

Gustavus Mentoring: Engaging for Success

2014 – 2015



**GUSTAVUS
MENTORING PROGRAM**

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

Vocational Discernment

“We understand vocation to be a sense of responsibility encompassing multiple areas of one’s life (work, family, citizenship, etc.) so that the person lives life in such a way as to benefit the community. For the Lutheran tradition out of which Gustavus comes, the most profound foundation for a sense of vocation is gratitude to God for the free gift of God’s love and for the gifts received through others (teachers, parents, mentors, friends, etc.). That same tradition recognizes that vocation may also be grounded in other religious faiths and on other understandings of self and the world, and that diverse perspectives and traditions enrich each individual’s sense of calling.

Closely associated with the sense of responsibility and integral to our understanding of vocation are the wisdom to understand what benefits the community and the courage to act for justice and defend human dignity even when economic, social, and political pressures make it easier not to do so.”

–Darrell Jodock, Lutheran Studies Professor

At Gustavus, we take seriously the opportunity to support and nurture students who are exploring their future career and calling. Based on the brain development experienced by young adults during their college years, this vocational discernment process is a natural fit for this time in life. Arthur Chickering, one of the leading theorists in college student identity development, says, “We discover our vocation by discovering what we love to do, what energizes us and fulfills us...and what actualizes all our potential for excellence.”

Vocational discernment addresses the holistic development of students by challenging them to look up from their narrow studies to ask and struggle with the larger questions of life: “Who am I?,” “Who am I called to be?,” “What is my purpose?,” “What are my passions?,” and “How can I use them to meet the needs of the world?” This process must focus on listening and reflecting upon a person’s true self including personality characteristics, gifts, skills, aptitudes, desires, passions, and interests.

A supportive mentoring relationship is a great setting for intentional reflection and dialogue around vocation to take place. For mentors, we believe you have a great opportunity to support a student’s vocational discernment process. And for the students, we trust that this experience will be a significant environment to consider their future.

Gustavus Mentoring: Engaging for Success

Vision

All students who desire a mentor are involved in this program creating the largest volunteer opportunity for alumni, parents, and friends to have a meaningful connection with Gustavus.

Mission

To provide Gustavus students with individual guidance for their career and vocational discernment/journey.

Program Values

Discovery: For students and mentors to explore simple and deep questions about life, work, and vocation and remaining open to uncover insights that are inside an individual.

Integration: To intentionally integrate learning from the classroom and past experience into setting a course for future exploration. In addition, an integration of many departments and constituents is valued to make the program a success.

Authenticity: Everyone involved in the program is expected to be their true and best self.

Objectives

- Develop meaningful relationships between students and mentors
- The mentoring experience results in measurable personal or professional growth for the mentee and mentor
- The mentoring experience assists in the discernment of students' career and vocation goals

Campus contact:

Amy Pehrson, Director for Mentoring, Vocation & Leadership for questions about the program
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Jackie Peterson, AVP for Institutional Advancement for opportunities for funding the program
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www.gustavus.edu/servantleadership/vocation/mentoring

College Life Today

Some of you may be just a few years out of college; others may be decades past the experience. It can be difficult to recall what a unique, exhilarating, and challenging few years college can be. As you prepare to connect with your mentee, consider his or her current reality as a college student. Students are not living at home for the first time and are negotiating their relationships with roommates and friends. They are tasked with creating routines that include all the responsibilities of student life: studying, socializing, class, laundry, working out, staying in touch with friends, working, going to meals, and preparing for the future.

Students are expected to know what they want to do after college and be setting significant career goals as soon as their freshman year ends. They are told that to get a job after college they need to get good grades, be involved in as many on-campus activities as possible, serve as leaders in their college community, and dedicate significant time to networking with others in their desired profession.

While some students have known what they want as a career since childhood, others can be confused while choosing classes and a career focus. They receive messages about how competitive the job market is and how many recent graduates are unemployed. As they look to their post-college years, the next steps can seem overwhelming and scary.

Most current college students are a part of the millennial generation. They have a unique set of life experiences that play a crucial role in their perspective. When asked about the key event in their lives, college students said (in this order):

1. the advent of digital culture
2. the economic downturn
3. 9/11
4. the election of President Obama

Take a moment to reflect on your response to that question. Are your key events similar or different? How might that impact your perspective and worldview?

