressures increase as exams and projects approach
  - ◆ Talk about study skills, time management, and test anxiety
- ◆ Excitement or anxiety over spring break plans
  - ◆ Talk to them about being safe during spring break
- ◆ Couples begin to plan for transition to summer; may make long-range commitment or experience problems/break-ups
  - ◆ Share personal experiences, if you are comfortable
- ◆ Valentine's Day may be a lonely time
  - ◆ Suggest doing something else on Valentine's Day, such as getting a group of single friends together
- ◆ Selection processes for many groups: anxiety/self-awareness/rejection, etc.
  - ◆ Share personal experiences, if appropriate
  - ◆ Suggest joining other groups in addition to current organizations
- ◆ Scholarship time: anxiety over future money situation
  - ◆ Share personal experiences, if applicable
  - ◆ Refer to Financial Aid or encourage to get a part-time or summer job

## March

Issues for new students & how you can help:

- ◆ Housing arrangement anxieties occur with deadlines approaching: Should I move off campus? Stay with the same roommate? Will a friend be left out of the plans? Will I make the lottery?
  - ◆ Explain housing lottery if you understand it. If not, refer to CA or Housing office

(March, cont.)

- ◆ Returning from Spring Break may be difficult
  - ◆ Suggest prioritizing tasks and continue discussing time management, if needed
- ◆ Academic pressures increase with approaching mid-term exams
  - ◆ Remind them not to procrastinate
- ◆ Progressive abuse of alcohol and drugs over the year may lead to signs of addiction
  - ◆ Refer them to CHOICES & Counseling Center

## April

Issues for Students:

- ◆ Academic pressures increase with the end of the semester approaching: papers and exams create anxiety
  - ◆ Talk to them about resources on campus that could help: the writing lab, math lab, tutoring center, etc.
- ◆ Social life pressures increase during this period: formal parties, banquets, concerts, etc.
  - ◆ Continue talking about time management and stress management
- ◆ Burn-out, lack of motivation: apathy, spring fever, sick of school
  - ◆ Send them a note of encouragement to stay motivated
- ◆ Course registration for summer/fall
  - ◆ Remind them about the pointers for how to register for classes

## May

Issues for Students:

- ◆ Anxiety over approaching finals, papers, project deadlines, plus social pressures of parties/picnics
  - ◆ Continue the conversation about stress management, study skills, and time management
  - ◆ Encourage healthy study habits with breaks
- ◆ Depression over leaving school: friends, freedoms, activities
  - ◆ Remind them they will be returning to friends & family
- ◆ Feelings of lack of closure as academic pressures limit end-of-year events and goodbyes
  - ◆ Prepare them for this feeling of lack of closure
- ◆ Anxiety for couples who will be parting for the summer; possibility of having long-distance relationship
  - ◆ Share personal experiences, if comfortable
- ◆ Anxiety over financial matters: Will I be able to return next year?
  - ◆ Talk to them about their options, suggest they see Financial Aid

Adapted from University of Florida Residence Life Office: <http://www.housing.ufl.edu/RA/Monthly.htm>



## RESOURCE REFERRAL LIST

At times we all have special needs and we want to know where to go for assistance. The following list can help you locate some of the resources available to you. (Information compiled by the Office of Student Retention, California University of Pennsylvania.)

