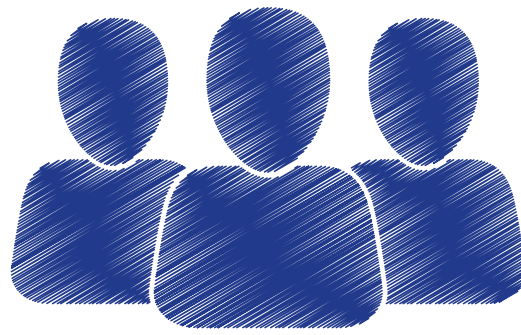


Cultivating Faculty Relationships



Why are These Relationships Important?

Strong relationships with faculty members may open the door to exciting opportunities and provide many benefits, from academic guidance and letters of recommendation to mentorship from - and access to - leading experts in the field. While it may seem intimidating to reach out to a professor - especially one whom you have never met - establishing these connections not only can be **incredibly meaningful for your college experience** but also positively shape your future goals.

Identifying Potential Mentors

- **Inventory your own faculty connections**, determining which ones share your interests and to whom you feel particularly connected.
- **Do some research!** Search relevant Georgetown academic department pages and faculty websites, read about faculty research, applied work, and specializations, and identify professors-- even those whom you have not previously met-- with relevant expertise and experience.
- **Talk to your peers.** Ask for suggestions of professors whom your friends know or have worked with, and identify those whose areas of focus align with your own.
- In total, **aim to identify five to ten potential mentors.**

Approaching Potential Mentors

- **Be prepared.** Clarify your own interests and goals, and do your homework, determining what in the faculty member's past or current work particularly interests you that will provide a point of connection.
- **Go to office hours.** Keep in mind that you do not need to be in someone's class in order to go to their office hours. In-person meetings offer the best means of introducing yourself and forging a relationship.



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FELLOWSHIPS,
AWARDS, & RESOURCES

Writing a respectful email to a potential faculty mentor:

- Use an informative subject line that specifically introduces your interests and hopes for the mentorship.
- Never include demands (i.e. "urgent request" or "immediate response needed").
- Begin your email with the appropriate salutation, using a clear greeting and honorific (i.e. Dr., Professor, etc.) If possible, read signatures on their own emails to identify the proper title.
- Introduce yourself and remind him/her about any past connection. If not already connected, establish one by explaining what you have found compelling about their work and how this fits with your own interests and goals.
- Ask to meet during office hours and/or state your availability. Emphasize, however, that you are willing to be flexible and will meet at their convenience, not yours.
- Conclude your email with a respectful salutation (i.e. sincerely, looking forward, thank you, etc.), and include the name you would like the professor to call you in-person.

Maintaining Relationships

- **Don't be afraid to reach out to professors from your past.** Maintain these past relationships by reaching out, identifying your recent work, goals, and other relevant information, and scheduling a meeting to discuss any updates.
- **Establish the opportunity for a follow-up appointment** during your meeting. For instance, ask if the professor would be willing to meet or talk via email to answer additional questions or to engage for some other specific purpose. Outline next steps before you leave the room.
- **Send a thank you follow-up email** within 24 hours of the meeting. Thank the professor for their time, summarize what was discussed at the next meeting, and take action on the next steps.

Most importantly, understand that student-professor relationships are a two-way street. Faculty members are excited to serve as mentors and want to share their experiences with you. They view these relationships with students not only as potential future collaborations but also as a way to stay on top of their field, to help develop their own network, and to demonstrate their commitment to the community.



Looking for More
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our website,
gofar.georgetown.edu