

The Center for Innovation

Start-Up E-Mentorship Program

Metropolitan State College of Denver



Mentee Handbook

Start-Up E-Mentorship Program E-Mentee Handbook

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Welcome

Start-Up E-Mentorship is a collaboration between the Metropolitan State College of Denver's Center for Innovation and members of the Denver Metropolitan Area entrepreneurial community. The Center for Innovation E-Mentorship program offers advisement, support, expertise, resources, and start-up business ownership support for students. Historically, mentoring was done face-to-face. Today, technology provides a tool for mentoring —the Internet. Because of this, the Center for Innovation is able to meet the needs of these participants using today's technology.

The E-Mentorship Process: E-Mentees

1. Application

The E-Mentorship recipient is called an E-Mentee. E-Mentees complete and submit an application, profile, and E-Mentorship Contract on the E-Mentorship home page on the Center for Innovation website.

Center for Innovation staff use the responses to match the E-Mentee with an E-Mentor. The E-Mentor is a carefully selected member of the Denver/Boulder entrepreneurial community with many years of professional experience who can contribute to the E-Mentees professional growth.

2. Pairings of E-Mentee with an E-Mentor

Pairings of the E-Mentee with the E-Mentor take place once the E-Mentee has submitted all Mentorship forms. Pairings of E-Mentee and E-Mentor will be determined by Center for Innovation staff and mutual consent.. Considerations include:

- E-Mentor availability and expertise;
- Grade level;
- Entrepreneurial interests and goals;
- Other interests.

Once all previous steps are completed, the Mentorship Coordinator will advise the E-Mentee of the E-Mentor pairing, and your E-Mentorship begins.

3. Initial Contact/Getting Acquainted

The E-Mentee will initiate the first contact by e-mailing or calling the E-Mentor and scheduling a meeting at the office of the E-Mentor. If E-Mentee is a high school student, the initial meeting can take place at the Denver Venture School or at a location within walking distance of it.

The initial contact is an opportunity to share backgrounds/common interests. Both the E-Mentee and E-Mentor should post their bios that reflect personal background and professional/accomplishments in the private discussion group. The participants communicate initial expectations and agree upon common goals and expectations for the initial phase of the relationship.

4. Set Goals

During the first weeks of the E-Mentorship, E-Mentees should discuss their professional goals and interests with their E-Mentor.

5. Define Expectations of the E-Mentorship Relationship

The E-Mentee and E-Mentor clarify roles and expectations to ensure a successful E-Mentorship relationship. The participants should understand the E-Mentorship process and limits of the E-Mentorship relationship.

An appropriate point to emphasize is that the E-Mentor will not arbitrate conflicts that occur in the E-Mentee's setting, including specific classroom problems, disagreements with administrative requirements, etc. The E-Mentorship complements and supplements the supports that the E-Mentee has in the school setting. Later, the E-Mentee can dialogue with the E-Mentor in their private discussion group on professional considerations inherent in the issue and how the issue was resolved.

6. Plan Communication

While the vehicle for communication is the asynchronous online discussion group, both the E-Mentor and E-Mentee should agree on best times for weekly communication. The E-Mentor and E-Mentee discuss personal schedules and availabilities that accommodate both participants. It is important to build in flexibility, but also ensure accountability. All communication should take place within the appropriate discussion group.

E-Mentorship “Mentee” Timeline

The following sequence illustrates the student selection and participation process in E-Mentorship

Step 1: The individual applies to E-Mentorship via the Center for Innovation’s online application form at www.MetroStateInnovate.org, completing:

- Application
- Profile
- Contract

Step 2: The recipient can download the E-Mentorship Mentee Handbook from the Center for Innovation website.

Step 3: The recipient is paired with an E-Mentorship Mentor.

Step: 4 The mentorship begins with one face-to-face meeting between Mentor and Mentee.

There are no assigned tasks; however, weekly communication is expected. Mentees are also encouraged to archive professional activities and accomplishments in order to reflect on personal/professional growth over time.

Interactive communication between the E-Mentee and E-Mentor is protected and private. Newsgroup communication is asynchronous; the E-Mentee and E-Mentor can communicate at a time of their choosing.

During the E-Mentorship, E-Mentees can:

- Ask question, share experiences, and feel supported.
- Discuss specific entrepreneurial and career-oriented activities and goals.
- Participate in topic-related newsgroups with other E-Mentorship participants in order to share ideas or learn new skills.
- Network with other participants and entrepreneurial experts.
- Access entrepreneurial knowledge resources through the Center for Innovation website.
- Participate in E-Mentorship professional development activities.

For the Mentee, E-Mentorship provides:

- A method of recognizing one's core values;
- A means to identify life goals;
- Personal support and coaching;
- Problem-solving assistance;
- Opportunities to identify and satisfy career needs, and;
- Opportunities to reflect on entrepreneurial practices and receive feedback.

E-Mentorship Policies

By completing and signing the E-Mentorship application, profile, and contract, the E-Mentee agrees to the following E-Mentorship policies:

1. To share personal/professional goals and interests with the E-Mentor at the start of the E-Mentorship

Rationale: Setting professional goals and sharing professional interests early in the E-Mentorship gives direction and purpose to the E-Mentee's professional growth. By sharing experiences, the E-Mentor can best support the E-Mentee and focus the mentorship experience. The E-Mentor will also receive a copy of the E-Mentee's application and profile so that initial contacts are meaningful.

