



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Miller College of Business**

**SOAR** Professional Development Program

# **Mentor Guide**



# BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

**SOAR: Success, Opportunity,  
Acumen, Readiness**



# Table of Contents

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**SOAR** Program Overview ..... 2

What is Mentoring? ..... 3

Responsibilities and Expectations  
of a Mentoring Relationship ..... 4

Code of Conduct ..... 5

Learning Outcomes ..... 6

Mentoring Stages ..... 7

Fostering a Positive Mentorship—Tips and Resources ..... 8



# SOAR Program Overview

The **SOAR** (Success, Opportunity, Acumen, and Readiness) program at Miller College of Business (MCOB) provides undergraduate students with essential resources through a one-semester course each year for the first three years. These courses offer meaningful engagement opportunities focused on career exploration and professional development. Students connect with community leaders and alumni mentors through Cardinals Connect, an online Ball State community where alumni and students can gain professional leads and connections. Mentoring of students takes place in MCOB 300, a third-year course. Our goal is to ensure that every student has access to a mentor.



# *What is Mentoring?*

Mentoring at Ball State University is a relationship where an experienced professional offers advice, leadership, and feedback to future professionals through purposeful interactions, empowering them to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives. This relationship is built on trust, goal setting, and open feedback.





## *Responsibilities and Expectations of a Mentoring Relationship*

### **Mentors are asked to:**

1. Respond promptly to mentees. Aim for four conversations, but feel free to communicate more often. If schedules are tight, consider emailing or messaging as an alternative. Meetings can be via Zoom, phone, or face-to-face.
2. Stay in contact and share interesting articles or podcasts.
3. Encourage mentees to set **SMART** goals for their college and career experiences.
4. Provide feedback on resumes and LinkedIn profiles.
5. Be honest, trustworthy, professional, and kind. Students are generally young, and you will likely be their first professional networking connection.
6. Always act in the mentee's best interests, avoiding any conflicts of interest. Under no circumstances, however, shall the mentor further other interests by intentionally advising the mentee to follow a course of action that is detrimental to the mentee's best interests. For example, the mentor shall not place the interests of the mentor, the mentor's employer, a professional society, or any other party above the mentee's interests.

## Mentees (students) are asked to:

1. Take the initiative to reach out to their mentor.
2. Respond promptly to their mentor.
3. Strive to achieve **SMART** goals.
4. Take the relationship seriously.
5. Be open to feedback and advice.
6. Be honest, personal, professional, and forthcoming in discussions as they relate to their development.



## Code of Conduct

1. Confidentiality is crucial. All shared information should be considered confidential unless otherwise agreed.
2. Maintain professional boundaries, free of discrimination, harassment, or romantic involvement. Participants agree to engage with their mentoring partner in a professional manner, free from the misuse of alcohol and other drugs. Report any concerns to Ball State immediately.
3. Introductions to a mentor's extended network are a privilege. Sharing contacts is not an obligation. You do not need to share contacts that you are not comfortable sharing. All codes of conduct are also applicable to these relationships.
4. Approach the partnership with an open mind, offering honest feedback with no intent to insult or harm, and commit to challenging mentees to grow.
5. The **SOAR** Mentor Program is not intended to provide employment opportunities. Students should not ask for positions, though mentors may share opportunities at their discretion.
6. Violations of the Code of Conduct can result in removal from the program.



# *Learning Outcomes*

Mentorship is vital for student growth. Remember, college is a time of immense change and opportunity for college students, and your guidance can help pave the way! By the end of the program, we expect mentees to:

1. Set goals for personal and professional development.
2. Strengthen networking skills.
3. Develop critical thinking skills through reflection and skill-building.

## **Mentors are expected to:**

1. Empower students to further personal and professional development to achieve a fulfilling career.
2. Promote goal setting and achievement through feedback and provide advice from personal experiences.
3. Assist students in strengthening critical thinking and networking skills.







## ***Mentoring Stages***

### **Stage 1: Get to Know Each Other**

Establish trust and ground rules. Share experiences, set goals, and build a connection.

### **Stage 2: Action Plan**

Guide the mentee through career-related questions and concerns, providing advice to help meet their professional development and career goals.

### **Stage 3: Reflect**

As the relationship begins to culminate, reflection should happen on the mentee's growth as the relationship progresses. Encourage ongoing communication beyond the formal program.

We encourage students to stay in touch with their mentors but do not have further requirements to do so as part of their classroom experience.

Students submit a reflection for each conversation with their mentor, summarizing what they learned. We use those reflections to confirm that students have been holding up their end of the relationship.

# *Fostering a Positive Mentorship— Tips and Resources*

We provide students with potential topics and questions to prepare for conversations, though these are not mandatory. Feel free to share your experiences openly. Students may feel nervous, so consider discussing:

- Prioritization, organization, and time management
- Transferable skill-building
- Morals, values, and ethics
- Professional development ideas
- Identifying and addressing skill gaps
- Work/life balance
- Insights you wish you had known earlier in your career



## *Questions?*

Contact Joel Whitesel, Director of Student Retention and Success,  
Office of Student Success and Engagement, Miller College of Business,  
765-285-5329, [jawhitesel@bsu.edu](mailto:jawhitesel@bsu.edu).



Your guidance can significantly  
impact a student's development  
and future success.

Thank you for being part of the  
**SOAR** Mentor Program!





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