



STC Orlando Chapter/UCF Mentoring Program Guidelines and Procedures

August 2004

The mentoring program coordinators for the 2004-05 STC year are Gail Lippincott, manager of the Education Committee, and Jen Selix, member of the Education Committee and president of the Future Technical Communicators (FTC) Club at UCF.

Mission

The mission of the mentoring program is to provide a structured approach by which mentors from the Orlando Chapter provide one-on-one assistance to student mentees to help them establish themselves successfully as technical communicators. The mentor helps the mentee in a variety of ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Assist in job search and placement by reviewing and critiquing the mentee's resume, cover letters, and portfolios; providing career guidance; and helping to establish contacts for interviews for internships or career placements (either via personal contacts or by helping the mentee network within the chapter to find suitable contacts).
- Increase the mentee's opportunity to network with professional practitioners, and also help develop his/her ability to do so effectively.
- Provide insight into the role of technical communicators in the workplace.
- Review/critique the mentee's academic and/or job-related technical communication projects or written communiqués, providing constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement.
- Answer questions; if the mentee so desires, provide real-time advice to help him/her resolve problems and conflicts as they arise in school or in the workplace.

Strategy

The mentoring program strategy for 2004-05 is as follows:

- Make the service available to any student* who requests help and meets the requirements under qualifications.
- Provide one mentor per student for a period of time of not less than 1 year and not more than 2 years. (The general expectation is that most mentor/mentee relationships will run for 1 year, but there is no imperative to end the relationship at that point if both participants wish to continue.)

*Within mentor availability

Responsibilities

The three positions in the mentoring program are program coordinator, mentor, and mentee. Responsibilities of each are listed below.

Mentor Program Coordinator Responsibilities

Note: If possible, it is preferable to have co-coordinators, one professional from the Education Committee and one student in FTC.

- Assign mentors and mentee pairs, using data on application forms.
- Follow up by phone to mentors and mentees to discuss progress, problems, and ideas at least once per month.
- Remain accessible to both mentors and mentees to deal with questions or problems.
- Report on progress of mentoring program to the Chapter Administrative Council.
- Document program results in an appropriate STC forum.

Mentor Responsibilities

- Agree to serve as a mentor for 2 college terms.
- Work with the mentee to define specific objectives of the mentor/mentee relationship and to define a plan and identify activities that will achieve those objectives.
- Agree to meet with the mentee an average of once per month in a suitable public setting.
- Contact the mentee approximately every 2 weeks by phone or e-mail.
- Help the mentee write/edit/design his or her resume, cover letters, and portfolio.
- Help identify potential employers.
- Help mentee learn to network, including participation and attendance at STC meetings.
- Assist the mentee in other ways as mutually agreed.
- Remain accessible to the mentee.
- Provide candid feedback in reviews and critiques, including constructive criticism as warranted, and recommend development activities.
- Be honest and open on expectations and commitments.
- Provide feedback to the mentor program coordinators on the progress of the relationship, including periodic e-mail messages and a brief final report and survey.
- Serve as an example of a positive role model.
- Communicate experiences and challenges.
- Listen.

Mentee Responsibilities

- Commit to a career in technical communication.
- Join STC (if not already a member): cost of student membership is \$55.
- Join FTC (if not already a member): no cost or obligation.
- Actively seek employment in the Central Florida area, at least during the last 3 months of the mentoring period.
- Agree to meet with the mentor an average of once per month in a suitable public setting.
- Contact the mentor approximately once every 2 weeks by phone or e-mail.
- Remain accessible to the mentor.
- Seek and accept candid feedback in reviews and critiques, including constructive criticism as warranted.
- Be honest and open on expectations and commitments.

- Provide feedback to the mentoring program coordinators on the progress of the relationship, including periodic e-mail messages and a brief final report and survey.
- Ask questions.
- Listen.
- Communicate experiences and challenges.
- Network.
- Advise of academic breakthroughs.

Qualifications

The following qualifications define mentors and mentees.

Mentor Qualifications

- Current member of the Orlando Chapter of STC.
- At least 3 years' professional experience in technical communication (exceptions can be made if circumstances warrant).

Mentee Qualifications

- Current member of the Orlando Chapter of STC.
- Currently enrolled in the University of Central Florida's technical writing program, at either an undergraduate or a graduate level, or a recent graduate of that program (within one year). (Generally, undergraduate mentees are expected to be in their senior year, nearing employment, but exceptions can be made if circumstances warrant.)
- Currently a member of FTC or willing to join (no cost or obligation).

Confidentiality

To assist with the learning and networking process, mentors and mentees may share information that is to remain confidential. They should both exercise good judgment when disclosing sensitive personal information, and both should keep the trust of that confidentiality.