

# **Eta Kappa Nu Mentoring Program**

## **Introduction**

Mentoring is an activity between peers which can aid mentees in a variety of ways. As a mentor, a person has the opportunity to be an example to the mentee and to act as a resource for the mentee in their development. As an organization composed of some of the top students in their engineering discipline, Eta Kappa Nu has a responsibility to give back to the community. Eta Kappa Nu mentors can help mentees in their adjustment to college life, the engineering school and engineering in general, and in developing long-term life goals which use college as the first step.

Mentoring is a different experience for each mentor/mentee pairing, and thus this packet intends to provide open-ended guidelines and suggestions for mentors. Relationships are encouraged to develop organically and according to the specific circumstances. At the same time, it is important that safety for both the mentor and mentee is guaranteed at all times, and so there are some limitations to ensure this occurs.

## **Goals**

The goals of this program are to:

- Develop a meaningful relationship between mentor and mentee.
- Provide a source of aid to younger students which is invaluable in their experience throughout the rest of college.
- Provide mentees with a peer (student)'s perspective on challenges they are facing.
- Help mentees choose their track through the engineering program, including such topics as research, courses, and professors.
- Provide mentees with helpful hints from students who have been through the same program and are aware of some of the nuances and oddities.

To achieve these goals, it is essential that mentors focus on the following principles:

- Be responsible and respectful. Attend scheduled meetings on time, or, if the meeting must be canceled, let the mentee know via phone, email, or text so as not to waste the mentee's time and show that the mentor does not care about them. Also, if a face-to-face meeting is proving problematic, an email or phone call can be a nice substitute that still shows the mentee that the mentor cares.
- Focus on the mentee, not the mentor. Mentors are there to provide mentees with aid and guidance, not to transform the mentee. Do not assume that the same solutions will work for all people, and be willing to explore many options in helping mentees overcome difficulties.
- Maintain a peer relationship. Mentors are peers of mentees, and though they provide leadership, this should not be taken to mean they have authority over a mentee. Just as with other peers, focus should be on accepting the mentee for who they are, not trying to change them.
- Keep it fun. Neither mentor nor mentee will enjoy a program that is not fun, and this will lead to an ineffective mentoring relationship.

## **Mentoring Experience**

Since all relationships develop over time, it is essential that mentoring experiences have a long time duration. This pilot program will last until the end of the semester, at which time it will be evaluated and those who wish to continue for the full year will be encouraged to do so. In addition to the duration of the mentorship, consistently meeting is also of key importance. Mentors are expected to schedule meetings with their mentees at least 1/2 hour every other week, though meeting more often is highly encouraged.

### *Mentee Signup*

Mentees who are interested in participating in the program will be invited to participate on a first-come, first-served basis, with a total number of mentees being capped at the number of available mentors. Mentor/mentee pairing will occur via the following process:

1. Interested mentees will send an email to [asuhkn@gmail.com](mailto:asuhkn@gmail.com) with the header "Mentorship Program." This email will contain the following information:
  - Name
  - Major
  - Preferred email address
  - Whether the mentee would prefer a mentor of the same sex (this may not be possible in all cases but every effort will be made to accommodate this preference if it exists).
  - Phone Number (optional)
  - Short paragraph describing items such as the mentee's interests, hobbies, extra-curricular activities, and any other information the mentee wants to include. These should present a personal profile for the mentee, but should not contain any information the mentee would want to remain confidential between only themselves and their mentor.
2. An email will be sent to all mentors containing each mentee's major and paragraph (viewed anonymously by mentors), and mentors will send back their top 5 choices for mentee prospects based on those choices. This is meant to try to align mentor/mentee interests and compatibility as much as possible.
3. The mentoring coordinator will examine all mentor responses and determine optimal mentor/mentee pairings. Once these pairings are established, both mentor and mentee will be contacted with their mentor/mentee's contact information and mentors will organize a first meeting.

### *First Meeting*

Once the mentor/mentee pairing has been established, the mentor is expected to contact the mentee within a week and schedule the first meeting. Finding out the mentee's availability, and selecting the most convenient time for the mentor is one way to schedule this meeting. Mentors should be sure to get the mentee's phone number (the mentee should have the mentor's number already) in case of any emergencies or to help find one another upon arrival.

At the first meeting, both mentor and mentee are likely to be nervous and unsure. It is important for the mentor to be aware that the mentee is likely more scared as well as potentially intimidated by their mentor. To help the mentee relax, it can be useful for the mentor to introduce themselves to their mentee. Possible topics include:

- Where the mentor is from
- What year the mentor is in their studies
- Research or class focuses of the mentor
- Some of the mentor's extracurricular activities or hobbies (such as Eta Kappa Nu!)
- What inspired the mentor to participate in the program

When the mentee is more relaxed it is also important that the mentor gets to know them. Some possible topics of discussion are:

- What classes they are taking, which professor is teaching the course, and how the course is progressing
- Why they have chosen to pursue an engineering degree, and what special interests they have in the field, and what specializations they are interested in
- Any current obstacles or challenges they are facing
- What dorm they live in, and how they like their roommate
- What inspired them to participate in the program

It is possible the mentee will not have considered all of these questions in depth, so it is good to be prepared to discuss them with the mentee and help them explore them more in depth. Before the meeting is over, it is a good idea to discuss topics to cover during the next meeting, and potentially set out tasks to complete before the next meeting, such as finding an answer to a question the mentee asked but the mentor did not know the answer to. Eventually, this may be unnecessary as the relationship evolves and matures.

## **Questions and Evaluation**

Most likely, questions will arise during the course of the mentorship, and mentors are encouraged to talk to the mentoring coordinator when anything does come up. Mentors are also welcome to update the mentoring coordinator with the progress of their mentorship.

At the end of the semester, evaluation forms will be sent to mentors as well as mentees, asking for feedback on the program so that it can continue to be improved and enhanced.

**Any questions can about the program may be directed to the mentoring coordinator, Vince Molieri at either [vmolieri@asu.edu](mailto:vmolieri@asu.edu) or [asuhkn@gmail.com](mailto:asuhkn@gmail.com)**