**2014-2015 Monthly Guiding Conversations**

The following are conversation prompts and questions for you to utilize in your times together. For some mentoring pairs, you will move quickly through the questions and will talk about other issues. For others, you might only get through a few of them. Some of you will find your conversations take you in a different direction. Make these relationships your own and get out of them what you need.

Note: these questions are also grounded in two major initiatives at Gustavus – leadership and wellbeing. We have embedded some of the language and concepts into these questions and hope that they offer you a richer conversation. Also, these questions are meant to be reciprocal – therefore, student mentees, go ahead and ask your mentor these same questions and see what their answers are!

Leadership Aspects

Ways of Being

* Self-Awareness
* Personal wellbeing
* Values

Ways of Seeing

* Awareness of context, histories, and location
* Awareness of others – needs and assets
* Vision

Ways of Doing

* Intentional and Informed Action
* Building relationships
* Influencing self and others to act

Wellbeing Dimensions

* Career
* Vocational
* Environmental
* Intellectual
* Financial
* Physical
* Relational
* Emotional
* Spiritual

**November (Theme: Relationship Foundation)**

Starter and closer questions

* What is motivating you to participate in the mentoring program?
* General career interests – for students, possible next destination after graduation
* Set 3-4 goals for the year and how the mentoring relationship could help attain the goals
* Exchange resumes, Linked In
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

Complete the “Past Destinations” section of your *Life in the Making Map*

Locations

Where have I lived or traveled? (Country, State, City, Setting)

How may these places influence where I choose to live or travel to in the future?

School

What is your Gustavus story?

What classes I have taken that made an impact on me (positive or negative)?

 What lesson did I learn that could influence future decisions?

Job

 What have been my past work experiences?

 What lesson did I learn that could influence future decisions?

Service/Activities

 What have been my past service activities or involvements?

 What lesson did I learn that could influence future decisions?

**December (Theme: Your compass):**

Starter and closer questions

* What are your plans for the holidays and January?
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

Complete the “Create Your Compass” section of your *Life in the Making Map*

* What are my values?
* What are my interests? (Hobbies, free time activities, types of books you read, societal issues you care about)
* What are my strengths?
* What areas am I not as strong where I need support? (Could be a shadow-side of a strength)

**January (Theme: Next Destination)**

Starter and closer questions

* Debrief January experience. How is/did it go? What did I learn?
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

Work on the academic and career portion of the “Next Destination” section of your *Life in the Making Map*

* What ideas do I have for my next destination?
* Steps to be taken along this path to explore or focus my thinking?
* How do my values, interests, and strengths influence my thinking on possible next destinations?
* If interviews are coming up for the student, discuss:

 Professional etiquette

What to wear

 Questions to expect

 Practice interview

 Researching the company/graduate school of the interview

 If the student is going to Job Fair, what companies are of most interest?

 What questions to ask a potential employer/graduate school?

**February (Theme: Wellbeing)**

Starter and closer questions

* What courses is the student taking spring semester?
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

Review the wellbeing dimensions

 Purpose – career, vocational, spiritual

 Connection – intellectual, environmental, relational

 Vitality – physical, emotional, financial

* How would you assess yourself in each dimension and why?
* Is there any area where you wish to or where you are focusing attention now?
* Discuss strategies for life balance and managing stress
* How have I learned from my struggles and challenges?
* How can I continue to build resilience?

**March (Theme: Networking and Professional Development)**

Starter and closer questions

* Check-in on goals, tasks on the horizon, time management
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

* What is networking and the basics of how to do it and why
* Based on the career interests of the student, who could the student connect with
* How to use the online Gribly and LinkedIn for networking
* Review how to write a first contact for networking
* What to if the person does not respond right away
* What should they ask for? A phone conversation, meeting for an informational interview? Job shadow?
* What questions can be asked in an informational interview?
* What professional organizations is the mentor involved in and why?
* What professional organizations could the student join as a young professional?
* What professional websites or journal could the student explore?

Networking – Could get together in a group of other mentoring pairs

Link to Gustavus networking tips website

**April (Theme: Future Destinations)**

Starter and closer questions

* Check-in on goals, tasks on the horizon, time management
* How and when will we communicate? Set up a date and time for the next contact.

Going Deeper

Complete the “Other Points on Your Map” section of the *Life in the Making Map*

* What careers could I imagine myself pursuing in my life?
* Do I see myself going back for more education at some point in the future?
* Ideas on ways I will serve my community or activities I wish to be involved in the future
* Other areas of my wellbeing that may be of interest or effort in the future?

**May (Theme: Access/Celebrate)**

Starter and closer questions

* Check-in on goals, tasks on the horizon, time management

Going Deeper

* How will I be intentional about staying connected to who matters to me after I leave Gustavus?
* How can an alum stay connected to Gustavus?
* How do I engage in a new community?
* How will I close relationships at the end of the year, including this mentoring relationship?
* How can I express gratitude to those who have been important to me?

**Other Question Ideas**

Leadership

What is your leadership style?

Who are you as a leader, not the role you have played?

What style of leadership do you work best with?

Goals

How do you want your work to make a difference in your organization or the community?

How do your strengths, values, interests fit into your goals?

What will you focus on over the next few months to move towards your goal?

Job Search

What do you wish you would have done your junior/senior year during your job search?

What factors influenced your career decisions?

How did you get to your current position?

How do people get hired at your organization?

How do I get experience in your field?

What are current trends in your industry?

What do I need to do to prepare for this type of career?

What is the most challenging/rewarding in your career?