



Guidelines for the Mentee

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What's the Purpose of the MentorSHPE Program?

Research has indicated that where students find community, they will persist to the completion of their degree programs. Community provides a sense of security and wellbeing, and with the support and advice from people whom we trust, we develop the confidence to tackle new challenges. Friends and scholars from your new community can help you to acclimate quickly to Rensselaer by sharing their knowledge about habits they developed to manage their time and tools they implemented to balance academics and their extracurricular activities. While getting good grades is an excellent goal, you will also want to spend time with new friends, exercise to stay alert and sleep well, eat healthfully, keep an eye on your finances, and make sure you have clean clothes to wear. A mentor can provide suggestions for developing a set of habits and practices to successfully meet the first year college goals you set for yourself. Your mentor has successfully completed his/her first year of college, and they want to help you to do the same.

The typical Rensselaer student enjoys working hard and playing hard, and when Rensselaer students collaborate as a community, they're unstoppable! The role of your peer mentor is to help you make a smooth transition to Rensselaer and to provide information and guidance to meet your first year academic and personal goals. Mentors and mentees who gather together for monthly activities create a supportive community where students can network and share information and advice from which the entire community benefits.

Barbara Ruel,
Program Director
Jonsson Engineering Center, Room 5004
Phone: 518-276-2618
Email: ruelb@rpi.edu

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is a power-free, two-way mutually beneficial learning situation in which the mentor provides advice, shares knowledge and experiences, and teaches using a low pressure, self-discovery approach. (Starcevich, Matt, 1999, "Coach, Mentor: Is there a Difference?" www.coachingandmentoring.com)

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MY MENTOR?

What do mentors do?

- Coach... by providing examples of how to perform a task
- Facilitate... by creating opportunities for learners to use new skills
- Counsel... by helping the learner to explore the consequences of potential decisions
- Network... by referring the learner to others when the mentor's experience is insufficient

What a mentor is...

Coach
Facilitator
Listener
Friend
Guide

What a mentor isn't...

Savior
Therapist
Servant
Omniscient being

WHAT IS MY ROLE AS MENTEE?

To make the most of your mentoring relationship, you'll want to know what you'd like to accomplish in your first year at Rensselaer and the study habits that you've employed to help you achieve good grades in high school. You'll want to share your first year goals with your mentor as well as the habits that you've developed which have worked well for you so far. You may need to change some of these habits slightly to succeed in college, but your mentor can provide you with choices that may work well for you. If you want to find out the best way to meet people, you'll want to discuss the kinds of activities you enjoy and describe characteristics of your best friends. This information will help your mentor to suggest clubs, organizations, and activities on campus that might interest you.

We've also provided a list of Questions and Answers (see page 5-7) and a list of Suggested Activities (see page 8) that will enable you to explore possible scenarios for interacting with your mentor. Your mentor has volunteered her time to be there for you and like you, she's hoping to learn and grow from the partnership that the two of you will develop together.

Building a Sustainable Mentoring Partnership

Getting Started

To build a solid mentoring partnership, you and your mentor will want to get to know each other, appreciate your similarities, accept your differences, and most importantly, discuss your goals and figure out a plan for helping you to meet those goals. This doesn't have to be a complicated plan, but rather a roadmap that will help you to figure out how to successfully balance your academics and your social life. Determining what's important to you and identifying the steps to take to successfully reach the goals that you've set for yourself is an important life skill that will help you during college and in the years following graduation.

Building a Framework for Success

Mentors can help you to develop a weekly schedule that allows sufficient time for studying and homework and includes adequate time for exercise, sleeping, eating, socializing, and all of the other things that are important to meet your individual goals. You'll be able to discuss options and evaluate choices, but ultimately, you are the decision-maker. Mistakes are a part of learning and help us to grow by providing a mechanism for us to analyze what we did and could have done differently. Don't beat yourself up over a mistake you've made. Rather, seek help from your mentor and your network of friends and stay focused on your goals! You will be successful if you believe in yourself and your dreams and ask for help whenever you need it!

Seeking Support from Your Network

In addition to receiving support from your mentor, there are many students who are members of the SHPE organization who can offer their sage advice and support!

