

Mentoring Student Leaders

YOUR ROLE AS A VALUE MENTOR

**VOSS ADVANCED LEADERSHIP
UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE**

Fort Hays State University

OVERVIEW

- **Background of VALUE**
- **What is VALUE?**
- **VALUE Scholars**
- **Your mentor role**
- **Establishing a mentoring relationship**
- **Your first mentor-student meeting**
- **Resources available**

BACKGROUND

The Voss Advanced Leadership Undergraduate Experience (VALUE) is the result of a generous gift, provided to the Department of Leadership Studies, from the family of Omer G. Voss.

The aim of the program is to prepare students for the real-world, and learn how to “get things done” and collaborate in a professional environment.

WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

Employers are increasingly seeking students who:

- have leadership experiences
- can work in a team
- can communicate well
- solve problems
- have a strong work ethic
- take initiative

The VALUE program aims to offer students the experiences to gain these abilities.

WHAT IS VALUE?

VALUE is an undergraduate program for students that show great leadership potential.

Comprised of both curricular and co-curricular experiences, VALUE will offer students the opportunity to gain experience in one of three sectors:

- Corporate leadership,
- Civic/non-profit leadership, or
- Scholarship/research

Paired with a mentor, students will complete a large project over the course of the year.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOLARS

- **Attend all required VALUE events (e.g. orientations)**
- **Complete all coursework for two, three credit hour Advanced Leadership Lab courses, offered in the fall and spring semesters**
- **Meet with a mentor a minimum of two times per month using a method of communication agreed upon by both the mentor and student**
- **Complete a project within a chosen program track**
- **Compile an end-of-program portfolio demonstrating competency in the program's learning objectives**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Operations

- Effectively *diagnose* the situation, understanding the root causes and issues underlying problems and challenges
- *Demonstrate* initiative to both introduce change and persist to see change through to its completion
- *Create* and *execute* change plans around their specified track.
- *Learn* to make conscious choices about interventions throughout the change process

Collaboration

- *Understand* themselves and their role on the team
- *Work* successfully in a team environment
- *Enhance* their ability to network and communicate effectively
- *Demonstrate* the ability to energize and effectively work across factions with multiple stakeholders

VALUE SCHOLARS

VALUE Scholars were selected via a nomination and application process.

All scholars in the program have demonstrated the willingness and potential to achieve the outcomes of the VALUE program.



MENTORING: WHAT MAKES A GREAT ONE?

What does it take to be a great mentor? Consider these qualities:

- A willingness to share skills, knowledge, and expertise
- Demonstrates a positive attitude and acts as a positive role model
- Takes both a personal and professional interest in the student's work
- Exhibits enthusiasm in his/her field
- Values ongoing learning and growth
- Plays the role of both the mentor and the mentee

YOUR MENTOR ROLE

As a VALUE Mentor, you are asked to coach the student through this experience by:

- Establishing a meaningful relationship with your student
- Meeting with your student a minimum of twice per month
- Providing honest and constructive feedback regarding the student's project progress
- Challenging the student to take healthy and positive risks
- Sharing your experiences
- Offering your advice (when asked by the student)
- Engaging in meaningful reflection with the student

YOUR MENTOR ROLE

As a mentor, you are **NOT**:

- A supervisor for the student's project
- To give academic coursework "advice"
- To track the student's program requirements
- To control the student's project progress



THE LOGISTICS

- Meet with your student mentee a minimum of twice per month during the fall and spring semesters (September – May)
- Remain accessible throughout the year
- Maintain a continuous, open line of communication with your student mentee
- Submit mentee evaluations each semester

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Being a mentor can be a positive, rewarding experience. Here are a few of the benefits:

- Allows you to “give back”
- Strengthens your interpersonal skills
- Provides the opportunity to share your knowledge or reflect on your own practice
- Increases your own personal and job satisfaction
- Develops your own self-awareness

HOW ARE YOU MATCHED WITH A SCHOLAR?

Mentors are matched with scholars based on shared VALUE track interests.

For example, a mentor with experience in civic/non-profit leadership will be paired with a scholar who desires the same track experience.

You will not be paired with a potential supervisee.

ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Relationship is the operative word – as with any relationship it is the responsibility of both parties to create openness and trust. It is crucial for the mentor and the mentee to discuss their hopes and expectations at the outset. The Mentor-Mentee agreement located in the Mentor Handbook can guide your conversation. Other things to discuss include:

- Time, place, and means for contact and meetings (e.g. e-mail, telephone, face-to-face, times of day, days of week, etc.)
- Mutual availability
- How differences or conflicts might be handled, should they arise
- How feedback to each other will be managed

YOUR FIRST MENTOR-STUDENT MEETING

Typically, first meetings allow two people to get to know a little bit about each other, attach a face to a name, and gain a bit of comfort.

