

HOW TO ENGAGE STUDENTS SEEKING ADVICE

As a WSU Alumnus who has joined the Political Science Mentoring Initiative, you agree to allow students to contact you for career advice. You have committed to engaging with your mentee once a month for a semester. If you are both agreeable, that relationship might be extended, but you are not expected to do so.

Guidelines and Best Practices for Engaging with Mentees

- Be professional and, at the same time, friendly; this process can be intimidating for students
- Respond promptly when a student reaches out to you, and confirm your preferred method of communication
- Ask that the student prepare a simple agenda (What are their goals for the mentorship?)
 - Include expectations, interests, questions
 - Request that they send it to you in advance
 - Please review it and try to address the student's interests when you meet
- Provide thoughtful responses to students' inquiries and give honest feedback

Great Questions for Mentors to ask of Mentees:

- What motivates your mentee? Is there anything that is holding them back?
- What's been your mentee's most challenging class? Why and what has it taught them in preparation for other courses?
- Where does your mentee want to be professionally in five, 10, and 20 years?
- What's your mentee's dream job? Why? How might you help them get there?
- Does your mentee know anyone else (family member or relative, friends or neighbors) in the major or career they are pursuing? What have they learned about the career they want to pursue firsthand?
- Ask your mentee to share a particularly challenging job experience. How did they address it, and what was the outcome?
- What does your mentee consider their most significant success to date- at Wichita State, in a job they've held, in an internship, or as a volunteer? Why?
- What are your mentee's experiences with or plans for internships?

The Best Mentors Will:

Set high standards

- Be candid in their professional advice
- Give relevant examples from experience
- Listen, empathize, show passion
- Understand how the mentee learns/works
- Challenge mentee with actionable advice
- Ask students to follow up on any advice they are given and to let you know the outcomes

Expectations

- Meetings should be at your place of business or somewhere public (coffee shop, library, etc.) or over the phone; do not meet at your home or other private places
- Adhere to all local, state, and federal laws as well as WSU's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) and the [WSU Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment](#)
- If you feel uncomfortable concerning a particular situation with a student or if you feel a student has behaved unprofessionally, don't hesitate to contact Dr. Shaw (Carolyn.shaw@wichita.edu)

Wrap Up

- At the end of the semester, you will receive a survey that will ask if you would like to continue with the current mentee, start with a new mentee, add a mentee, or take a break from mentoring. Please complete the post-engagement survey when you receive it so we can continue to improve the initiative.