

# Michigan Engineering Mentoring Guidelines

Thank you for choosing to have a positive impact on our students' educations and careers through mentoring. Mentoring fosters a culture of exploration, learning, and development by increasing student awareness of potential career paths, networking opportunities, and professional behaviors. Please review the following information to help ensure the best possible mentoring outcome.

## Student Mentees

Students who request mentors represent all departments of the College. Their reasons for participating in a mentorship may vary from career focus, professional and educational advice to class requirements. During an initial meeting, understanding a bit about who they are and what they seek will help you create a mutually rewarding relationship.

## Types of Mentoring

### 30-MINUTE MENTORING

These mentoring sessions are held routinely throughout the academic year. This is an opportunity for students to sit down with alumni for informal, brief conversations, either in person or virtually.

### LONG-TERM MENTORING

These mentoring engagements typically last a full semester or more. The goal is for mentors to meet with their mentees at specified intervals, at least monthly, preferably using a video conferencing platform or face-to-face.

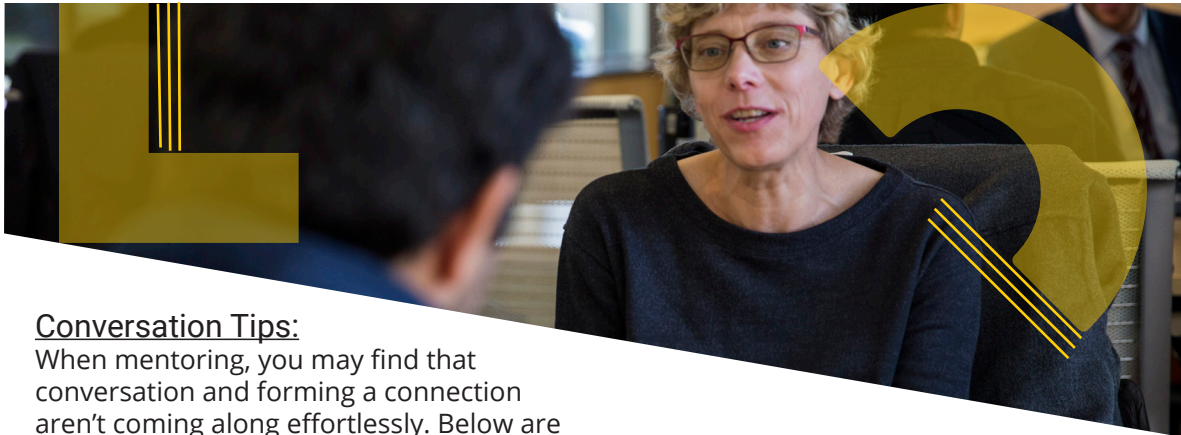
## Guidelines & Mentoring Techniques

### Your Role as a Mentor:

- Discuss your mentee's educational choices and directions
- Encourage your mentee to explore their passions, aspirations, interests, and concerns
- Share personal experiences to help provide real-world context
- Introduce potential career paths and help your mentee discover a fit

### Mentoring Techniques:

- Be curious and ask open-ended questions
- Learn about your mentee's strengths, skills, and abilities
- Encourage your mentee to reflect on what they're learning and identify ways in which it might apply to their personal and professional life
- Listen and be genuine without judging
- Private - discussions should generally not be shared unless the student requests you to do so
- If there are concerns for the welfare and safety of the student, encourage them to get help ([C.A.R.E Center](#)) or for urgent situations, contact UMPD at (734) 763-1131



### Conversation Tips:

When mentoring, you may find that conversation and forming a connection aren't coming along effortlessly. Below are some tips and conversation starters:

- Share a highlight, success, small win, or something positive that has happened recently
- Share something new that you're looking forward to or is on the horizon
- Share a challenge, low, or something you need support with
- Share what's on your mind today
- Don't feel pressured to force high-level conversations about careers or long-term goals, especially at the beginning of your connection

### **Build an Inclusive and Trusting Relationship with Your Mentee**

For both parties to get the most out of these mentoring opportunities, it's helpful to acknowledge we may unconsciously bring misperceptions and misinformation about differences into interactions. In acknowledgment, the College of Engineering strongly encourages all mentors to review the brief "Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions" training module found at [umicheng.in/UCBMA](http://umicheng.in/UCBMA)

