



## **STAT Alumni Mentor Program**

### **Mentor Handbook**

2011-2012 Academic Year

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# Welcome

Dear Alumnus/Alumna,

Thank you for your interest in the STAT Alumni Mentor Program! This handbook was designed to give you a thorough understanding of what the program entails as well as some guidelines for our program participants.

The STAT Alumni Mentor Program serves three crucial functions: easing the transition from college to graduation for students, fostering student networking opportunities and creating an easy transition from student to active Alumni Association member. In order to meet these goals and ensure lasting relationships between students and their mentors, great care is taken in pairing alumni mentors with students who share similar hobbies and career interests.

This handbook will provide you with an overview of the program and hopefully answer some basic questions about mentoring. Please use it as a guide and resource throughout your mentoring experience and feel free to share with us any suggestions for improving its usefulness to our future alumni mentors.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the STAT Alumni Mentor Program. If you have further questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact the STAT adviser at 618-650-2762 or [kabenne@siue.edu](mailto:kabenne@siue.edu). We look forward to working with you!

With Cougar Pride,

Jamie Springer  
2011-12 STAT President

# Overview

## **STAT – Students Today, Alumni Tomorrow**

The mission of STAT is to create relationships with SIUE alumni and other students while strengthening your lifelong loyalty to SIUE.

The purpose of the organization is to encourage students to interact with alumni before graduation through social and educational networking opportunities. The organization will also partner current students with alumni mentors for the purpose of gaining valuable career advice.

Junior, senior and graduate students are partnered with an alumni mentor in a one-on-one mentoring relationship through the STAT Alumni Mentor program.

## **STAT Mentor Program - The Matching Process**

All alumni who wish to participate in the program as mentors must first fill out the Alumni Survey (see page 11.) Once the Alumni Association office receives a completed survey, the alumni mentor will be matched with a current student based on their answers to the student participation survey. As much as possible, matches will be made based on similar career field, major, hometown, hobbies and interests. Please note that we cannot guarantee an exact match in any one particular area.

Once a match has been made, the Alumni Association office will provide the mentor and student with each other's contact information. We encourage matches to contact each other as soon as possible.

If there are no students available at the time that you sign up as a mentor, we will hold your information for the next available student who matches your survey results.

# What is a Mentor?

A **Role Model** who:

- Provides an example to emulate
- Expands the student's perspective on life

A **Motivator** who:

- Helps the student acquire information and skills that will prove integral for success at SIUE and beyond
- Participates with the student in learning new things
- Encourages the student to try new things

A **Supporter** who:

- Helps build the student's self-esteem
- Conveys a sincere personal interest in the well-being of the student
- Listens to the student's ideas and concerns
- Expresses belief and confidence in the student's abilities

A **Resource** who:

- Introduces the student to new people, places, interests and ideas

A **Challenger** who:

- Encourages the student to set goals and develop a plan of action to reach them
- Challenges the student to succeed and try things on his or her own
- Encourages the student to engage in increasingly complex activities

While mentors serve a variety of roles in a student's life, a mentor cannot do or be everything. Mentors work in conjunction with student and academic services staff at the University. There are limits to what a mentoring relationship can do for the student and mentor. Both parties must work at the relationship to make it successful. It will not just happen. A good mentoring relationship takes time, so do not expect it to happen overnight.

## Basics of Mentoring

A mentor is a guide, a friend, a resource who successfully navigated the ins and outs of SIUE – rose to the challenge and reaped the rewards of graduating. Alumni mentors use their SIUE education and experience to help pave the way for success at SIUE and beyond for current students, and derive satisfaction from helping others succeed.

Alumni mentors want to maintain ties to their alma mater. They enjoy the personal satisfaction of contributing to a student's growth and success. They also enjoy the stimulation and challenge of relating to today's students. Your role as an alumni mentor is to inspire, inform, guide, encourage and support your student, and to contribute to the student's personal and academic development. In this role, you will have the opportunity to put your energy, creativity and vision to work in making an important difference in a SIUE student's life.

## **What Makes YOU a Mentor?**

Your own life experiences in learning and working with others qualify you to be a mentor. The best mentors are people whose own enthusiasm for their work is so contagious that they inspire others just by doing what they enjoy most. Sharing your own interests with an undergraduate is just the beginning of mentoring.

The basic objective of mentoring is to encourage and assist in the development and growth of a student. Each mentoring relationship will be different because of the student's development level, the student's needs and his or her personal interests. A mentor can provide a wide variety of assistance to students.

## **What a Mentor is NOT**

- A coach or personal trainer
- A tutor or proofreader
- A supervisor
- A parent or disciplinarian
- A counselor or therapist
- A "reference book"

## **Personal Reflection for Mentors**

Consider your answers to these questions as you think about what role you might play in your student's life:

- *As you think back on your college years, do any adults stick out in your mind? Who were the adults who really made a positive difference in your life?*
- *Why do you think they took a special interest in you? What qualities did you have that made them want to spend time with you and encourage you?*
- *What was it that made each of them a great mentor? What did these important people have in common?*
- *What might these experiences teach you about how you want to be as a mentor? What lessons can you take away from these role models?*

# Expectations & Guidelines

## Time Commitment for Mentors

We know how busy our alumni are, and we do not want your participation in this program to hinder your day-to-day routine or conflict with your other commitments. Therefore, we have made this program as adaptable and user-friendly as possible. The amount of time you commit is entirely up to you. The important thing is to work with your student to decide on a plan that you can both commit to – this may be a monthly e-mail or phone call, or an in-person meeting once a semester.