Please refer to the SHPE brochure in the enclosed folder and page 8 of this document. Here you will find regularly scheduled SHPE activities where you can meet other first year students, mentors, and members of SHPE who can provide a close-knit community that you can call on for friendship and support. We understand that your schedule may not permit you to attend every SHPE event and the same may be true for your mentor. If your mentor cannot attend an event, feel free to bring a friend or come alone! The SHPE community is a great place to network and explore how you can choose a minor to compliment and/or supplement your major, find out what kind of undergraduate research others are doing that may interest you, ask about companies where students have interned, find out about Study Abroad opportunities, and ask how others are preparing for professional careers as researchers, entrepreneurs, doctors, dentists, lawyers, etc. Find out how you can take advantage of your undergraduate experiences to prepare for Graduate School. Ask about available resources on campus, like the Advising Learning, and Assistance Center, and how professional staff can help you to address issues that you may be experiencing.

Sustaining a mentoring relationship is easy! For the first six weeks of the fall semester, figure out a day and time that's convenient for you to send a short text message or email to your mentor to let her know how you're doing or to ask for face time to discuss an issue.

Your First Six Weeks at RPI

If you're having an issue with a roommate or a course, text or email your mentor...something like, "Having Roommate Issue," or "Struggling with Chem 1. Can we chat for 10-15 minutes?" When your mentor replies to you, work with him/her to identify a mutually convenient time to discuss the issue as soon as possible. If you and your mentor have conflicting schedules and you cannot find time to get together, send an email to the SHPE Internal Secretary, Michelle Green at greenm9@rpi.edu and she will match you with a new mentor. If you're experiencing other issues and your mentoring partnership is not working out to your satisfaction, please send an email describing the issue to Michelle or to the program director, Barbara Ruel, at ruelb@rpi.edu, and we'll work with you to resolve the issue or reassign you.

Mentor Compatibility

Although we tried our best to match you with someone who has a few things in common with you on paper, we cannot guarantee that your personalities will match perfectly. Part of the college experience is to listen to the perspectives of others without judging them. You and your mentor will not have had exactly the same experiences and may have different ideas about how to resolve an issue. However, if you can look past your differences and listen closely to the advice that's being offered, then you can determine whether the advice has merit or value. Thank your mentor for his/her contribution, whether you found their advice beneficial or not. If the advice was helpful, let him/her know that. If the advice wasn't what you were looking for, clarify your question, or seek advice from another student. Your feedback is a necessary element to ensuring that the partnership is headed in a positive direction. A mutually beneficial partnership is possible when mentor and mentee are sharing authentically and both are learning and growing from their interactions. Remember that you can always find additional mentors from the SHPE network and that Michelle or Barbara can help you to find a new mentor!

Please read through this booklet carefully and if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Barbara by telephone at 518-276-2618 or email her at ruelb@rpi.edu.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What can I expect from my mentor? Your mentor is someone....

- Who is respectful, resourceful, supportive, and patient
- Who will be a good listener
- Who's agreed to make the initial contact with you (However, you may contact him/her first, if you prefer not to wait.)
- Who will stay in touch with you throughout your first year
- Who shares his/her knowledge and experience about student life, Rensselaer resources, and the Troy community
- Who acts as guide and coach to help you reach your academic and personal goals
- Who will provide friendship
- Who can suggest avenues for meeting people and making new friends
- Who can help you to quickly acclimate to your new environment
- Who can offer advice when requested

What is expected of me as the mentee?

- Discuss your expectations of your mentoring relationship with your mentor.
- Share your first-year goals and interests. What do you want to accomplish?
- Interact with your mentor on a regular basis. If your schedules don't mesh, write to internal secretary, Michelle Green at greenm9@rpi.edu, and she'll match you with a new mentor!
- Schedule mutually agreeable times and modes of communication with your mentor, and respond promptly to each other.
- Ask questions, so your mentor understands how she can best support you.
- If you would like to change your mentor or discontinue your participation in the program at any time, please write to Michelle or Barbara.

What can I expect from the Mentor Program Office? We will...

