Faculty Mentor Program  
UCSD Academic Enrichment Programs • (858) 534-5791 • http://aep.ucsd.edu  
Guide to Getting Started with the FMP  
2012-13  

Here are the basic steps:  

1. Determine what it is you want to get out of the program (make a list, think about your strengths and weaknesses and how you will be working on these)  
2. Contact Potential Mentors  
3. Attend Information Session in October.  
4. Find a mentor (do your research and determine the right fit for your needs)  
5. Submit a “student application” online before the end of November (www.aep.ucsd.edu).  
6. Register for a 199 through your department  
7. Meet with your mentor to discuss the research project and sign the mentorship contract  

Keep posted for deadlines and quarterly workshops using the FMP blog:  
http://fmpucsd.wordpress.com  

HOW TO FIND A MENTOR  

DO SOME HOMEWORK:  
Check out the available mentors on the FMP blog:  
http://fmpucsd.wordpress.com/  

Also, be sure to check out the websites of departments in which you’re interested. Check these sites weekly. The URL for most departments is: department name.ucsd.edu.  

Once you’ve found professors you are interested in, email them. But first prioritize them, which ones are your first, second and third choices. Follow an email up with a telephone call, follow a telephone call with an office visit.  

Be assertive! You are not the only student looking for a mentor -- it’s very competitive.  

Don’t expect the professor to find you-YOU must be motivated and find him or her. Academic departments have faculty profiles that include background and research foci. Check them out now before your junior year. Some departments have over 70 faculty members!
Evaluate Your Strengths and Weaknesses

It is important to know your strengths and weaknesses academically before going into a mentorship relationship.

Your mentor can help you in areas where you need improvement, but they need to know where those are first. You will be able to offer your mentor your strengths and in that way, the relationship will be reciprocal.

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Questions to ask yourself before looking for a mentor…

What are your research interests?
Where would you like to develop?
What are your goals?
How do you rate these qualities in a mentor?
  • Interested in developing your career
  • Commitment to mentoring
  • A match with your professional and personal needs
  • Professional competence
  • A successful track record in mentoring
  • Good communication skills
  • Will provide networking opportunities
  • Is institutionally savvy
  • Expresses interest in you as a person

What can you offer your mentor?
What do you hope to gain through your research experience?
What do you know about research in your field or area of interest?
Is there a faculty member working in your area of interest?
Are there particular skills you need to develop or courses you need to take before embarking on your project?
Will your project require special approvals, such as working with human or animal subjects or hazardous materials?
Will your project require funding?
Will you be able to commit the minimum 10 hours a week to your project?
Will your project be done independently on your own schedule, or will you need to mesh your research with other ongoing research?
Sample e-mail to a professor  
(For faculty not listed on the FMP website or who asked to be contacted directly)

Dear Professor X:

My name is Name, and I have recently decided to participate in the Faculty Mentor Program. An important component of the program is a two-quarter faculty mentorship during winter and spring quarters 2013. I am very interested in becoming involved in research in Subject Area. I am a X year student with a GPA of X. I have taken Relevant Courses and Additional Relevant Experiences (brief). My goal is to Goal-brief. I am aware of the commitment required to complete a two-quarter research project and I am confident that I will fulfill it.

I am interested in your project on brief project description. Your work interests me because Briefly state why the professor's work interests you. I would like to get involved in research in this area because it will help me to better prepare for Your Professional Goals.

Would it be possible to meet with you to further discuss your project and my possible involvement in it? I am available at your earliest convenience. For more information about the structure and requirements of the Faculty Mentor Program, please contact Karen Van Ness, Program Coordinator at (858) 534-5791 or kvanness@ucsd.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Your Name
Student ID
E-mail
Phone