

# THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY 55 *of* PARIS YEARS

## Alumni Career Mentoring Program

### GUIDELINES BROCHURE



This brochure is a resource to help both mentees and mentors make the most out of the Alumni Career Mentoring Program.

Each year, program signups (for mentors and mentees) open in September, mentor/mentee matches are announced in October and the Program runs until the end of May.

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## **Guide for Student Mentees:**

The objective of the Alumni Career Mentoring Program is to provide AUP students with professional development, to assist them in building their network, and to guide them as they prepare for their futures.



### **WHY PARTICIPATE IN THE AUP ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM?**

By participating in the AUP Alumni Career Mentoring Program, you have a unique opportunity to receive help, inspiration, and motivation for achieving your personal and professional objectives.

### **HOW DO I BENEFIT AS A STUDENT MENTEE?**

- Build a professional network.
- Develop your communication skills.
- Connect your current academic work to your future career.
- Explore new ideas and areas of interest.
- Gain exposure to career options, advice and insider tips.

### **WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM ME AS A MENTEE?**

- Make the first contact with your mentor and respond to all communications.
- Set and commit to specific goals and expectations with your mentor. (more on page 5)
- Spend at least two hours per month building the mentoring relationship.
- Approach the mentoring relationship with an open mind, professionalism and respect.
- Be open to suggestions and feedback.
- Do not expect your mentor to offer you a job or an internship.
- Communicate difficulties with your mentoring relationship to the Alumni Affairs Office at [alumni@aup.edu](mailto:alumni@aup.edu).

If your mentor has suggested specific internships or other experiences and you're not sure how to locate them, ask them for additional information and come to Internship and Career Office

Hours (The Learning Commons, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) to discuss what you're looking for. To see a list of office hours days and times, see [AUP Engage](#).

## INITIAL CONTACT WITH YOUR MENTOR

You are expected to make the initial contact with your mentor within the week following the match. We encourage you to send an introductory email to your mentor along with your resume in order to provide them some background information about yourself.

## HOW TO MAKE THE FIRST CONTACT WITH YOUR MENTOR

**Subject:** The subject of your email should be short and concise, introducing yourself as the mentee.

- *AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program*
- *AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program: I am your mentee!*
- *I am your AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program mentee*

**Greeting:** Be formal when addressing your mentor; address them as “Mr.”, “Mrs.”, “Ms.”, “Dr.”, etc. in the initial contact. As a tip, make sure you check their degree level information and/or profession to help identify the proper title.

- *Dear Dr. Phil,*
- *Dear Ms. Marvel,*
- *Dear Mr. Rogers,*

(**Note:** Informal greetings such as “Hey,” “Hi,” or “What’s up” are inappropriate. They are too chatty and casual, giving the impression that the writer doesn’t understand email etiquette).

**Introduction of Yourself:** Share your name and a little bit about yourself; your major, degree level, and hometown are often great pieces of information to include. Also, remember not all acronyms for majors and degrees mean the same thing to alumni and to students. It is a good idea to write out your full degree.

- *My name is Elle Woods and I am a junior majoring in International Finance from Miami, Florida.*
- *My name is Harry Potter and I am a graduate student in the Global Communications (MAGC) program. I was born and raised in London, England.*

**Explain Your Reason for Writing:** Let your mentor know that you’ve been paired through the mentoring program at AUP.

- *You and I have been paired through the AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program this year and I am reaching out to touch base with you.*
- *I received your contact information through the AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program and am excited to have you as my mentor this year!*
- *I am reaching out because I just received my pairing information from the AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program and am excited that I have been paired with you!*

**Share More About Yourself/Add a Personal Touch:** Your alumni mentor will have received a similar pairing e-mail to the one you received, with some information about your interests, but take this opportunity to paint a better picture of who you are. Topics like hobbies, extracurricular interests, and some high-level goals are all great introductory details.

- *I want to share a little bit more about myself. Outside of classes, I enjoy music, writing, and traveling. I am also a huge TV/Film fan and write reviews and analyses on my personal blog!*
- *I am hoping to get involved with an internship at a film studio but am also considering graduate school in communications.*

**Set Action Items:** Throughout the mentoring program, it is important to be purposeful and set goals for each interaction. In this instance, letting your partner know that you're looking forward to hearing from them and politely requesting a response would be an appropriate objective.