Building respectful, trusting relationships across differences requires mentors to reflect deeply on their lived experiences, identities, and misinformation they may

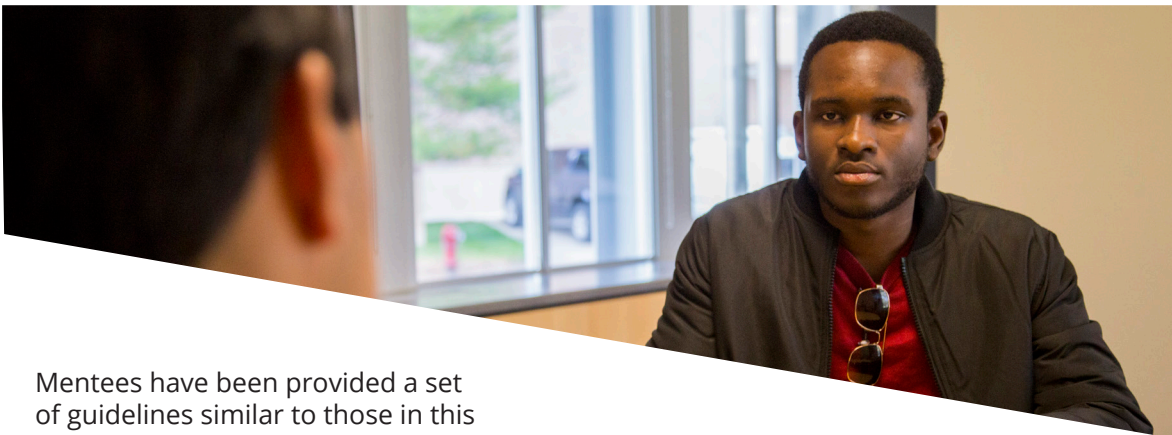
have learned about others through bias and stereotypes. It requires a commitment to cultural humility, continuous learning, and unlearning. This is an ongoing process for all of us; we all carry biases as a result of our socialization — that's OK! Working to educate yourself and expand your comfort zone is an important step in developing supportive, inclusive, and successful mentoring relationships.

When we enter into a mentoring relationship across differences, we unconsciously bring information and misinformation about differences that are grounded in stereotypes and assumptions that we've been socialized with over time. Explore your implicit and explicit assumptions about race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, age, and other social identities. Examining biases is a process of reflecting, unlearning, and discussing identity-based assumptions.

### **Additional Long-term Mentoring Techniques**

#### What Does MY Long-term Mentee Expect from me?

We ask you for the amount of time and guidance that you are willing and able to provide. Many successful mentor/mentee relationships start with one-hour meetings once a month but feel free to adjust as needed to fit your mentoring relationship needs.



Mentees have been provided a set of guidelines similar to those in this document, and we advise expectations of both parties to be discussed during the initial conversation, potentially including:

- Meeting intervals
- Hours each of you is available
- How you will communicate on a regular basis (email, text, video chat, etc.)
- Encourage mentees to be proactive about asking for guidance
- Establish how each of you prefers to receive support and constructive feedback
- Be open and practice vulnerability. Sharing your stories and experiences may help your mentee feel more comfortable sharing their own experiences. Sharing some of the more difficult chapters of your life can signal that personal topics are “on the table”

### **Keys to a Successful Mentoring Relationship**

Communication will set the tone for your ongoing relationship. Below are some additional communication tips for long-term mentoring relationships:

- During your initial conversation, spend a few minutes detailing your academic and work history and allow the student to do the same.
- Show mutual respect and understanding that you’ll have different experiences and perspectives
- Be responsive by showing up consistently and responding in a timely manner

### **What if I Am Not a Good Match for My Long-term Mentee?**

The matching process is done to the best of our ability with limited information, so it’s important that you and your mentee determine if your experiences and their goals are a good match. If you find you and your student mentee are not a good match, let us know and we’ll work to find a more mutually beneficial fit.

Email us at:  
**[engin-alumni@umich.edu](mailto:engin-alumni@umich.edu)**