Training Outline

9:15 Welcome to Mentor Program
   OH&S

9:30 The Mentor Program and Your Role
   What is a mentor?
   Why have mentors?
   How does the program work?
   Benefits of Mentoring
   Mentor role and role boundaries

10:00 Resources & Support Services
   Resources-Mentor Survival Kit
   Roles of Mentor Program staff
     • Role of Directors of First Year Studies
     • Role of Transition Office
   Support Services
   FUSA/FlindersOne
   Library/FLO

10:30 Morning Tea Break

11:00 The Practical Side of Mentoring (1)
   Expectations
     • Yours
     • Ours
   Reporting serious issues
   Student issues lifecycle
   Student issues
   Diversity in mentee groups

11:30 The Practical Side of Mentoring (2)
   Establishing mentoring relationships
   Orientation and Communication
   Real Life Scenarios
   Email management & etiquette

12:00 Any queries
12:05 Lunch
1:00 School-specific sessions
Issues - Work Health and Safety

- Emergency Procedures
  - Standby tone
  - Evacuation tone

- Medical Emergencies
  - First Aid
  - Need an Ambulance

- Work Health and Safety policy

- Reporting Incidents and safety matters

- University Environment – Security 12880
Before we start

1. Think back –
   What do you wish you had known when you first started your course?
   What would have made a difference to you in the first week or weeks?

2. What you think your Mentoring role will entail -
   Why be a mentor?

(adapted from Curtin’s START program)

Mentoring example
What is Mentoring?

• Think of someone who has been a mentor to you at some point in time;

• Think of the qualities and attributes they had that made them a good (or bad) mentor;

• What qualities or attributes do you think you might bring?
Why have mentors?

- High attrition rate – improve retention and student satisfaction
- How? Sense of belonging, engagement
  - knowing where things are, what to do, where to go.
- So-called ‘Non-traditional’ students – first in family, lowSES, NESB, temporary visa, working, mature age
- Alternative entry pathways
- Cultural/linguistic diversity
- Sense of isolation, alienation, too hard, disconnected,
- At risk of...
Successful Mentors

- Have a mentor focus
- Have good knowledge of Flinders (or a willingness to find out!)
- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and both respect and responsibility
- Show effective communication skills
- Are sensitive to how their Mentees are feeling
- Spend time communicating with Mentees
- Strive to be open minded, deal well with diverse individuals
- Are aware that mentees may not ask for help, for many valid reasons
- Are committed and motivated to support their mentees

See Mentor’s training guide, pp. 8 & 11
Flinders policy - All commencing students to have a mentor. A range of different mentor programs in each School. Mentors & mentees are all peers (same School)

- Embedded in topic
- Peer tutorial support
- General ‘opt out’ model
- Formal or Informal
- Structured / unstructured
- Large group of mentees (5 – 20)

*All have same aim – help mentee make a successful transition to uni*
How does the program work?

- Transition Office coordinates central mentor training
- Each School runs its own specific component
- Each School has a Mentor Coordinator (Director of First Year Studies)
- Generally, mentor randomly assigned between 10 – 20 new students (your mentees)
- Assigned before or by Orientation (O’ Week)
- New students may be assigned during semester
- You need to:
  1. do training (and any other useful workshops)
  2. sign a mentor agreement (?)
  3. take part in your School’s orientation where required
  4. communicate regularly with mentees
  5. attend meetings with School Mentor Coordinator
  6. complete evaluation of your mentoring experience
Leadership experience - *This will not be the last time you are in a mentor/mentee relationship*

Improving/acquiring skills - active listening, communication, time management, information gathering and distribution, networking, email management, reflection and constructive criticism

Learn about yourself

Making a difference to other students

Meeting people – experience dealing with a diverse group

Recognition of your contribution

Contribution to your career

Motivation and persistence

Prioritisation of information
Mentors’ feedback

I feel that being a mentor also helped to develop my leadership skills which will definitely be an asset to myself in my career as a registered nurse.

I found it meaningful to impart my experience, regardless of wrong or right to them.

Feeling useful and helpful is fantastic and I have loved having chats with these new Uni students.

I found that I learnt and build on many skills personally and professionally. My communication skills developed in more ways than one. I was able to built a sense of trust with ease, hence developing rapport with people I didn’t know quickly.

I also get tremendous rewards from my mentees; friendship, trust and respect.

I love the fact that this program puts a human side to attending university and makes it less intimidating and more accessible.

