



DSF MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

MEETING BEST PRACTICES

Align on the purpose of meetings

Most successful meetings aim to facilitate the following things: building a trusting relationship, staying informed and aligned, providing mutual feedback to help each other grow, and addressing topics focused on academic and/or professional goals and experiences for the purpose of academic and/or professional enhancement. Regular conversations will help you and your mentor or mentee to get to know each other better and build mutual trust, which encourages open communication, honest feedback, and effective collaboration.

Meetings are a joint responsibility

You and your mentor or mentee should be able to contribute to an agenda that can be used to prepare and guide the conversation. The agenda depends on the need and can change from meeting to meeting.

Being present matters

Give your mentor or mentee your full attention. Reduce distractions to a bare minimum. Coming prepared, turning off notifications on your devices, starting on time, listening actively – all these things help you be more present during a meeting. Follow the Code of Conduct/Conduct for Virtual Meetings outlined for mentors, to maintain privacy and professionalism. Understand virtual meetings may open the doors to each other's homes, exercise confidentiality and respect for each other's privacy as well as demonstrate grace as unforeseen circumstances may arise.

Face-to-face conversation

Nonverbal cues are an essential part of communication and particularly in a time when most are studying and/or working remotely, virtual meetings are much better than having a call. This also gives your meeting a more "personal" touch.

Make meetings a routine

Routine is key to making meetings a powerful tool for establishing a trusting relationship. That's more likely to happen if you block out time on your calendar, keep those meetings sacred, and reschedule only if really necessary.

Write things down and agree to a wrap up email

Once you've finished your meeting, summarizing the most important outcomes and sharing them with the other person helps eliminate misunderstandings. It also makes it easier to remember next steps and pick up the ball in the next meeting. Regularly share your thoughts with each other on how valuable you find the current meetings and what could be improved. Nothing is set in stone, and feedback is your most powerful tool for making great meetings happen.