To do this, you need to think about what setting would feel comfortable for both of you, such as:

- FHSU Memorial Union
- Local coffee shop
- Local restaurant for a lunch/dinner meeting

It is the responsibility of the VALUE Scholar to contact his/her mentor to schedule the first meeting.

YOUR FIRST MENTOR-STUDENT MEETING

Also, plan out some conversation starters by asking yourself:

- What are things I could tell my student about myself that would help us get to know each other a little bit?
- What about my career story might be interesting and relevant to him/her?
- What are some questions I could ask my student to get to know him/her a little bit without prying?
- How can I use my strengths to guide my student through this learning experience?

STUDENT MENTEE EVALUATION

Students are not the only ones who can learn from participating in VALUE, you can too!

The Director of VALUE will administer an evaluation twice per semester, to give both you and your mentee the opportunity to evaluate each other.

Learn from the results!

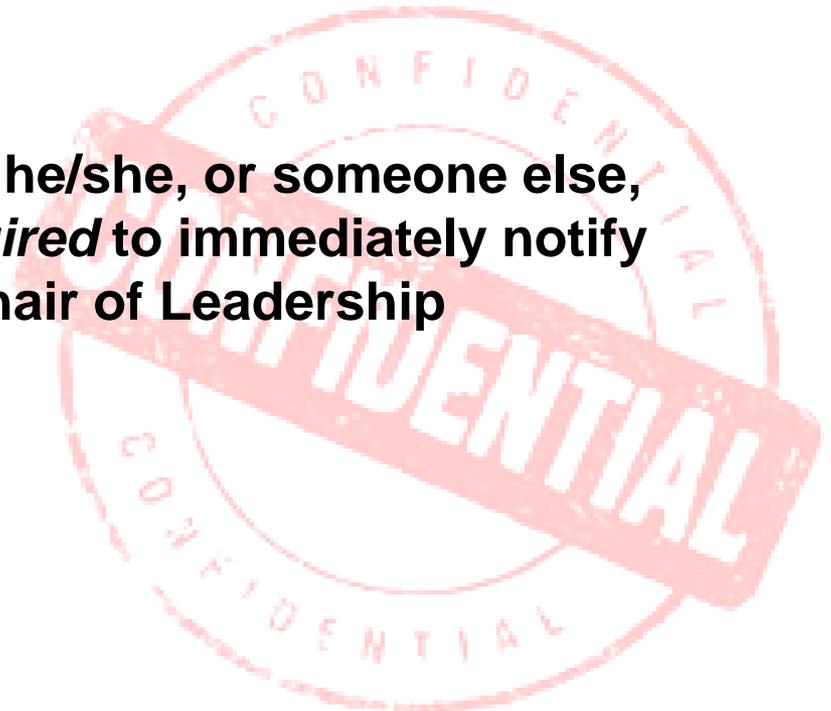
STUDENT ASSESSMENT – EVALUATE YOUR STUDENT (STUDENT)				
Fall – Midterm				
<i>Availability:</i> The student initiates contact with the mentor (at least twice per month), and regular meetings are planned.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Communication:</i> The student maintains a continuous open line of communication with his/her mentor.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Critical Thinking:</i> The student has demonstrated the ability to think professionally, rather than “backpack” thinking.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Critical Thinking:</i> The student offers thoughtful responses to reflective questions asked by the mentor.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Problem Solving:</i> The student has demonstrated the ability to solve problems as they occur and he/she may even go beyond the help of the mentor to other resources.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Feedback:</i> The student looks for feedback and criticism on his/her performance and project so that they can improve.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Feedback:</i> The student respectfully accepts feedback and criticism in a professional manner.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Commitment:</i> The student is committed to their development throughout the experience.				
4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
<i>Enthusiasm:</i> The student is enthusiastic about their VALUE experience.				
4	3	2	1	

MENTOR-STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Trust is an important part of the mentoring relationship.

Whenever possible, student confidences should be kept private.

However, if a student indicates that he/she, or someone else, may be in danger, mentors are *required* to immediately notify the Director of VALUE and/or the Chair of Leadership Studies.



MENTORING RESOURCES

- **VALUE Mentor Handbook**
 - *Mentoring Tips & Frequently Asked Questions*
- **External Resources**
 - *Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Feedback in Coaching* (Blue Pencil Institute)
 - *Resources for Each Phase of the Mentoring Relationship* (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
 - *Mentoring Best Practices* (University of Albany)

QUESTIONS?

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