

Department of Nutritional Sciences

Alumni Mentorship Program

Program Overview

The Department of Nutritional Sciences Mentorship Program is a fantastic way for Nutritional Sciences students to connect with alumni in one-on-one conversations. For students, this is an opportunity to receive advice and insight into the field of nutritional sciences and grow a professional network. For alumni, this is an opportunity to support student success.

Above and beyond specializations, the mentorship program helps students build a meaningful professional relationship with an experienced professional.

Program Commitment

The Alumni Mentorship Program runs through the academic year (September to April). Once matched, alumni mentors and student mentees **must meet a minimum of 2-3 times** during the academic year. If schedules allow, additional meetings are encouraged.

In person meetings are preferred, however, electronic meetings (via Skype or by phone) are suitable meeting mediums.

Student Mentees Responsibilities

All students must attend a mandatory Mentorship Program Student Orientation to take place in September. Student participants will be notified of the time and date once it is confirmed.

The DNS Mentorship Program is **student-driven**:

- Be responsible to initiate and maintain all communications with your mentor
- Take the lead in scheduling meeting times and locations
- Make the most out of your time with your mentor and prepare an agenda with discussion topics and/or questions for each of your meetings
- Be on time for meetings and respond to emails/phone calls quickly (this will show that you are respectful of your mentor's time)

Mentor Responsibilities

- Create a safe and trusting environment
- Be timely and respectful
- Be a good listener who is empathetic, approachable and non-judgemental

- Provide valuable and constructive feedback
- Establish personal boundaries, expectations and communication methods early on

Mentorship Meetings

Below is a list of suggested topics to guide your mentorship conversations. Feel free to discuss only those which are most relevant to you.

- Resume critique and/or interview preparation
- Discuss job postings that you are interested in pursuing
- Job search strategies and career planning
- Building professional networks and conducting informational interviews
- Deciding between graduate school or entering the workforce
- Transitioning from student to full-time employee
- Work/life balance
- Resources for further professional development (associations, conferences, courses, online tools etc.)

Check-Ins

Staff from the Office of Advancement will be checking in with both mentors and mentees twice during the course of the program. The first time will be early November to ensure that all matches are going smoothly and the second will be in the New Year.

Mentorship Closure

The official part of this mentoring relationship ends at the completion of the academic year (April). Please take some time to fill out the evaluation form for the program which will be sent to you electronically.

If you have any questions about your match or the mentorship program, please contact Sara Franca, Director of Alumni Relations at sara.franca@utoronto.ca or by phone at (647) 998-5733.