



MIEX Alumni Association

Peer Mentoring Program Guide for Mentors

2013-2014

The MIEX Alumni Association appreciates the time and dedication you are giving to today's MIEX students. Few things are as rewarding as helping students develop and succeed. Thank you. In creating this handbook, we have in places called upon similar mentoring guides from other Institutions. We acknowledge using material from the Cornell University Mentoring Program.

Mentoring and Success at MIEX

Who is an Alumni Mentor?

1. A guide, friend, and resource who has an opportunity to put his/her own vision, energy, and creativity to work;
2. One who wants to make an important difference in a MIEX student's life;
3. One who wants to maintain ties to MIEX;
4. One who contributes to a student's professional and personal development.

Mentors play contradictory roles – at times offering friendship and support, at other times posing tough challenges and sharing critical insights. To be productive, there must be a reciprocal, trusting relationship between mentor and student. This relationship takes time to build, but at its best, it is a powerful personal relationship with a strong potential to positively influence student attitudes and behavior.

Incoming students need several things in addition to their intellect in order to succeed: a dream (goal, vision, plan), determination (ambition, perseverance, ability), and someone who believes in them and can help shape their dream into reality. That's where you come in.

While mentors serve a variety of roles in a student's life, a mentor cannot do or be everything. Mentors work in conjunction with student and academic services staff at the University. They are more motivators than advocates in relation to staff and faculty. There are limits to what a mentoring relationship can do for the student and mentor. For example, while some mentors may help students find jobs, job-finding is not a normal expectation in the mentoring relationship. Both parties must work at the relationship to make it successful. A good mentoring relationship takes time, so do not expect it to happen overnight.

Mentor/Student Relationships: Expectations and Guidelines

How will I be matched with a student?

Mentors will usually be matched with students from the MIEX Track. In addition to second year destination, other factors—such as gender, ethnicity, and career field will be considered in making the match.

How long will it take for me to be matched with a student?

Since we aim to match mentors and students based on students' preferences first, you will not be matched until a student asks for a mentor who fits your description. It is possible that we may not be able to complete an alumni/student match for you right away.

What does the program expect of me?

1. To advise students on how to successfully navigate their way through MIEX by providing support and encouragement;

2. To teach students about the importance of networking;
3. To assist students in bridging the gap between college life and working life;
4. To assist students in transitional phases with career advice, helping to clarify goals, strengths and opportunities through open discussion and personal experience;
5. To assist students with their professional development, presentation and communication skills and to teach them what it means to be a responsible community member.

What is not expected of me?

To offer jobs to your student. Though some mentors offer job shadowing and internship opportunities, it is neither an expectation nor a requirement.

Are you sure I can help a student who does not share my career interests?

Yes. The primary factor used in matching students with alumni is second year destination choices. We believe that alumni mentors have much more to offer than career advice.

If a student requests specific career advice that you cannot offer, you might consider connecting your student with another MIEX alumnus/a who shares your student's career interest. This will allow you to teach your student about the importance of having a network and will enable the student to begin building his/her own MIEX network.

What is the time commitment involved?

1. Alumni are asked to serve as mentors for the duration of the student's MIEX career plus the first year post-graduation.
2. Mentors are provided with the contact details of their students the spring before the student leaves for his/her second year destination. You will be asked to contact your student before he/she leaves for the second year and within one week following the communication of the match.
3. We encourage you to be in contact at least once a month via email, phone/skype/facetime, or even in-person meetings where possible.
4. Mentors are asked to dedicate a minimum of 2 hours a month to their mentee.

How to Make Mentoring Work

How should I keep in touch with my student while he/she is in MIEX?

1. When you first meet or speak with your student, you should establish a preferred method of communication (phone, email, Facebook, etc.).
2. We highly suggest that you also establish a schedule for communicating so that you and the student know when to expect to hear from each other. Though this may seem highly regimented, we believe that it helps keep the relationship going when both of you get busy. Be sure to discuss scheduling with your student and be flexible as academic and social demands change throughout the semester.

Keys to communicating with your student:

1. Get to know your student's style of communication and problem solving. Be aware of your own style, as well. In the early stage of your Mentor/Student relationship "lead by following", i.e. let the student take the lead and adjust your style to balance the student's. If your student is intellectualizing, anxious or agitated, respond with calm reassurance and thoughtful questions. If your student is quiet, hesitant or distant, respond with lively reassurance and invitations to engage in discussion and activity. In time you will find a natural, comfortable balance in your conversations.
2. Practice active listening: Let your student get it all out. Example: "Go on, I'm listening." Talk less; avoid interrupting and offering quick solutions. Show concern in your voice and posture. Be patient; silence promotes thinking. Repeat what you think you heard and ask if that is what your student meant to say. Example: "Let's see if I heard you correctly."
3. Set an example by respecting your student's confidentiality and personal boundaries. The focus should always be on your student's concerns and issues. When appropriate, share the lighter side of your own MIEX years; share the humor in the complexities and contradictions of MIEX life. If you become concerned about your student's overall health and well being, contact the MIEX Alumni Association at: info.miexaa@gmail.com
4. Ask regularly how your student views MIEX and how he/she fits within that view. Your MIEX wisdom and experience can encourage your student to gain perspective on his/her personal journey and to realize dreams.

Helping Your Student

When asked, "What should I do?" avoid offering solutions and instead encourage your student to explore alternatives.

1. Ask "What options are you considering?" or "What has worked well for you in similar situations?"
2. Express your interest in the problem/situation and your willingness to support your student's ability to find the best alternative.
3. Help your student realize that considering options and deciding for oneself under pressure are important for success at MIEX and in life.

Building the Mentor/Student Relationship: Ideas for Mentor–Student Activities

1. Socialize with other mentor–student pairs.
2. Have lunch or dinner at a local eatery – share your favorite spots with each other. Eating together is an important relationship builder.
3. Attend a campus lecture, performance or a sporting event together.
4. Attend a MIEX Alumni Association sponsored event.
5. Volunteer a few hours to help an alumni organization, campus, or community–organized event.
6. Introduce each other to your favorite types of movies, concerts, festivals, art exhibits, and cultural events.

What should I do if my student does not communicate with me?

We emphasize to students how important it is that they be committed to this mentoring relationship because mentors are busy people. Even so, we find that as students become busy, they forget to contact their mentors, and as time passes, they feel badly about establishing a reconnection. If you haven't heard from your student, please try to contact him/her and make it clear that you are still interested in mentoring him/her.

If you still experience issues related to your relationship with your student, please contact us. We are more than happy to work with you and the student or to re-match you with a more responsive student.

More Opportunities for Involvement

MIEX Alumni Day

The event dedicated to the MIEX Community: alumni, students, partners, professors and business professionals.

Contact Information

email: info.miexaa@gmail.com

website: <http://www.mastermiex.com/alumni-corner/>