I was able to see for myself how to be a team player, how to lead a group of people, and more importantly how to get the message across in a dynamic group.

I feel that being a mentor also helped to develop my leadership skills which will definitely be an asset to myself in my career as a registered nurse.
What is a Flinders Mentor?

- Guide
- Someone to ask questions of ("There are no dumb questions!")
- Networking facilitator (mentees, staff, mentors, services)
- Information conduit (social, academic, wellbeing)
- Just-in-case support
- Signpost to support services and appropriate academic staff

- Role model
  - non-discriminatory
  - inclusive, helpful, friendly
  - consistent, supportive, motivational
  - model good study skills and time management where possible
  - honesty and integrity
Role Boundaries

Actual feedback from a mentor:

(My mentee) didn’t say yes when I asked them on a date!
One of your mentees asks to see you after your session and says they don’t feel comfortable in the group. They suggest meeting up separately.

You are discussing contact details and several members of your mentee group say they prefer Facebook or Twitter as a medium. They also suggest sharing mobile numbers.
The role for both mentor and mentee should be *non-exploitative*:

- You do not have to be a close friend
- You are not your mentees’ “representative” or advocate
- You can be a confidante, a role model, a person to go to for help
- You are not expected to know everything

What do you think your role boundaries/rules as mentor might be?

Think about:
- Academic and personal issues
- Friendships
- Reporting to staff
- Privacy

- Do point them in the right direction - your job is to connect them to the most appropriate student services
- Share what you know if you think it would help
- Set guidelines in your first meeting (I can, can’t, will, won’t)
- Provide contact details but specify when and how they contact you
Role Boundaries

DON’T:
• Compromise your own study / work / life balance
• Be available 24/7
• Put yourself in a situation where you are not comfortable – seek help from your School Mentor Program Coordinator or other support available
• Proof read assignments
• Meet alone off campus
• Form a private relationship with a mentee

DO REMEMBER:
• There are services provided by staff on campus for academic matters and disputes
• You can help your mentees with self-directed learning
• You can discuss any issues of concern with your DofFYS and/or Transition Staff
• You can request to switch a mentee to another mentor

See also pp.16, 17 in Mentor’s Guide
Support Services

Your hit team

Check out pp. 19 & 20 in Mentors’ Guide
Available Resources

• Resources-Mentor Survival Kit
  ✓ Manual
  ✓ Supports for mentees
  ✓ Skills development for mentors

• Role of Directors of First Year Studies
  ✓ Your mentor coordinator
  ✓ School-specific information
  ✓ First port of call

• Role of Transition Office
  ✓ Runs generic training
  ✓ Website
  ✓ Access to print resources
  ✓ Can be port of call
Who to go to for...

**Academic advice**
- Student learning centre (Library, website, FLO)
- Yunggorendi
- Director of First Year Studies
- Topic tutor
- Subject librarian

**Course advice**
- Admissions
- Careers
- Course advisor
- Faculty administrator

**Health and well-being**
- Health, Counselling and Disability Services
- FUSA
- Oasis
- International Student Services Unit (ISSU)
- Flinders One (Sport, yoga, massage)
Morning Tea Break

Flinders University
inspiring achievement
Expectations: What you should expect of Flinders
See page 10, Mentor’s guide

Expectations: What Flinders expects of you
See page 9, Mentor’s guide
Reporting Serious Issues

- In the unlikely event of a mentee threatening self-harm or harm to others:
  - Do not try to manage this yourself
  - Contact Security or Health and Counselling immediately – 12880/12118
  - Or Contact Lifeline all hours 13 11 14, web address http://www.lifelinesa.org.au
  - Report immediately to your School mentor coordinator or the Transition Office (Sandra Egege)

- If you become aware of staff/student code of conduct issues OR you witness or are the victim of bullying, harassment or discrimination:
  - Contact your School Mentoring coordinator or Equal Opportunity unit (Lisa O’Neill – 13735) http://www.flinders.edu.au/equal-opportunity/

Think of your boundaries – you do not need to put yourself in harm’s way nor allow destructive or illegal behaviours to go unmentioned.

