



Peer Mentoring

BACKGROUND

Academic medical institutions across the country have demonstrated the positive impact of student-to-student mentoring on medical education for both mentors and mentees alike. UMMS students have consistently reported that receiving advice and support from upperclassmen peers was beneficial to their medical education experience, particularly at major transition points.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

The mission of the Peer Mentoring Program is to promote student well-being, support academic success, and facilitate career exploration. The vision of the Program is to create a supportive environment where every student is able to reach their full potential. The Program values mentee-centric relationships, objectivity, supportiveness, and dependability.

OBJECTIVES

- To promote student well-being by being available, acknowledging and normalizing mentee concerns, providing advice and reassurance, and encouraging self-care.
- To support academic success by teaching basic study skills and strategies, providing information on commonly-used resources, and offering objective advice on academic matters, particularly at major transition points.
- To facilitate career exploration by assisting in the identification of extracurricular activities relevant to the mentee's goals and facilitating connections with other students, faculty, and other members of the community.
- To establish longitudinal relationships between students at different stages in their education and enhance vertical integration within the Learning Communities.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Interested students entering the third and fourth years apply and interview for available positions. 26 students from each year are selected based on their understanding of mentoring qualities, prior experiences, dedication, and professionalism.
- Mentor Pairs, consisting of one third- and one fourth-year Peer Mentor, are formed and each is assigned to a single Faculty Mentor, typically within the same Learning Community.
- Mentor Pairs are assigned to the cohort of 12-15 first- and second-year students belonging to the Faculty Mentor.
- Additional MD/PhD Peer Mentors provide additional mentoring to all MD/PhD students, with an emphasis on questions related to the MD/PhD program or GSBS.

PEER MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Meet with mentees in person at least once per semester. Meetings may be held with groups of mentees or individual mentees.
- Maintain active communication with mentees, with at least one communication per month. Texts and phone calls must be responded to within 24 hours, and e-mails must be replied to within 48 hours. Mentors who anticipate not being able to meet these requirements due to travel or other reasons are required to notify the other Mentor in their Pair and are encouraged to notify their mentees as well.
- Attend faculty-led training sessions and Peer Mentoring Program meetings to develop skills for effective mentoring and support overall program development. At least one Mentor from each Pair must be present at every meeting.
- Participate in surveys and focus groups to support quality improvement initiatives.
- Communicate clearly with mentees regarding the limits of the mentoring relationship, including explanations of scenarios that should be referred to faculty/administrators instead of Peer Mentors. Maintain confidentiality as described in the Disclosure and Confidentiality Statement: <https://tiny.cc/PM-Confidentiality>