



# *First Vike*

## MENTORING PROGRAM HANDBOOK



**WELCOME** to the new FirstVike program. Cleveland State University serves a large population of students who are the first in their families to attend college. The Alumni Association would like to help the transition to a new, exciting, life changing experience that is Cleveland State.



Our alumni have been there and done that! Many of them were first generation students who successfully navigated Cleveland State and have gone on to great careers. They are now willing to give back and offer guidance to current first generation students. They'll share their experiences and help you try to avoid any pitfalls they may have encountered along the way.

The Alumni Association looks forward to being part of your support team at Cleveland State. Do not hesitate to reach out to ask questions or just stop by Mather Mansion, home of the Alumni Association, to say hi!

Go Vikes!

Brian Breittholz  
Executive Director, CSU Alumni Association  
Assistant Vice President, Alumni Affairs

## PURPOSE

The FirstVike program was developed to help CSU students who are the first to attend college from their families. We hope to build a support team to help our students succeed. As part of the experience the student should learn skills that will help transition classroom skills into career networking, professional development and career exploration.

## GOALS

- Build relationships and networks.
- Providing academic, professional and personal guidance.
- Build leadership skills.
- Develop and enhance professional, creative and interpersonal skills.





## EXPECTATIONS

### *Mentors:*

- Be a professional resource for your mentee.
- Keep regular contact with your mentee.
- Meet face to face. Possibly 2-3X per year minimum
- Find the best mode of communication for you and your mentee.
- Encourage mentee to develop a LinkedIn profile.
- Give guidance on campus and community resources if the student is having academic problems.
- If possible, the mentor may choose to allow the mentee to shadow him/her on a workday.
- The mentor is NOT responsible for conducting a job search for the student or offering the student an internship or full-time position.

### *Mentees:*

- Initiate (at least) monthly communication. You drive the relationship and indicate needs. Your mentor may reach out as well.
- Find the best mode of communication for you and your mentor.
- Respond to correspondence ideally, within 48 hours.
- Proactively prepare for meetings and identify goals you hope to achieve.
- Follow through with timelines and communication.
- Contact mentor in a timely manner if unable to attend scheduled meeting.
- Be open and listen to mentor. Accept criticism and listen to constructive feedback.
- Have an agenda/topics to discuss during calls or meetings

## MATCHING

### *How do I find a mentor/mentee?*

The Cleveland State University Alumni Association has teamed with America Mentors

You will log into the program where you will be asked to fill out some biographical, educational and interest data. Based on that, matches to a mentor/mentee will be shown. The mentee will then have an option on who to reach out to for an initial discussion.



## MEETING/COMMUNICATION

*Initial contact should be driven by the mentee. There should be an introduction email or phone call explaining that you have been matched and would like to set up a time to get to know each other. Remember, you are dealing with someone in a professional setting so, the communication should reflect it. This is a great opportunity to begin to build professional communication skills that will serve you during your career.*



### *Sample first email:*

Dear Mr./Ms/Mrs./Dr.

I was excited to learn I have been matched with you through the FirstVike mentoring program, and I wanted to write to introduce myself and to schedule our first meeting to get acquainted.

I am a <insert major> major, and grew up in(name of town) before attending CSU. I look forward to talking with you about your experience at CSU and your career.

I am free on the following days/times, and I was hoping we could schedule a time to meet in person, via skype, or by phone. I can be reached at abc123@csuohio.edu or by phone at 610-555-5555.

Mondays between 5pm and 8pm  
Tuesdays between 10am and 2pm  
Wednesdays are full (class and work all day!)  
Thursdays between 10am and 2pm  
Fridays anytime

Could you please let me know if any of these days and times would work with your schedule?

Thank you for your willingness to discuss a possible mentoring opportunity, and I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith  
Bachelor of Arts in History (Expected May 2014)  
Tel: 610-555-5555  
Email: jxz5111@csuohio.edu



*Once your first meeting/phone call is set here are some things you might discuss:*

- How did you choose CSU?
- If you were a CSU student again, what would you do differently?
- What is your greatest memory during your time at CSU?
- Were you involved in any extracurricular activities at CSU?
- What was your first job out of college and how did you get it?
- What is a typical work day for you?
- What do you like most or find most interesting about your work?
- What is the biggest challenge of your job?
- What education, skills and experiences are needed to enter your profession?
- Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give a college student to be successful?

- Before finishing any meeting or call, try to set the date and time of your next communication
- Future discussions and activities could include:
- Resume and LinkedIn profile building.
- Internships and professional organizations.
- Goals during CSU career and after graduation.
- Articles on the current state of the career field of the mentee.
- What are things outside of the classroom that can enhance your job prospects and personal development – study abroad, internships, research, professional and academic clubs
- Shadowing opportunities.
- Professional communication, dress and other soft skills required in a work environment.



## ACTIVITIES

There are numerous activities around campus and the city that you can use for meetings.

### Campus Activity Board Events

[csucab.com/events](http://csucab.com/events)

### Alumni Association Events

[csualumni.com/events-travel/events/](http://csualumni.com/events-travel/events/)

\*\*\*Discounts may be available for select events\*\*\*

**Viking Traditions** – Great opportunities to explore CSU with a mentor

[vikingtraditions.com/categories/](http://vikingtraditions.com/categories/)

### Professional/Personal Development series for students

[csualumni.com/readyssetpro/](http://csualumni.com/readyssetpro/)

**Five under 35** - See what recent grads are doing and how they navigated CSU

[csualumni.com/students/5-under-35/](http://csualumni.com/students/5-under-35/)

Explore all of the diverse clubs and organizations on campus  
[orgsync.com/login/csuohio](http://orgsync.com/login/csuohio)

Places on campus to grab a meal or coffee

[dineoncampus.com/csu](http://dineoncampus.com/csu)

\*\*\*Mentors and mentees are not under any obligation to purchase meals etc. for each other.

## MENTOR AGREEMENT

As a mentor in the Cleveland State FirstVike Program I agree to the following:

1. Create or update a relevant LinkedIn profile.
2. Review and use the Mentoring Program Handbook as a reference guide.
3. Connect with my mentee at least once a month (in person if possible) during the academic year.
4. Communicate with and respond to my mentee in a timely manner.
5. Notify my mentee if I cannot meet/connect with him/her for any reason and
6. reschedule any cancelled meetings.
7. Raise concerns with CSU Alumni staff if the relationship is not working.
8. I will share resources with my mentee, including, but not limited to: short term career exploration experiences, informational interviews and shadowing as my situation permits.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_







# Alumni Association

[csualumni.com](http://csualumni.com)

