



MENTORING

“Facilitating student success at the Faculty of Health Science”

"In order for students to succeed as whole human beings, students need additional attention and care outside of the classroom" (Hatfield, 2011). Tertiary institutions constantly seek to create an environment that fosters support and encourages students to spend more time with their peers and learn from each other (Tinto, 2008).

The University of the Witwatersrand started implementing Mentoring to the Wits community in 2009 as part of the First Year Experience (FYE) programme. Mentoring aims to:

- provide support and guidance to students through one-on-one or group sessions;
- assist students transition and adjust to University life;
- engage students and therefore contribute to the creation of learning communities;
- transfer knowledge of University policies, procedures and referral sources.

Mentoring might take the form of individual mentoring where a senior student/mentor is matched with one junior student/mentee. Alternatively, it can also be group mentoring where one senior student/mentor is matched to 3 to 5 junior students/mentees. Mentoring sessions are held weekly or bi-weekly and should be no longer than 30 minutes in duration ideally from February to September each year. Depending on the School, monthly and/or quarterly monitoring sessions are usually held with Programme Coordinators and mentors to ensure the efficient implementation of the programme.

What is a mentor?

A senior student (from second year of study and above) who is passing all courses; helpful, caring and willing to volunteer their time to support another student.

How to become a mentor?

Mentors are recruited annually either by Course Coordinators, Student Councils, OSS or the FYE Office. Interested students need to complete the Mentors Application Form and submit it to the latter recruitment points. Selection interviews may be held with applicants. Successful applicants attend a compulsory 4 hour Mentoring Training facilitated by OSS and receive a certificate of attendance.

What are the benefits of being a mentor?

- Increased awareness of self and a sense of fulfilment in serving and helping others.
- Acquisition of mentoring skills which enhances leadership abilities, interpersonal interactions and serve as a great marketing tool to prospective employers.
- Additional networks which will provide a meaningful University experience.

What is a mentee?

A mentee is a junior student who seeks assistance and support to cope with the challenges of University.

The benefits of being mentored?

- Develops self confidence to transition and adjust to University life.
- Provides support to clarify and prioritise study goals.
- Promotes forming new networks to create a successful academic year.