



FLIGHT READY
WINTHROP UNIVERSITY



I'M READY

ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM

GUIDE FOR MENTORS

2023 / 2024

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Welcome Message



Leah Simmonds ' 23

*Alumni Career
Programs Director*

Welcome to the ***I'm Ready*** Alumni Mentoring Program! We are thrilled to have you onboard and excited to participate in this transformative journey. Thank you for partnering with the Winthrop Alumni Association to provide this opportunity to our current student body. By choosing to participate in the ***I'm Ready*** mentoring program, you've opened the door to a world of opportunities and valuable connections.

Throughout this program, you'll have the privilege of being paired with a Winthrop student mentee who is eager to share their academic pursuits and professional aspirations with you.

The ***I'm Ready*** Alumni Mentoring Program goes beyond traditional mentoring models, with a focus on flexibility and adaptability to suit your busy schedule. We believe in the power of short but impactful "micro mentoring" sessions, providing you with focused discussions on specific topics related to career and self-development.

We encourage you to embrace this opportunity fully, be open to new ideas, and actively engage with your mentee. The knowledge and professional experiences you share during this program can be truly transformative and lay the groundwork for a bright and fulfilling future for your mentee.

Once again, welcome to the ***I'm Ready*** Alumni Mentoring Program. We are here to support you every step of the way, and we can't wait to see the incredible growth and achievements that will unfold during your time in this program.

I'm Ready Vision and Mission

Vision

Empowering Futures, Forging Bonds: The *I'm Ready* Alumni to Student Mentoring Program envisions a vibrant mentorship community. Through personalized micro mentoring, we nurture skills, ignite inspiration, and foster lasting connections. Our goal is to propel students confidently toward impactful achievements, creating a legacy of success that transcends generations.

Mission

The mission of the *I'm Ready* Alumni Mentoring Program is to empower students in their journey of career and self-development by fostering impactful connections between our esteemed alumni and current students. Through our mentorship program, we strive to facilitate a dynamic exchange of knowledge, guidance, and professional experiences, enabling students to navigate their career pathways with confidence and clarity.



PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is a Mentoring Relationship?

Mentoring is a collaborative relationship that facilitates mutual learning, critical reflection, and growth. It is also a chance to help develop self-awareness. There are a number of benefits to be gained by being in a mentoring connection, including:

- Identifying and refining your career goals
- Reconnecting with Winthrop University and the Winthrop Family.
- Expanding your professional network.

Program Details

The *I'm Ready* inaugural alumni mentoring program begins with Winthrop University Alumni Relations matching you to a mentee, and allows you to connect for four (4) micro mentoring sessions; two sessions in the Fall term and two session in the Spring term. While the program has a specific end date, you are welcome to continue that mentoring relationship with your mentee for however long a time you pre-determine with your mentee. The micro-sessions themes and key dates are identified on page 6 of this handbook. You will receive mentoring aids and topic one sheets within Winthrop Connect prior to each micro-session start date. Mentoring tips and tricks will also be shared to aid in cultivating and nurturing a successful mentoring relationship.

Communication Methods

Communications between mentors and mentees is flexible and can span a variety of methods including direct messages on Winthrop Connect, email, phone call or text, or by video chat. You can easily reach out to your match by navigating to their Winthrop Connect profile and clicking on the small icons below their name to schedule a chat. Make sure to edit your communication settings in Winthrop Connect to ensure you're receiving notifications from your mentee and Alumni Relations.



MENTOR ROLE & EXPECTATIONS

A Mentor is:

A Winthrop alumnus who is looking to give back to fellow Eagles through sharing professional experiences, career advice and knowledge. Sharing both your successes and failures can help a student on their journey. We are grateful you are lending a hand! You really can make a difference in someone's life. As a mentor, your role is to support your mentee and **provide guidance** based on their individual needs and questions, by bringing the following to the relationship:

- Support your mentee by identifying their needs (resume advice, professional connections, job shadowing, workplace advice, etc.), strengths, and areas for growth
- Share your work and/or program experiences (the good and the bad!)
- Motivate your mentee by defining clear objectives and encouraging them to commit to action points, and direct them to relevant resources where appropriate
- Be a good listener while helping your mentee realize their potential by employing a non-judgmental approach.