College provides an ideal environment to be exposed to different ideas, people, and experiences. This time in their lives will challenge some things and ideas and bring them into question for the first time. This can cause anxiety, fear, confusion, imbalance, and insecurity. However, anytime a person is struggling, it is an opportunity for positive growth to occur.

Focus on helping them develop critical thinking skills, creative problem-solving abilities, and a desire to learn continuously. These are skills students will need in order to deal with the fast-changing and sometimes overwhelming work that lies ahead of them both in their careers and lives.

Building a Relationship

Establish Ground Rules

Ground rules are the foundation for working together. Clearly defining them for your relationship will help prevent potential problems. Establish ground rules at the beginning, and supplement them as the mentoring relationship grows. Some categories for ground rules include:

Meetings: What should be covered; when will you have them; how long will they last; who is responsible for scheduling?

Communications: What is the primary method of communication; when is the best time to communicate?

Commitments: What is each partner accountable for; what are you mutually accountable for; how is accountability measured and monitored?

Get to Know Each Other

Start by getting acquainted with one another. Be curious about one another, and you'll discover things you have in common and ways you are unique. Ask open-ended questions to learn more about your mentee such as:

- What are you reading these days? What kind of music do you like to listen to?
- How did you pick Gustavus? How did you pick your major(s) and your minor(s)?
- What has surprised you the most about your college experience thus far?
- Describe your favorite class, learning experience, or job.
- What skills or qualities set you apart? What skills do you want to improve?
- Where do you want to be 3-5 years from today?
- What do you want to be known for?
- How would someone who knows you well describe you?
- What's your greatest accomplishment?

Keep in mind, students may not know what they want from a mentoring relationship let alone their future career. Start by asking and listening, not talking. Ask strategic questions to clarify what you hear and paraphrase. Resist the temptation to advise, redirect, or problem-solve.

Set Goals for the Relationship

At this stage, you are getting to know your mentee's interests, skills, and experiences. Next, you can begin to identify goals for your mentoring relationship and together draft an action plan to achieve them. Goal setting is an important part of every relationship. In addition to helping your mentee set realistic goals for his/her professional development, make it a priority to set goals for your relationship. Take time to share what you would like to get out of the relationship and hear from your mentee as well. Look for areas of connection and mutual interest and set attainable goals that you can revisit over the course of the year. Things like "set up and conduct three informational interviews with emerging companies and compare takeaways" or "complete Strengths Finders Assessment and reflect on results" could be possible examples of goals you could work toward completing together over the course of this year.

Manage Your Expectations

Take a moment to reflect on your expectations for this relationship. What do you expect of your mentee? What are you hoping to get out of this relationship? Having expectations for a relationship is very normal and can be helpful in setting the stage. However, be aware of your expectations and understand the ways in which they are unrealistic or unlikely.

Common Expectations	What if?	Consider this
You will have an immediate connection with your mentee.	You meet for the first three months and don't feel like you are connecting.	Relationships take time to build, often times it may take several months before trust is established. Hang in there.
Your mentee will always call you back.	Your mentee never calls you back.	Your mentee may be struggling with time management. You have an opportunity to continue to pursue your mentee and be a consistent presence in the midst of busy college life.
Your mentee will initiate contact.	You always have to be the first one to reach out.	You can model positive behavior by initiating contact and getting the ball rolling. Your mentee may learn from your commitment!
You mentee will need a lot of help on his/her resume and job preparation skills.	Your mentee feels set with his/her resume and is confident about getting a job after college.	There is innate value in your relationship. Your mentee can learn new things from you and you can offer your mentee a safe space to process the experience of being a student. Think outside the box for ways you may support him or her.
Your mentee will be savvy and have the skills needed to get a job after college.	Your mentee lacks basic interpersonal skills needed for networking and interviewing.	Focus on your mentees strengths and look for skills to build on. Don't be afraid to make observations about ways he/she can grow and improve and be sure to affirm things you see as well.
Your mentee will be interested in your career.	Your mentee is set on a completely different career path and seems to wish his/her mentor was in that field.	You both have a chance to learn! Find out what your mentee is interested in and look for commonalities to talk about. Consider the skills and experience you have in your profession that translate.