*Keep in mind that alumni do NOT need to live in close proximity to SIUE or to their student in order to participate in the program – a mentoring relationship built solely on e-mail, phone calls, letters, etc. can be just as effective as mentoring a student in person. We try to match mentors and students whose hometowns are nearby to foster opportunities to meet in person but this is not always possible.*

## Methods of Communication

As mentioned above, there are now numerous ways to communicate with your student. Today's college students grew up with e-mail and instant messenger...but we all know that they love receiving "snail mail" as well – so a handwritten note or letter is still an important way to show your student that you are thinking of him or her. Birthdays and final exams are great opportunities to send a note or card wishing your student well. The best method of determining how to contact your student is to discuss with him or her what is most convenient and comfortable for you both.

## What the Students Expect

The STAT students who participate in the mentoring program are not all looking for the same thing from their mentors – in fact, the students' expectations are often quite varied. Some of the things that students may be seeking through this program include:

- Guidance or advice
- Career help
- Emotional support
- Friendship

Be sure that as you are beginning your mentoring relationship you leave things open to what the student wants. For example, do not try to force upon him or her your career advice and networking contacts when all he or she is really seeking is someone to talk to and share their SIUE experience. However, this does not mean that you shouldn't inform your student of the ways in which you feel you could be particularly helpful – if you are an experienced business person with many contacts in your field, be sure to point that out to your student, so the door is open.

# Mentoring Tips & Techniques

## Getting Started

Once a match has been made and the information is sent to each participant, both parties are asked to contact one another as soon as possible. Your initial meeting or phone call should be kept friendly and light – the goal is to have both parties be at ease with each other. It should not be a “goal setting/problem solving” session. This is the time to get to know about each other, significant events or people in each other’s life, likes, dislikes and interests.

At the end of the meeting, conversation or e-mail exchange, be sure to make arrangements for the next contact you will have with each other, at which time you should discuss in more detail what each person, especially the student, hopes to gain from the relationship, and try to establish a contact schedule.

Here are some questions to think about as you prepare for initial contact with your student:

- *What are some things I should tell my student about myself that would help us get to know each other? What about me and my life story might be interesting and relevant to this person?*
- *What are some questions that I could ask my student to get to know him or her a little bit without prying? (These should be open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no”)*
- *What do I want to gain from the mentoring relationship – what are my hopes?*
- *How can I find out what my student hopes to gain from the mentoring relationship?*

## Helpful Questions

If you are having a hard time coming up with questions to ask your student, take a look at this list of helpful questions:

- *What do you expect from this relationship?*
- *How often would you like to meet/e-mail/call, etc?*
- *Where (if in person) and when should those meetings take place?*
- *Who should initiate contact?*
- *At present, what are your academic goals?*
- *What are some of your personal goals (i.e. campus involvement, time management, etc.)?*
- *What plans do you have for reaching those goals?*
- *How can I be of assistance in helping you carry out your plans?*
- *What are your plans for your professional future?*
- *Do you need help in learning how to network/establish a networking?*

## Activity Ideas

As you mentor, you can develop your own ideas for activities or take advantage of the suggestions listed here:

- Provide information on how you built your career with a degree from SIUE.
- If your student is interested in graduate school and you have a graduate degree, inform them of important things to consider.
- Offer to review your student's resume, cover letter or other networking correspondence. Provide constructive feedback.
- Invite your student to shadow you in your workplace for a day or longer. Introduce your student to colleagues.
- Introduce your student to others who work in your field or organization. Offer your student guidance on the networking process.
- Offer to conduct a mock interview/portfolio review with your student.
- Provide guidance to your student on the job and internship search process.
- Invite your student to a lecture on a topic related to your field.
- Socialize with other mentor-student pairs.
- Attend a campus lecture, performance or a sporting event together.
- Attend a SIUE Alumni Association or STAT event.
- Volunteer a few hours to help at a campus or community-organized event.
- Do something fun and social with your student!

## Troubleshooting: What to do when...

- *You are having trouble contacting your student* – Try all methods of communication that have been provided to you (phone, e-mail, etc.) If you still have no response, contact the Alumni Association office to verify your student's information or have a staff member contact the student on your behalf.
- *Your student seems disinterested* – Do not give up on him or her! It could be that your student is very busy at the moment, or is shy and unsure of how to proceed. In this case, it is okay to take the lead in the relationship without becoming overbearing or forceful. Sometimes a few months of gentle reminders that you are there and are interested is all that it takes for a student to gain interest in the mentoring relationship.
- *You feel the relationship is not working* – We ask that all our mentors give the relationship a full year to develop. Oftentimes it takes longer than expected for a mentor and student to become relaxed with one another and really start to benefit from the relationship. If you are having specific problems with your student, please contact the Alumni Association office for further assistance.