Mentor Role & Responsibilities:

For the duration of the mentoring relationship, we expect that mentors will do the following:

- Remain reliable and trustworthy, and build a rapport with your mentee
- Establish and maintain appropriate boundaries
- Be encouraging, supportive, patient, tolerant, and inspiring
- Commit to the program which includes four (4) micro-sessions
- Engage with your mentee regularly throughout the program and sustain the frequency of contact agreed between you and your mentee, and notify mentee in a timely manner of any changes or cancellations to any communications previously agreed upon.
- Inform Winthrop Alumni Relations of any conflict or intention to withdraw from the mentorship program

Mentors Do Not:

- Pass on confidential information shared by the mentee
- Adopt a domineering stance, or make their mentee's decision for them
- Undermine the confidence of their mentee and pass judgement
- Use the mentee's position to take advantage of the mentorship program

GETTING STARTED

Once you've been successfully paired with your mentee, we suggest introducing yourself and setting up a time for an introductory call. During your introductory call, we recommend defining expectations regarding the frequency of your sessions, the duration of each session (i.e. 45 mins; 1 hour), and a few points on the guidance the mentee is seeking. This way, you have some background knowledge to expand upon for the subsequent sessions.

Below is an example of a intro message you can send via Winthrop Connect:

Example Email

Subject Line | I'm Ready Alumni Mentorship Program: Hello from your Mentor

Dear <<Mentee's Name>>,

Hello! My name is <<Your Name>> and I have been paired with you through Winthrop Connect as your mentor. It's nice to e-meet you! I hope this finds you well. I look forward to getting to know you and helping you on your career journey.

I'd like to begin by finding a time for us to meet via video chat to set up some expectations for our interactions and to learn more about what you're seeking. I am available the following days and times. Let me know if any of these work well for you:

- [Day of the week], [Month] [Date] @ [Time]
- [Day of the week], [Month] [Date] @ [Time]
- [Day of the week], [Month] [Date] @ [Time]

Speak to you soon. Regards,

<<Your Name>>



GOAL SETTING & TOPICS

Goal Setting:

During and following your introductory call, it's often helpful to get to know your mentee and help them identify clear goals. Here are some questions you can use to get to know your mentee:

- What areas are you hoping to grow in during this program?
- What challenges or uncertainties do you face?
- Where do you hope to be in 5 years. 10 years?
- What are your top hard skills, and top soft skills?
- Can you identify areas for growth and why those areas are especially challenging for you (i.e. computer/program skills, patience, collaborative mindset, networking, etc.)?

Micro Session Topics & Schedule

Fall 2023 -

- Micro Session #1 - Discover your Direction: Introductions & Professional Skills Self Assessment
 - Sept. 13, 2023 - Sept. 26, 2023
- Micro Session #2 - Explore the World of Work: Career Exploration & Pathways
 - Oct. 25, 2023 - Nov. 7, 2023

Spring 2024

- Micro Session #3 - Communicate your Brand: Networking & Professional Branding
 - Feb. 7, 2024 - Feb. 20, 2024
- Micro Session #4 - Create your Opportunities: Interview Skills & Personal Growth
 - March 27, 2024 - April 9, 2024

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How am I matched with a mentee for the Fall 2023 *I'm Ready* Alumni Mentoring Program?

Winthrop Connect features a powerful AI (artificial intelligence) technology that matches you with a mentee based on your profile information. The more information you provide on your Winthrop Connect profile, the more tailored a match you'll receive!

What happens if I am paired with someone and never hear from them?

If you have reached out to your match and have not heard back from them, please contact us at alumni@winthrop.edu. We would be happy to help you connect, or find a new connection altogether.

My mentee is not quite the right fit, even after talking for a couple of occasions, what do I do?

While we recommend trying to still build a rapport with your match, we understand that not every fit will be perfect. Please don't hesitate to reach out to share the details on the situation and we'd be happy to assist, or match you with a new connection

My mentee is enthusiastic and I'm hearing from them a little too frequently, what do I do?

We love our enthusiastic Eagles, but we understand your discomfort, too! Fear not. Revisit your agreement regarding frequency of communications together, or feel free to contact us for assistance.

I'm in a connection and no longer able to commit to the program. How can I politely bow out?

Life happens! We get it. We recommend reaching out to your mentee explaining your new situation, and letting them know you'll be stepping away. Email us and let us know your situation and we will end your mentorship relationship on Winthrop Connect.

Our Team



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Alumni

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