

OLA primer

How to develop a MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



Who should use this primer, and how?

Health professions learners, faculty or admin staff can read this quick guide to acquire concepts to apply in ensuring best practice in mentorship learning outcomes and operations.

Developed by the Temerty Medicine Mentorship Advisory Committee (2026).



TEMERTY FACULTY OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Office of
Learner Affairs

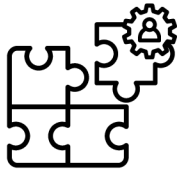


What is mentorship?

Mentorship is a bi-directional process where an experienced, empathetic person guides another person in the development and re-examination of their ideas, learning, identity or professional development. This can include (though not identical to) being an advisor, role model, collaborator or coach.

WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

Before starting a mentorship program, ask yourself...



Is there a gap in mentorship for your target groups?

- Can this be addressed by collaborating with an existing program? Connect with student life or mentorship staff to learn about what already exists within education offices, hospitals, professional associations or student groups.
- Building off a program (e.g. as a new “branch”) could concentrate existing resources and quality, along with clarity for potential mentees/mentors.



What will be unique about your mentorship program?

- Eligibility of mentors or mentees
- Duration and frequency of meetings
- The *objective* or point of the program (content)



Objective: what purpose or info will mentors provide?

- Academic topics, learning strategy
- Career support, skill development, research
- Personal identity formation, equity-support

KEY ELEMENTS



Clarity & Structure

in roles, format, policies, communication.



Recruitment/Selection

of mentors+mentees, with suitable tools & criteria.



Preparing Resources

like handbooks, website links, training events.



Intentional Matching

based on program focus and mentor availability.



Ongoing Support

through events and check-in messages.



Feedback & Recognition

for quality improvement and participant moral.

References & Resources

1. Mentorship & Peer Program Resource Library - U of T Student Life (uoft.me/ce0)
2. SECTION: Guide to Starting a Mentorship Program (uoft.me/chJ)
3. SECTION: Mentoring Program Template (uoft.me/chM)
4. SECTION: Mentor Handbook (uoft.me/ccX)
5. Temerty Faculty of Medicine Peer Mentorship Guide (uoft.me/chS)
6. Elements of effective practice for mentoring (eepm.mentoring.org)
7. Enhancing leadership and relationships by implementing a peer mentoring program (tinyurl.com/yc27mw8h)
8. Near-peer mentoring in STEM: A starter kit. (tinyurl.com/ysyaj449)
9. Online peer mentoring in medical education: A qualitative evaluation of a pilot programme. (tinyurl.com/yf36kx6r)
10. Mentorship - Princess Margaret Cancer Centre (tinyurl.com/47my85my)
11. Mentorship Portfolio - Office of Learner Affairs (uoft.me/olamp)

Wait, there's more!



APPENDIX: 10 STEPS TO MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMING

1. Establish target groups and check against any existing programs
2. Determine unique structure (duration and frequency, matching process) and objective (e.g., academic, career, equity/identity)
3. Plan overall program timeline (see [Figure 1](#) below) and key dates
4. Review inclusivity & accessibility (e.g. culture, time, comms. platforms)
5. Develop policies and resources with defined expectations (roles, scope, confidentiality)
6. Prepare and implement mentor and mentee recruitment materials (e.g., program description email/social media text, graphics, testimonials, application forms, mentor bio sheet)
7. Match mentees with mentors based on program objective(s) and communicate with any unmatched mentors
8. Plan orientation, networking/check-in, and closing events
9. Ensure ongoing support/check-ins (e.g. monthly email updates)
10. Collect feedback & provide mentor recognition (e.g. thank you letters)

*Figure 1 - U of T Student Life
Guide to Starting a
Mentorship Program,
"Duration and Timeline"*