## Resources

Here are some resources that you might find helpful as you work with your student:

Campus Department or Office	Phone Number	Web Site
SIUE Alumni Association	618-650-2760	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/alumni">www.siu.edu/alumni</a>
Career Development Center	618-650-3708	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/careerdevelopmentcenter">www.siu.edu/careerdevelopmentcenter</a>
Counseling Services	618-650-2197	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/counseling">www.siu.edu/counseling</a>
University Housing	618-650-3931	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/housing">www.siu.edu/housing</a>
Instruction Services (Tutoring)	618-650-3448	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/IS">www.siu.edu/IS</a>
Academic Counseling & Advising	618-650-3701	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/ADVISING">www.siu.edu/ADVISING</a>
Student Financial Aid	618-650-3880	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/financialaid">www.siu.edu/financialaid</a>
Kimmel Leadership Center	618-650-2686	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/kimmel">www.siu.edu/kimmel</a>
SIUE Police Department	618-650-3324	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/POLICE">www.siu.edu/POLICE</a>
Campus Recreation	618-650-BFIT	<a href="http://www.siu.edu/crec">www.siu.edu/crec</a>

## Relationship Check-up

Instructions: This worksheet is intended for you to complete and share with your student after you have been working together for approximately 3-4 months. It's time to do a "check-up" if you have already completed goal-setting and have gotten to know each other reasonably well. You can also use this worksheet when things get rocky and you feel some honest mutual feedback might help.

My student and I have been meeting and/or conversing for \_\_\_\_\_ (amount of time)

I feel we have established enough trust between us that we can work well together.

Yes       No       Not Sure

If he/she's upset or unhappy with me or our relationship, I'm confident my student would talk to me about what's going on.

Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't Know     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

If I were upset or unhappy with my student or our relationship, I would feel comfortable talking with my student about what's going on.

Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't Know     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

I feel we've made real headway in helping my student set goals and take steps to implement them.

Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't Know     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

Three Things I feel are going great in our mentoring relationship are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

One thing I wish I could change about how we interact with each other is...

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SIUE Alumni Association – Volunteer Services Agreement  
Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability & Covenant Not to Sue

Volunteer Duties: STAT Alumni Mentor

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned hereby do agree to provide personal services outlined above on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the volunteer project of serving as a STAT alumni mentor, hereinafter “Activity,” which is offered under the sponsorship of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Office of Alumni Affairs, hereinafter “Sponsor” during the 2010-11 academic year. I agree to serve as a volunteer and not as an employee of SIUE or the Sponsor. I further understand that, as a volunteer, I shall not be eligible or entitled to receive any salary, wage or other compensation for services rendered and that my volunteer services may be terminated for any reason at any time without notice.

In consideration of the voluntary services to be performed hereunder, I understand that I will be provided general liability insurance coverage as an Insured-Volunteer under the SIUE Self-Insurance program, to the extent that any claim or suit for personal injury or property damage may be asserted against me involving my volunteer services. I understand and acknowledge that the Activity involves an inherent risk of and exposure to property damage and bodily or personal injury to myself or to others in the training, preparation for, and travel to and from the Activity; that the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University, a body politic and corporate of the State of Illinois, on behalf of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and its members individually, and its officers, employees, students, and agents, hereinafter Releasees, do not warrant or guarantee in any respect the competency or mental or physical condition of any leader, instructor, volunteer, vehicle driver, or individual participants in any volunteer program or activity; that Releasees make no warranty as to the condition, safety, or suitability of any equipment, vehicle, property, or premises for any purpose, and that I am solely responsible, through insurance or otherwise, for any hospital or other costs arising out of any bodily injury or property damage sustained by me through my participations in the Activity. I hereby assume any and all such risk. For the sole consideration of Releasees arranging for and allowing my participation in the Activity, and in connection therewith, making available for my use certain equipment, facilities, grounds or personnel of Releasees, I hereby waive liability, release, hold harmless, covenant not to sue, and forever discharge Releasees from any and all liability, claims, demands, rights, and causes of action of whatever kind, arising from or by reason of any personal injury, property damage, or the consequences thereof, whether caused by the negligence or carelessness of the Releasees or otherwise, resulting from or in any way connected with my participation in the Activity. I understand and agree that Releasees do not have medical personnel available at the location of the Activity; that Releasees are granted permission to authorize emergency medial treatment for me; that such action by Releasees shall be subject to the terms of this Agreement; and that Releasees assume no responsibility for any injury or damage which might arise out of or in connection with such authorized emergency medial treatment.

I further represent that I am at least 18 years of age and voluntarily and knowingly enter into this waiver with full understanding of all risks involved and further agree that this waiver and release shall be binding upon my heirs, executors, administrators, assignors and next of kin; that it shall be construed in accordance with the laws of Illinois; and that if any of its terms or provisions are held illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any law, the validity of the remaining portions shall not be affected thereby.

Signature of volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First, Middle and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_