- *I am looking forward to learning more about you! Please let me know if you have time to set up a phone call or meeting so I can learn more about you and we can discuss our mentoring relationship.*

**Formally End the E-mail:** Be polite and professional throughout the email. Consider thanking your mentor for volunteering their time to serve as a mentor. Use one of the following before signing your name:

- *Sincerely,*
- *Best regards,*
- *Thank you,*
- *All the best,*

#### **Sample e-mail:**

**Subject:** AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program: I am your mentee!

Dear [Mr. Spielberg](#),

My name is [Bobbi](#) and I am a [senior](#) majoring in [Film Studies](#) at The American University of Paris (AUP). We have been paired through the AUP Alumni Career Mentoring program and I am reaching out to touch base with you.

I want to share a little bit more about myself. Outside of classes, I enjoy [music, writing, and traveling](#). I am also [a huge TV/Film fan and write reviews and analyses on my personal blog!](#) I am hoping to get involved with an internship at a film studio but am also considering graduate school in communications.

I am looking forward to learning more about you! Please let me know if you have time to set up a phone call or meeting so I can learn more about you and we can discuss our mentoring relationship. Thank you for taking the time to serve as a mentor in the Alumni Career Mentoring program! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,  
[Bobbi](#)

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FIRST CONVERSATION**

You will make first contact through email after which another mode of communication can be used - phone, Skype, FaceTime or in-person.

- Tell your mentor that you are excited about being his/her mentee. Sharing your enthusiasm will help reassure them that you are committed to making the relationship succeed.

- Build a rapport with your mentor by asking questions about his/her educational and professional background and experiences. Remember, you have AUP in common and that is a great place to start!
- At the beginning of the relationship, it is important to talk about expectations and goals for the mentoring experience. Make sure you start this dialogue from the first conversation.

## SET SMART GOALS WITH YOUR MENTOR

Smart goals are goals that are **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**chievable, **r**ealistic and **t**ime-bound.



Think about what you want to get out of a mentoring relationship. Establishing clear goals is key for helping you discover what you want to achieve. It's a critical step in defining the work with your mentor and mapping out your efforts moving forward. There is no right or wrong way to establish goals, it's just really important to have them.

### What Are Mentoring Goals? And How Many Should I Aim For?

Mentoring goals are both long-term and short-term goals set by the mentee. The long-term goal tends to be a larger goal (e.g. become a stronger candidate in my field) and the short-term goals are the "mini" goals that need to happen along the way in order to achieve the big goal (e.g. take part in a webinar series on developing leadership skills, preparing your CV and cover letters, honing your interviews skills, etc.).

As a mentee, you get the final say on the goals, but it would be a good idea to seek input from your mentor. The first couple of meetings should involve this goal-setting discussion. How many goals should you aim for? That depends. It's important to be realistic. The most successful mentoring relationships are ones where both the mentor and mentee believe the mentee is making progress, not feeling overwhelmed or disappointed with unachievable or unrealistic goals.



## Guide for Alumni Mentors:

The objective of the Alumni Career Mentoring Program is to provide AUP students with professional development, to assist them in building their network, and to guide them as they prepare for their futures. By participating as a mentor, you will build your leadership skills, improve your communication skills, learn new perspectives, and gain personal satisfaction from watching your mentee's growth and development.



### WHAT IS AN AUP ALUMNI MENTOR?

As an AUP alumni mentor, you are an inspiration, friend, and resource who shares an AUP education. You are a professional who helps build the way for students to succeed at AUP and beyond.

Roles as an AUP Alumni Mentor:

- **Motivator:** To express confidence in the mentee's abilities and to encourage the mentee to pursue his/her goals and to try new things.
- **Resource:** To advise the mentee on how to make professional contacts, how to prepare for the professional environment, and to introduce the mentee to new opportunities, people, places, or ideas.
- **Supporter:** To encourage honest and open dialogue; to listen to and to respond to the needs of the mentee.
- **Coach:** To guide students through a decision-making process rather than determining their path.

### HOW WILL I BENEFIT AS A MENTOR?

It is our belief that mentoring would be an enriching experience for you and specifically we hope that you will:

- Refine your mentoring skills.
- Develop meaningful connections with students.
- Learn about AUP's growing community.
- Expand your professional network.

## WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM ME AS A MENTOR?

- Spend at least two hours per month building the mentoring relationship.
- Email, telephone contact, or face-to-face meetings with your mentee.
- From the beginning, set expectations with your mentee for how you will communicate.
- Help your mentee in identifying and setting goals, track progress and make changes.
- Approach the mentoring relationship with an open-mind, professionalism, and respect.
- Mentally support your mentee's professional and personal development.
- Respond to all communications in a timely manner.
- Maintain and model professional behavior.
- Communicate any difficulties related to the mentoring relationship to the Alumni Affairs Office at alumni@aup.edu.