2. Develop a Professional Growth Plan with the assistance of the E-Mentor.

Rationale: Writing goals down with pertinent timelines focuses the efforts of the E-Mentee and provides concrete objectives by which one can gauge progress.

3. To share accomplishments and reflections with the E-Mentor at least one time per week.

Rationale: The E-Mentorship is a collaborative arrangement between the mentee, Center for Innovation at Metropolitan State College of Denver, and the Denver Venture School. The E-Mentor represents the Center for Innovation in facilitating this collaboration.

Consistent communication leads to a productive mentee-mentor relationship and results in more opportunities for professional growth. The E-Mentee can communicate successes and areas for refinement, classroom experiences, or just questions/comments with the E-Mentor in a private discussion group. E-Mentees will also have the opportunity to network with other E-Mentees and E-Mentors by posting and discussing original professional materials or other topics of interest in one of the public discussion groups. Additionally, E-Mentees should consider archiving academic activities and accomplishments in a journal, portfolio, or other professional format in order to reflect on development over time.

4. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of all individuals.

Rationale: There are two types of discussion groups available to E-Mentorship participants: public and private. Participants should avoid posting any private or confidential situations/information in any public discussion group. This information includes names, addresses, phone numbers, personal identification numbers, and personal information including student academic records and confidential reports. Matters of a personal or sensitive nature should be discussed only in the private discussion group and even then avoiding the use of specific names or other identifying criteria.

5. To maintain appropriate tone and netiquette in all communications.

Rationale: Just as in face-to-face communication, tone and etiquette are also important online. Consider your “tone” in all communications. It is very easy to seem harsh or sarcastic when that is not the intent. Experience shows that even an innocent remark can be misconstrued. Please re-read your communications before you post them to be sure that you have worded your message in a way that would not be seen as a personal attack. Be positive in your approach to others and diplomatic with your words.

6. To protect the integrity of the Center for Innovation at the Metropolitan State College of Denver and the Denver Venture School.

Rationale: In the event a participant provides misleading or false information on an application or in any communication, whether public or private, the Center for Innovation will investigate and, if necessary, block the user from continued participation in the program.

During the E-Mentorship, the E-Mentee:

- Communicates with the E-Mentor weekly, including sharing your academic and professional goals, describing your professional accomplishments/areas you would like to refine, and discussing areas of interest. Discussions might focus on your experiences, questions you might have, reflection on your courses, knowledge gained, etc.
- Shares information in the open discussion groups from which other E-Mentees could benefit.
- Completes E-Mentorship surveys as requested.

Here are some ideas for discussion:

1. Share success/setbacks and ask for feedback

Students experience many daily successes and some setbacks. Communicate these privately with your E-Mentor. This is an opportunity to receive validation for what works and make refinements for the future.

2. Share personal reflections and artifacts

Effective learners consistently reflect on their past learning experiences. One way to reflect is by archiving professional activities and accomplishments in a journal, portfolio, or other professional format. Include reflections on your goals, student interactions, projects, school activities, your business ideas and start-up issues.

Then you can send artifacts to your E-Mentor and/or post them in pertinent public discussion groups. By archiving academic and entrepreneurial activities, reflections, and accomplishments, you will have artifacts that will demonstrate your personal and professional growth and reflections you will enjoy re-reading later in your career.

3. Share best practices

You can post any ideas or solutions into pertinent discussion groups (or create one of your own) that arise from conversations with your E-Mentor (only with the permission of the E-Mentor) that you feel other E-Mentees could benefit from learning about.

Reflection and Evaluation:

1. Personal Reflection

One of the best methods of learning is to reflect on day-to-day experiences. Your continued participation in the E-Mentorship discussions will provide opportunities for you to engage in this reflection.

2. Evaluate the Effectiveness of the E-Mentee and E-Mentor Relationship

The E-Mentorship evolves over time. Initial needs give way to insights and issues. Participants continue to address the changing status of the E-Mentee/E-Mentor relationship by evaluating the relationship and determine new goals, priorities, etc. throughout the E-Mentorship year.

E-Mentorship Goals and Objectives: E-Mentee

Goal 1: To establish effective E-Mentee communication

- Objective 1: The E-Mentee will demonstrate effective E-technology competencies.
- Objective 2: The E-Mentee will initiate contact with the E-Mentor.
- Objective 3: The E-Mentee will share professional background/personal interests with the E-Mentor.
- Objective 4: The E-Mentee will communicate with the E-Mentor weekly.
- Objective 5: The E-Mentee will network with other Center for Innovation entrepreneurial experts.
- Objective 6: The E-Mentee will request guidance and support from the E-Mentor.

Goal 2: To increase opportunities for entrepreneurial support and growth

- Objective 1: The E-Mentee will complete a profile indicating an area of interest in entrepreneurship.
- Objective 2: The E-Mentee will communicate areas of strength.
- Objective 3: The E-Mentee will communicate areas for refinement.
- Objective 4: The E-Mentee will communicate interest in entrepreneurial growth opportunities.
- Objective 5: The E-Mentee will participate in opportunities to share best practices and receive assistance in public discussion groups.
- Objective 6: The E-Mentee will access and use online resources to support classroom activities.

Goal 3: The E-Mentee will demonstrate interest in the profession of entrepreneurship

Objective 1: The E-Mentee will identify academic/entrepreneurial accomplishments during the mentorship.

Objective 2: The E-Mentee will archive academic/entrepreneurial artifacts that demonstrate professional competencies/accomplishments during the E-Mentorship.

Objective 3: The E-Mentee will formulate both long- and short-range goals at the end of each year of the mentorship.