Goal Setting

You have the unique opportunity to support your mentee as they set specific goals related to the future and career aspirations. Use your active listening skills to help your mentee set attainable goals for the year and then offer them assistance and support as they work toward their goals.

These goals should be SMART ones:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Time-bound

For example, you may recall them commenting that public speaking was an area for improvement. You might suggest that they set a goal to improve public speaking skills. This goal, as written, does not satisfy the SMART requirements and needs more clarity. How can you make the goal specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely?

A revised goal might look something like this:

Develop public speaking skills by delivering three presentations to three different groups by the end of the academic year.

Consider asking your mentee these questions when setting goals:

- What do you hope to achieve within the next 3-5 years?
- What resources -- people or otherwise -- do you have access to that could help you meet these goals (e.g., for frequent feedback or encouragement)?
- If you were to break this goal down into skills and knowledge, what would be some of the most important aspects of what you want to learn?
- What level of skill do you need to achieve this goal (e.g. familiarity, passing a certification, recognition as an exemplary performer, ability to train others)?
- To what degree are your goals capable of being measured?
- What concrete activities will you be able to do as a result of achieving your goals?

Sample Types of Question

Let's explore the use of three different types of questions: investigative, discovery, and empowering. These open-ended questions, when used correctly, encourage dialogue, require that mentees think through the issues, and disclose mentees' thoughts and feelings.

Investigative Questions:

These questions seek information and objective facts to provide enough background to move the mentoring conversation forward, and they should be used on a limited basis. Examples are:

- What have you accomplished so far?
- How long have you been working on this?
- Where do you think you lost focus?

Discovery Questions:

These questions are used to encourage the mentee to tap into their own knowledge, experience, and insight and lead them into drawing their own conclusions and learning from their experiences. Examples are:

- What have you learned from this experience?
- What could you have done differently?
- What does this tell you about your approach?
- What's the best thing that could happen for you?
- What's the worst thing that could happen to you?
- What do you think are your alternatives?

Empowering Questions:

These questions call upon the mentee to take ownership and make plans for the next step by asking "what happens next." Empowering questions push for action and ask for commitment. Examples are:

- What is your next step?
- What do you have to do to make it happen?
- What problems or obstacles might occur that would prevent you from achieving the best result?
- What will you do if the first plan does not work as well as you expect?
- What resources do you have; what do you need?
- How can I help you succeed?

Interview Practice

STAR Questions

S.T.A.R. questions are common behavioral interview questions that will ask about a *situation* in which you were given a specific *task*, the *action* you took, the *result* of your action, and what was learned from the situation. It is good to practice all types of these situational questions so that you will sound sincere when it comes to the real interview.

The Top Ten Most Frequently Asked Interview Questions

1. Tell me what you like most about your current job.
2. What do you like least about your current job?
3. What kind of job are you ideally looking for?
4. Tell me about your last boss. Strengths? Weaknesses?
5. Tell me what a typical workday looks like for you.
6. Describe a conflict with someone at work and how you handled it. (STAR)
7. Tell me about the most successful project you've led at work.
8. Describe for me a situation where you made a mistake and how you handled it. (STAR)
9. What salary range are you looking for?
10. What questions do you have for me?

Extra Questions for Practice

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- How do you effectively communicate with others?
- What are your career goals?
- Why should I hire you?
- Where do you see yourself in ten years?
- What are 2-3 weaknesses you need to improve upon?
- Tell me about a situation in which you practiced good communication skills.
- Tell me about a situation in which you demonstrated poor communication skills.
- Briefly describe the most important responsibility you have had in your career and what it taught you.
- Tell me about a confrontation you had with your employer. Who was wrong and why?
- Give an example of your ability to make decisions under pressure.
- Tell me about the worst decision you've made on the job.

Interview Stream

Interview Stream is a wonderful resource for students and business professionals alike. It is an online video interview that records the answers of the interviewee so that they can be reviewed and analyzed. Encourage your mentee to go to the Career Development website.

Leadership at Gustavus

STATEMENT OF BELIEF for LEADERSHIP

We are all called to a lifelong journey to lead and serve through knowing oneself, authentically engaging with others, and taking action to make a positive difference.