- Assist you and your mentor in getting "connected".
- Answer any questions or concerns you may have regarding the Mentor Program and its activities or about Rensselaer's resources and offices.
- Assist you with registration to events or connect you with someone who will be attending an upcoming event.
- Provide timely responses to your questions. Please send email to Fabiola B. Negrette Delgado at negref@rpi.edu Barbara Ruel at ruelb@rpi.edu, or call Barbara at 518-276-2618.

What kinds of things should I discuss with my mentor?

- How is college different from high school?
- What adjustments will I need to make?
- Why you and your mentor decided to enroll at Rensselaer
- Academic major; career goals (yours and your mentor's)
- Classes, teaching assistants, and professors
- Social life: What can you do in Troy?
- Where can you shop close to campus?
- Balancing classes and extracurricular activities
- Clubs/activities
- Fraternities/sororities
- Athletic
- Home life
- Vacations
- Undergraduate research opportunities

What kinds of things can I expect to do with my mentor?

- Walk the campus & find out where your classes will be
- Go to the UPAC movies
- Go to a club or organizational meeting together
- Attend monthly MentorSHPE Program activities
- Go to an RPI athletic event or join an intramural team
- Go the Mueller Center, walk, play tennis, or some other mode of exercise
- Go to Downtown Troy or shopping via the CDTA bus (which is free to students)
- Participate in activities in which you have common interests
- Have conversation over lunch/dinner/snack
- Tell him/her how you did on your first test
- Ask for his/her opinion on how to address any concerns about a roommate, how to stay on top of class work, or how to deal with a classroom situation

How do I communicate with my mentor?

- Text
- Email
- Phone
- In person
- Letters (over the summer)

What can I do to ensure a good relationship with my mentor?

- Be yourself.
- Acknowledge that your mentor's personal experiences, perspectives, and opinions may not match yours 100% of the time.
- Be open to hearing what your mentor has to offer and listen for any pearls of wisdom that may be useful.
- Find out more about your mentor's interests, career goals, etc.
- Let your mentor know the best times to reach you and find out the best time to reach him/her.
- Stay in regular contact with your mentor. Take the initiative to connect with him/her!
- Ask questions! There are no stupid questions!
- Be a good listener.
- Follow through on scheduled commitments you've made with your mentor.
- If you miss a scheduled appointment with your mentor, apologize, explain what happened and schedule a new day/time to get together.
- If your mentor misses an appointment with you, don't rush to judge him/her. Find out if he or she is "ok," and if you can reschedule.
- Be honest.
- Be realistic about your expectations for your mentoring relationship.
- Most importantly, HAVE FUN!

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR MENTOR

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce yourself to your mentor by Facebook, text, or email 	July 1 through August 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your mentor to show you where your classes will be 	August 28 to 30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about low cost options for purchasing current textbooks or borrowing them 	July and August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask your mentor to attend the Activities Fair at the Armory 	September 3, 6:30 to 8:30 PM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the SHPE barbecue with your mentor 	September 5, 1 to 4 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss adding or dropping courses 	Month of September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend first SHPE General Body Meeting (GBM) 	September 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend a SHPE Study Jam (beginning Sept. 14) 	Every Monday at 7 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to a workshop on Pre-Career Fair prep or Inside Scoop on Undergraduate Research 	September 14, 7 to 9 PM or October 26, 7 to 9 PM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call or text your mentor after your first test to let him/her know how you did 	Evening of first test
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend second SHPE GBM 	September 24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the NSBE/SHPE Career Fair, Armory 	September 25 and 26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to the SHPE Etiquette Dinner 	October 21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule Final Exam study breaks together 	December 14-22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask him/her about being a mentor to a first-year student 	mentor training dates: April 5, or 6, or 26, or 27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule Final Exam study breaks 	May 12-20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite him/her to join you for a meal in the dining hall 	Any time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask him/her to attend a club meeting or to work out at the Mueller Center 	Any time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch a movie or t.v. show (can do with other mentor/mentee pairs) 	Any time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite him/her to an RPI athletic event, participate in an intramural game, or to an event at EMPAC or the Playhouse. 	Any time

More mentor/mentee activities will be announced as the year moves forward, so be sure to check your email regularly! If you have questions about upcoming events, write to Fabiola B. Negrette Delgado at negref@rpi.edu.