Help and support is always available
The Student Issues Lifecycle

What sort of queries do you think come up during these times – consider a diverse group of mentees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Issues</th>
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<td>O’Week</td>
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<td>Weeks 1 – 2</td>
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<td>Weeks 2 - 5</td>
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<td>Weeks 11 – end of exams</td>
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<td>Results release</td>
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The Student Issues Lifecycle

**Weeks 1 – 2**

- Homesickness
- Family relationship issues because they have moved away from home
- Feelings of uncertainty in adjusting to their new environment
- Feelings of inadequacy and social rejection fears
- Frustrations in having to deal with administration that they feel should be resolved for them already
- Time management difficulties
- Independent living issues
- Anxiety in establishing new friendships
- Organisational stress related to academic study
- Stress from difficulties around locating rooms and staff (timetable clashes)

**Weeks 2 – 4**

- Homesickness may still exist
- Financial strains may increase due to lack of budgeting experience (or just from being poor – most students don’t have enough money!)
- Stress increases due to up and coming assessment deadlines
- Frustration in accessing information and using IT
- Feelings of being overwhelmed and overly extended
- Difficulty managing competing commitments (inc home, work)
- Uncertainty about course choice
- Loneliness and feelings of isolation.
Weeks 4 – 6

- Concerns with meeting academic expectations
- Increased anxiety concerning completing assignments
- Continued feelings of being overwhelmed and over extended
- Increased anxiety associated with accessing information needed to complete assignments
- Financial pressures – lack of money, bills start to come in
- Possible questioning reasons for undertaking course

Weeks 6 onwards

- Feelings of being burnt out
- Depression
- Homesickness continues
- Pressure to find paid work
- Increased academic work pressures associated with meeting deadlines for assignments or tests
- Time management conflicts between University commitments and personal/social commitments
- Increased alcohol or other substance consumption
- Relationship pressures - possibly issues with friends or dating issues
- Sickness — lack of sleep and not eating well
- Stress and panic related to up and coming exams
- Worried about return home during the holidays
- Financial pressures, with the possibility of no money during the holidays
## Mentee Issues

### Types of Queries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course materials</th>
<th>Electives</th>
<th>Swapping units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>Major selection</td>
<td>Re-enrolment</td>
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<td>Second-hand books</td>
<td>Appealing a mark</td>
<td>Events</td>
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<td>Public transport</td>
<td>Homesickness</td>
<td>Fitting in with the</td>
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<td>Work-study-life balance</td>
<td>Unit registration</td>
<td>Australian culture</td>
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<td>ID cards</td>
<td>Timetable registration</td>
<td>What the course is like</td>
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<td>Library Borrowing</td>
<td>Unit withdrawal</td>
<td>after 1st year</td>
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<td>Study tips</td>
<td>Overloading</td>
<td>Student exchange</td>
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<td>Improving marks</td>
<td>Deferring</td>
<td>Referencing</td>
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<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Managing the readings</td>
<td>Group work</td>
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<td>Time management</td>
<td>Can I do it?</td>
<td>Extensions</td>
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<td>Motivation</td>
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<td>Submitting assignments</td>
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<td>In the ‘wrong’ course!</td>
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<td>Health/counselling</td>
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<td>Changing course</td>
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1. Some local and international students might participate more in online/email discussions than face to face initially if that forum meets their needs.

2. Some rural and international students may receive more varied, possibly accurate information, if they have more Australian friends (otherwise they rely on info and advice from home!).

3. Some international students may be used to a different educational system and may be unaware of things you take for granted.

4. Students from backgrounds and communities where university hasn’t been an educational or workplace focus may experience severe ‘culture shock’.

5. REMEMBER: part-time, NESB, international, rural, mature age, private school, First-in-family – very diverse mentee groups.

6. Ask mentees – what would help you? Don’t assume – everyone is different.

Try to let your mentees feel supported regardless of who they are, where they are from, their socioeconomic background, family status etc.
Establishing Mentoring Relationship

Some issues:

- Sometimes you don't even need a mentor and it's annoying constantly getting emails.
- Lost contact after second week. Saw them in uni environment and there was no acknowledgement of my presence.
- Did not reply to my email and then I gave up making contact.
- I emailed her once about how to hand in assignments. She took a long time to get back to me, so I handed it in wrong :(
- Didn't send me email @ end of semester just to see how semester went.
Contact & Orientation

**Attendance at School Orientation and O’Week**

- Essential, proven to improve response rates from mentees, not to mention retention and success rates for new students
- Good time to catch up and organise a meeting (over coffee!)