<b>Concern/Question</b>	<b>Who/What/Where</b>
<b>Academic</b> Advisor	Departmental Office, Department Chair, Deans' Offices, Department Secretary
Adding/Dropping a Class	SISWEB; Advisor, Departmental Office, Department Chair, Deans' Offices, Instructor, Advising and Placement-Testing Center; Office of Student Retention, Academic Records  NOTE: The last day to drop a class without penalty is the end of the sixth week of the semester!!
Change Major	Advisor, Department Secretary, Dean of your College
Class Schedule	Advisor, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Academic Records, Student Success Facilitators; Office of Student Retention
Course Difficulty	Always Instructors first, Advisor, Department Chair, Deans' Offices, Dean of your College, Provost, Academic Development Services (tutorial assistance), various support services (Math, Writing, and Reading Labs)
Grade Appeal	Instructor, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Provost
Instructor	Instructor first, Advisor, Department Chair, Dean, Provost
Major-Career	Advisor, Career Services, First-Year Seminar, Career Planning Class, Academic Development Services
Math Anxiety	Math Lab, Math Tutor, Instructor, Academic Development Services, Advising and Placement-Testing Center
Math Course	Instructor, Advisor, Math Laboratory, University Catalog, University Website, University Schedule Book
Official Transcript	Academic Records
Pre-registration	Advisor, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Advising and Placement-Testing Center; Office of Student Retention
Prerequisites	Advisor, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Departmental Secretary, Advising and Placement-Testing Center; Office of Student Retention
Setting Goals	Career Services, Advisor, Academic Development Services, Advising and Placement-Testing Center; Office of Student Retention; Counseling Center
Scheduling	Advisor, Department Chair, Department Dean, Advising and Placement-Testing Center (Student Success Facilitators); Office of Student Retention
Study Skills	Reading Clinic and Advising and Placement-Testing Center; Office of Student Retention
Summer Class Registration	Advisor, Life Long Learning

**Concern/Question**  
***Academic, cont.***

**Who/What/Where**

Test Anxiety	Counseling Center, Career Services, Academic Development Services, Math Lab
Writing/Term Paper	Writing Center
Transfer Concerns/Credits	Advisor, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Admissions Department; Articulation and Transfer Office
Tutors	Noss Annex, Residence Halls, Advising and Placement-Testing Center
Unofficial Transcript	Advising and Placement-Testing Center
Withdrawal from University	Academic Records, Advisor, Bursar Office, Financial Aid Office, Department Chair, Dean of your College, Academic Affairs, Advising and Placement-Testing Center

***Personal***

Alcohol	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Advisor, CHOICES, Counseling Center, Alcoholics Anonymous, Psychology Clinic, Health Center
Attention Deficit Disorder	Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)
Dating Violence	Counseling Center, Health Center, Women's Center, Public Safety, Psychology Clinic
Depressed	Friend, Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Counseling Center
Frustrated	Advisor, Counseling Center, Friend, Residence Hall Assistant/Director
Drugs	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, C.H.O.I.C.E.S, Counseling Center
Eating Disorders	Counseling Center, Health Center, Psychology Clinic
Hearing Problems	Speech and Hearing Clinic, Reading Clinic
Homesick	Friend, Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Counseling Center
Learning Disabilities	Office for Students with Disabilities
Money/Finances	University Catalog, Financial Aid, Office of Administration and Finance, Office of Bursar
Physical Disabilities	Office for Students with Disabilities
Pregnancy	Counseling Center, Health Center, Campus Ministry, Women's Center
Relationships	Friend, Residence Hall Assistant, Director, Counseling Center, Campus Ministry
Residence Hall Crisis	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Public Safety

**Concern/Question**  
***Personal, cont.***

**Who/What/Where**

Room/Roommate	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Counseling Center, Housing Office
Sexual Assault	Counseling Center, Student Sexual Assault Response Team, Women's Center, Health Center, Psychology Clinic, Public Safety
Sexual Harassment	EEO Office, Friend, Advisor, Office of Student Retention
Sexually Transmitted Disease	Health Center, Counseling Center, Women's Center
Sickness	Health Center, Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Faculty Academic Records (if extended absence)
Speaking	Speech and Hearing Clinic, Communications Department
Spiritual	Campus Ministry
Stress	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Counseling Center, Campus Ministry, Psychology Clinic
Time Management	Counseling Center, First-Year Seminar, Academic Development Services

***Extracurricular***

Exercise	Herron Recreation and Fitness Center
Student Involvement	University Catalog, Cal U Website, Student Association, Inc., Natali Student Services
Work Study	Financial Aid Office

***Miscellaneous***

Computer Lab	All Residence Halls, Departments, World Culture Building, Library, Student Union
Don't know what to do?	Residence Hall Assistant/Director, Advisor, Office of Student Retention, Counseling Center
E-mail Accounts	Computer Center beside the library (downstairs), First-Year Seminar