The Gustavus Mission calls us to prepare students for lives of leadership and service. The leadership aspects below outline a framework and key questions for leadership development.

3 Aspects of Authentic Leadership:

Ways of **Being**:

- *Awareness of self*: What are my gifts, talents, skills, and passions?
- *Values*: What do I value? What do I hold as central to my life?
- *Principles*: How do I choose to live out those values?
- *Personal Well-Being*: Am I well? What choices do I need to make to be well?

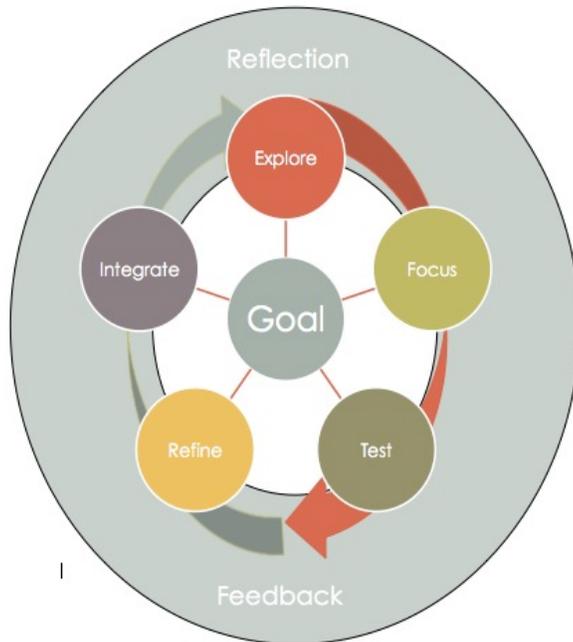
Ways of **Seeing**:

- *Vision*: What contributions need to be made to move us forward? What's possible?
- *Awareness of others – Needs and Assets*: What are the needs and assets of those around me?
- *Awareness of context, histories, location*: What has happened in the past? How does place influence vision?

Ways of **Doing**:

- *Intentional and Informed action*: How can my actions be tied to values and vision?
- *Building relationships*: What is my network? Am I working to build community? What contributions am I making to others?
- *Influencing self and others to act*: What impact do I have on others? How do I leverage the strengths of others to achieve results? What can we create together?

Life in the Making



Leadership development process

Life in the Making Map – additional handout

This “map” is to address some of the needs that our students struggle with knowing and understanding. These might include:

- Many people struggle to name values and strengths
- People do not often reflect upon their experiences to deepen their understanding of what they learned and how this could impact future choices
- Many students struggle to identify their career path and goals
- Some college students finish college and do not know their next step
- Many students are very busy, yet lack direction and wellbeing
- People will change jobs and careers many times, colleges can teach students the basic steps to follow to work through this process in the future

Program Policies

Eligibility Policy

Mentors must be Gustavus graduates or friends of the college and mentees must be at least sophomores currently enrolled at Gustavus Adolphus College.

Screening and Training Policy

All mentors and mentees must complete the screening process and be accepted into the program. We strongly recommend that all mentors and mentees attend the beginning of the year training session to ensure that the relationship gets off to a good start.

Match Support and Supervision Policy

The GMP team members are available to you at any time if you encounter challenges in your relationship or are looking for additional resources or support. Mid-year check-ins and year-end evaluations are crucial to continue to improve the program and ensure that matches are most effective for mentees. Contact Amy if you have issues with your mentoring relationship.

Confidentiality Policy

Program staff will not share information and records about mentors and mentees with others unless given permission otherwise. Mentors and mentees are expected to keep information about their mentor/mentee confidential.

Overnight Visit and Out-of-Town Travel Policy

Mentor/mentee visits should take place within their own community and not take place out-of-state. If an opportunity presents itself where a mentor would like to conduct business travel with a mentee, special arrangements and approvals would need to be arranged with Amy Pehrson.

Mandatory Reporting

Mentors must disclose information indicating that a mentor or mentee may be dangerous or intends to harm themselves or others to Amy immediately so she can disclose it to the appropriate state and/or local authorities.

Unacceptable Behavior Policy

Mentors or mentees that engage in illegal substance use or criminal activity will be immediately removed from the program.

Closure Policy

The program length requirements are one academic year. Mentors and mentees are asked to complete an end of the year evaluation and bring closure to their relationship.