

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM
GUIDE BOOK

Delivered in Partnership by:

MPPI's Continual Professional Learning (CPL) Committee
The Department of City Planning at the University of Manitoba
and
The University of Manitoba Association of Planning Students
(UMAPS)

This guide was adapted from the OPPI Mentoring Program.

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE MPPI MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The MPPI Continual Professional Learning (CPL) committee, working with the Department of City Planning, has developed and continues to develop a student-practitioner Mentorship Program whereby MPPI members are encouraged to share their professional experience with eager and upcoming planners and to discuss the planning profession on an informal basis. Overall, the program benefits both MPPI and the Department of City Planning by addressing two overarching issues:

1. to assist planning students in making the transition into the planning professions through the creation of a professional network;
2. to provide a professional development opportunity for practicing planners via the mentoring process and other related opportunities.

In addition to these two objectives, the Mentorship Program will also address other general MPPI goals, such as:

- Encouraging the growth of the profession and advance the principles of MPPI;
- Creating and enhancing a network of contacts in the planning profession;
- Sharing of knowledge and ideas among professional planners;
- Increasing the awareness of MPPI and recruiting opportunities;
- Facilitating the dissemination of information on emerging trends and issues.

2.0 HOW THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM WORKS

To keep the program informal yet structured, the MPPI CPL committee has developed the following system:

1. A 'pool' of available mentors is updated annually
 - Practitioners interested in being/continuing as a mentor are asked to review this *Program Guide* and fill out the *Mentor Profile Form*. The Form should be submitted to the Mentor Liaison (see page 6 for contact information).
 - The Profile Form information is entered into a Mentor Database that is accessible to students. It outlines all the available mentors, their interests,

place of work, etc. so students have a chance to become familiar with them and select whom they would like to work with.

2. Mentorship Evening

- During the school year, the CPL Committee hosts an evening Mentorship Wine & Cheese event where students and prospective mentors will have the chance to meet, and will be given an overview of the benefits of the program.

3. Creating the matches

- There are two typical ways in which matches are created under this Program. In both cases, students are asked to fill out and submit the *Student Profile Form* to the Student Liaison (see page 6 for contact information):
 - Students can suggest mentors they would like to be matched with and the CPL committee will match the students with the available mentor who best fits with their interests. The committee will introduce the match at the Mentorship Evening and/or via email to set up an initial connection.
 - Students contact mentors directly to set up their own match. In this case, matches should be reported back to the Student Liaison.

NOTE: Students should not feel limited to only one pairing.

4. Mentoring process

- After the initial introduction, either by the CPL Committee or on their own accord, it is up to the students and their mentors to set out the parameters of their mentorship arrangement. The CPL Committee has developed an ice breaker exercise for the mentor and student to complete if they wish.
- However, the CPL Committee will endeavor to initiate more structured opportunities for students and their mentors to interact. Suggestions are welcome.

NOTE: Both mentors and students are free to terminate the matches at any time and for any reason. There is no formal obligation to either party.

5. Evaluation

- Both the mentor and student are asked to complete the *Evaluation Form* within the first year of their pairing(s) and return it to the CPL committee. This helps the committee to maintain and improve the Mentorship Program.

Students can submit the completed evaluation to the Student Liaison and the Mentors can submit to the Mentor Liaison.

3.0 SUGGESTED MENTOR / STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Mentors and students can do a number of activities together and either the mentor or the student may initiate the activity. We encourage people to be creative and flexible! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- To begin the relationship, go for coffee, breakfast, lunch or dinner. Establish a mentoring plan together. Set another time to get together to keep the momentum going.
- Attend public meetings together. After the meetings, discuss them to learn about people, politics, procedures, etc.
- Loan materials to each other (i.e.: reports, books, articles, etc.) that have impressed you. Read and discuss them.
- Introduce your mentor / student to your colleagues. Point out specific ways in which your contacts can potentially help each other (i.e.: there could be internship possibilities for students!)
- Offer to listen to and evaluate an upcoming oral presentation to be made by your mentor / student. Review and provide feedback.
- Go together to hear an effective speaker or presenter either in the workplace or in a university setting. Discuss the strengths (and any possibilities for improvement) afterward.
- Seek each others opinion on various problems, ideas, proposals and tasks.

4.0 MENTOR / STUDENT CHECKLIST

Depending on the nature of the relationship, some of the points noted below may be more appropriate than others. Here are a few suggestions to get started:

- Set specific goals for the relationship and check regularly to see how goals are progressing
- Provide constant feedback.
- Establish a communication schedule and stick to it.

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- Mentors: get your student to talk. Your student should feel free to discuss questions and issues with you.
- Mentors: be available as a resource. If your student asks for help it is because she / he feels it is needed. Be willing to offer your assistance in such cases.
- Mentors: keep your student informed. Provide insight into corporate culture and management perspectives.

5.0 MENTORSHIP PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT

If you are interested in the mentorship program please contact MPPI at mppiadmin@shaw.ca. Your inquiry will be directed to the current Mentor Liaison or Student Liaison.