## WHAT IS NOT EXPECTED FROM ME AS A MENTOR?

- Offer jobs or internships to your mentee.
- Have all the answers for your mentee.
- Initiate the first contact with your mentee. The student should reach out to you first.

## INITIAL CONTACT WITH YOUR MENTEE

Students are expected to initiate the first contact with the mentor.

We encourage the students to send you an introductory email; so please be on the lookout for this message and respond in a timely manner. If the student does not respond to your messages or you have any other troubles, please contact the Alumni Affairs Office.

- **Tell your mentee that you are excited about being his/her mentor.** Sharing your enthusiasm will help reassure them that you are committed to making the relationship succeed.
- **Build a rapport with your mentee by asking questions about his/her background and experiences.** Remember, you have AUP in common and that is a great place to start!
- **Talk about expectations and goals for the mentoring experience.** Make sure you start this dialogue from the first conversation.

## SET SMART GOALS WITH YOUR MENTEE

Smart goals are goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Setting goals with your mentee at the beginning of the relationship is critical because it gives direction to the relationship and informs you in how to help the mentee.

If your mentee does not know his/her goals, this could be your first mentoring moment. You can ask questions such as "What made you sign up for the mentoring program?" or "What about my profile stood out to you?" or "What are your specific concerns and questions right now?" or simply "How can I help you?"

Remember, goal setting can be a process, so make a point to check in and ask the mentee if his/her priorities are changing or evolving.

- **Ask Questions To Really Understand Your Mentee's Desired Outcome**

The best way to create SMART mentoring goals is through conversation. Together with your mentee, take a look at the starter goal you created. Make sure you are clear on what success looks like. Be as specific as possible, and drill down until you come up with a way to measure success. Ask: "How will we know if you achieved it?" "What will success look like?" "What will be different when you achieve this goal?"

- **Get To Know Your Mentee**

Ask thoughtful questions about your mentee's interests, experiences and background. Follow up on any important steps the student has taken, such as a job interview or a professional experience, and ask what he/she learned.

- **Encourage Action Rather Than Contemplation**

Mentors help mentees create action-focused goals by reminding them that clarity comes from engagement, not thought. Too often we see mentees set goals that start with "I will think about" or "I will explore" or "I will learn." SMART goals have action words and should answer the question: "What will you DO?"

- **Share Your Story**

Telling your mentee about yourself and your experiences builds trust and rapport. Think about how you have learned from your mistakes and how your mentee can learn from them. Share your lessons learned during school and beyond with your mentee.

- **Provide A Reality Check**

SMART goals are realistic. Help your mentees set realistic milestones that link to a larger goal. That will keep them motivated and create enthusiasm for further progress. Ask "What are the obstacles to your success?" and "On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you that you can overcome those obstacles?" For anything less than an 8, work with your mentee to identify and anticipate obstacles. If obstacles can be overcome, create learning around that. If they cannot, create a more realistic goal.

- **Be A Coach!**

Encourage your mentee to take risks. Do not hesitate to give your mentee feedback if he/she is not acting in a professional manner – it could make a huge difference for his/her first interview, job and other life experiences.

- **Set A Deadline**

Too often, development goals languish because they feel important but not urgent. Having time-bound goals helps measure progress, create a sense of urgency, generate momentum and provide natural check-in points along the way. Set a date by which the goal should be achieved, and continually track progress towards that date. It's perfectly appropriate — even, at times, encouraged — for a mentee to choose a lofty goal that will really propel them forward. But unless that goal is broken down into smaller steps, your mentee may get fatigued or burned out. Set timelines for milestones along the way.



## SUGGESTED MENTORING ACTIVITIES

You will decide with your mentee what areas to work on. If you need ideas on what to do with your mentee, here is a list.

- Review the mentee's resume and/or cover letter.
- Lead your mentee through a mock interview.
- Offer guidance on where to best look for jobs/internships in your field.
- Share how you have balanced personal life and career and what to expect.
- Discuss what you would have done differently at AUP if you had to do it over.
- Talk about how you have dealt with personal or professional challenges.
- If in town, meet your mentee for coffee or lunch; take the opportunity to get to know them in person.
- Introduce your mentee to colleagues or other contacts.

Please don't hesitate to recommend that your mentee use AUP's Internship and Career Office to further discuss or research your recommendations.

We thank you for your interest and participation in the program. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email the Alumni Affairs team at [alumni@aup.edu](mailto:alumni@aup.edu) with further inquiries.