

Law Student Mentoring Program Timeline

2010 NALP Annual Education Conference

“The Who, What, When, and Where of Law Student Mentoring Programs”

Friday, April 30, 2010, 3:30 pm

The Alumni-Mentor program begins in the fall, when the entering first year class is given the option of participating, on a first-come, first-served basis. A student who has an interest in a particular area of law, geographic area, academic pursuit or other special interest will be matched with an alumni mentor with such a background.

To Develop a Program from Scratch:

- Create a short questionnaire that can be sent to alumni
- Work with your alumni association
- Search directories for alumni in various practice areas, settings and geographic locations
- Create a similar questionnaire for students

MAY

- 1) Send survey to alumni to gather information (with the assistance of the alumni office), including a question on willingness to mentor a new student
 - a) Other questions may include willingness to conduct mock interviews, be on a panel, participate in a specific career day, etc.
- 2) Decide on your target group. For these purposes, we will target first-year students
- 3) With your IT department (unless you are “techy” enough to do it yourself!), create an online questionnaire for both alumni and students to ask pertinent questions that will help you match student to alums. *See appendix for samples.*
 - a) Questions should help you match by:
 - i) Practice area
 - ii) Personal interests
 - iii) Second career? Older student? Dual degree, i.e. JD/MBA? Hobbies?
 - iv) Geographic preferences
 - v) Practice setting: private practice, government, public interest

JUNE

- 4) Send email to alums that include the link to the questionnaire. Results should appear in a database that you can manipulate.

AUGUST

- 5) Send “Save the Date/Invite” to alumni (who have committed to be mentors) re: kickoff reception in October
- 6) Send email to new students who have committed to the school to invite them to request a mentor. Include the link for signing up.
- 7) Take notes on unusual requests, i.e. religious preferences, unusual practice area interests, etc. from both students and alums
- 8) End of month – deadline for student requests

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

- 9) Begin to preliminarily match students and alumni, especially if you are matching on a one-by-one basis
- 10) If you are lacking alumni volunteers
 - a) Reach out to recruiters from law firms to forward your email to alumni in their offices
 - b) Ask your alumni office for help in emails to alums with whom they have relationships
- 11) It is helpful to create a report that will give you one page per student and one page per alum
 - a) Use these sheets to make notes and switch around matches

OCTOBER

- 12) Once matches are made, email information about students/alumni to everyone which includes matching interests

MID-OCTOBER

Kick-Off Reception

To facilitate the initial meeting between mentors and their students, the Office hosts a Kick-Off Reception in the fall. Throughout the year, the students and alumni are encouraged to communicate by telephone, e-mail, or, if practical, in person; some mentors in the past enjoyed bringing their mentees to their offices, to alumni events and to court hearings. While we do recommend that the students and alumni have at least three or four meetings of one type or another during the school year, there is no set requirement as the program is fairly unstructured with no required activities, thereby allowing the mentors to give as much time and effort as they wish.

POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP IDEAS

Spring Semester

- Organized get-together
 - Attendance generally less
 - Hold in more casual, “fun” environment, i.e. off-campus
- Student Follow-up
 - Formal survey OR
 - Casual conversations during counseling sessions, etc.

Summer

- Mentor Follow-up
 - Formal survey

Survey coupled with invitation to participate for the next year

SPECIALIZED MENTORS

Second-Year Transfer Students

- Former transfer student alumni to be mentors specifically to new transfer students
 - **PRO:** Special needs, issues from not having begun with the current class
 - **CON:** Could thin out good mentors for 1Ls; depending on size of transfer class, could create time constraints