**Contact with Mentees**

- Check with your School mentor coordinator about what they expect from you
- Otherwise at least every 2 weeks, for the WHOLE semester. They may not respond, but they like to know you are there if they need you
- Good idea to get the students’ preferred email and show them how to divert their Flinders email
- Use the word “Mentor” in the subject line– so they know who it’s from and so it does not go into Junk mail
- **Bcc (Blind Copy) to all mentees (if emailing)**
- Continue contact even if no response
Sticky Situations: What would you do?
First meeting: You walk into the ‘wisdom corner’ in the library where you’d suggested your mentees meet. Four females and two males are present. After half an hour of introductions, chit chat and nitty gritty talk, there is one mentee, Majid, who is not saying much.
Two weeks have gone by and your mentee appears to be losing faith in her ‘ability’ to finish first year. She says she’s simply not cut out for study. She likes some of her topics but is terrified of public speaking. She hates exams, she feels there’s too much to learn and her kids demand a lot of her attention at home.
Scenario: Discrimination?

After your third session you learn that your mentee is having issues with a lecturer. Your mentee tells you that his lecturer told him that his cultural background is an issue for his learning now because in Australia we learn to think and reflect by working with others in groups and so it’s not like they do in some countries where the teaching approach in use involves transmission and memorising chunks of stuff. He is visibly upset about the situation.

• What are the issues? What would you do?
Scenario: Suffering

Your mentee has arrived and seems distressed. His eyes are swollen and he begins telling you that he has a very abusive father and that they’ve had a huge fight. His father has kicked him out.

What are the issues? What would you do?
You’ve been helping your mentee understand the criteria for a project. You have exhausted all possible examples and metaphors.

• What are the issues? What would you do?
Scenario: Boundaries & Social Media

Your mentee asks;

• Can we meet outside of the uni environment?
• Can I have your mobile number?
• Will you be my friend on Facebook [other social media]?
• What are the issues? What would you do?
You have a mentee who is very casual in her communications with you and other mentees in your group. Her English language skills are quite informal (colloquialisms and *#@! are dominant in her speech). She is now assigning nick names to you and others in the group.
To: mentee@student.curtin.edu.au  
From: mentor@student.curtin.edu.au  
Subject: Wassup my HOMEYS????

Yo Homey,

What’s cracking? I’m busy as a mofo and have no time for my stupid assignments. What’s going down with your uni work? Need a hand with anything?

I’m busting for the weekend so I can get smashed and hit the town. Might have a barbie with mates on Sat – you up for it?

Toodle-loo,

Mr Mentor Man (ps like my cartoon … ha ha ha)
Email/communication etiquette

• Check with your School mentor coordinator about what they expect from you

• Think about - What information is relevant, and when

• Use the word “Mentor” in the subject line—so they know who it’s from and so it does not go into Junk mail

• Be friendly and informal but no need to be too ‘familiar’. You can use:
  • Bulk email lists
  • Redirecting emails (eg. Outlook to home account or vice versa)
  • Timely replies (check daily – Facebook too)
  • Folders & filing
  • Forward to staff and cc the mentee
SUBJECT: Your Student Mentor Contact - Response Required

Hello John, Melanie, Sally, Bob, Gagandeep, Mary, Puk, Doris, Xiao-Mei and Ferdinand -

I met most of you at Orientation, but wanted to confirm that I am your Flinders Student Mentor. I’m here as a source of help and guidance if you need it. I will send you regular emails full of tips, hints, events and information that will help you with your study and student life. Mentors volunteer to help out new students, so we do this because we are keen to help not because we get paid!

Please feel free to ask me any questions you have about textbooks (which ones to and not to buy), classes and lecturers, and anything else Uni related you might want to know/find. I can’t do your assignments or proof read for you, but I can direct you to support services to help with that sort of thing!

I am really enjoying starting the third year of my Laboratory Medicine course – you might not see the relevance of some of your first year units now, but when you hit second and third year, you understand how important the basics are and get into the good stuff!

I would love to meet up with you a couple of times this semester for a short chat too.

MEETING: Next week, I’ll be at the Café on Thursday 14 Feb 10am - 11am. Please come along, the more of you the better, then we can talk about any issues or questions you have about your new life at Curtin. If you don’t come, I’ll be lonely on my own!

Please email me back to say Hi, confirm your email is correct, ask me questions and tell me about yourself!

Cheers!
Mentor Evaluation

It is important to obtain feedback and evaluation data:
- To validate your role
- To improve the program
- For research purposes

Please spend a few minutes filling out the feedback form in your Mentor’s Survival Kit.
(place in box in foyer)

Think about whether or not you would consider providing more detailed feedback at a later date.
A HUGE Thank You!

We wish you all the best for your semester!

Any questions about Mentoring?