

Mentoring Program Working Group  
September 20, 2016 Conference Call Notes

Attending: Julie Bennett, Christine Cruzvergara, Kate, Erickson, Lauren Flamer,  
Susan Harmon, Sherry Holland, Simone Liano, Jen Pollard, Missy Shea, Alice Yurke,  
Unable to attend: Laura Griffith

1. Supportive of College Goals: Missy briefly reviewed how the mentoring program fits into the priorities of the Wellesley College Alumnae Association (WCAA) to connect alumnae, respond to an appetite and need for mentoring, and utilize the Wellesley alumnae network in a structured program, such as the mentoring program. Christine talked about her first steps coming to Wellesley that began by listening to various constituents and concluding that both Wellesley faculty and alumnae are underutilized for the benefit of the students. She outlined the structure of the newly constituted Wellesley Career Education wherein each student has a set of advisors and with new easily accessible technological support available. She reiterated the need for a mentoring program by alumnae to complement Wellesley's new approach to Career Education – an approach that begins when students walk in the door.
2. Vision Statement for the Mentoring Project: Alice asked for clarification in the vision statement and suggested that over the three years if priorities need to be shifted, we should provide for that possibility (see revised vision statement attached with words added, “refine priorities, if necessary” in the final paragraph). She also expressed the concern that the mentoring program mesh with the goals and vision of WCAA and Career Education. Christine, Missy, and Susan confirmed and spoke to the partnership among all of us to make sure what we do fits perfectly with the work of WCAA and Career Education.
3. Preparation for November 13-14 Meeting: The group spent most of the time planning for the November meeting so that our time can be used most productively when we are together.
  - 1) Christine and Missy will provide more context, introduce more members of their team and update how our work fits into the big picture of their responsibilities. During this section of the meeting and throughout, they and we will focus on: How does the mentorship program fit in? What niche can we fill and help with? How do members of our group function as alumnae ambassadors? Are their organic or intentional ways that we serve as an information source and positivity in an area that has been a void?

2) Remy Carpinito, Founder and CEO of CampusTap will join us Sunday night to talk about his research on mentoring and demonstrate how the CampusTap technology will support the mentorship program.

3) Elements of good mentorship programs elsewhere: Julie and Alice both volunteered to help frame this discussion for us. Julie will look into what's going on at Colby and Barnard (two schools with mentorship programs mentioned by Christine) and will check in with Jen Pollard (also on the call and head of operations in Career Education) for more information. Meanwhile, Alice will research JP Morgan's Legal Re-entry program for women re-entering the work force. Laura Griffith, who regrettably couldn't join the call, will be prepared to talk about mentoring events that she has seen as particularly useful.

4) Inventory of what is available now on campus: Simone already jumped in to provide information about what is currently available (see write up at the bottom of the minutes). Kate will also check in with Simone and Jen to make sure we have captured a good understanding of what is available now, including how Career Education is already evolving and providing new resources on campus.

5) Training of mentors and mentees is a huge area of concern and Sherry and the Class of '66 have been doing a lot of thinking and talking about this. She and Julie volunteered to frame this discussion.

6) Alice asked "training for what" – which leads to the main part of our discussion in November as to what exactly the mentorship program should look like. The committee has a whole should be thinking about what makes best sense for the actual program and we will make sure this discussion is front and center at our November meeting.

7) Marketing of the mentorship program: Jen and Kate will talk before the November meeting and frame this discussion for us. Simone will focus on the question of marketing to students. Everyone agreed that communication and clarity will be important among ourselves, with WCAA and Career Education and with the various student and alumnae audiences we plan to serve.

8) Other areas of our project that should be discussed when we meet in November?

\*Sherry asked if someone could provide a paragraph that describes the "Wellesley culture" in this context. After the meeting, we asked Simone to do this since she is in the midst of experiencing it! Other working group members can validate or add to her description as they wish.

\*Sherry also volunteers to collect and distribute short bios of committee members so we can know one another better.

\*Simone asked about the Business Leadership Council's (BLC) involvement in this project and Susan confirmed that there is tremendous enthusiasm about mentoring within BLC.

\*We confirmed the need for minutes of this meeting and subsequent ones. To that end, we will find a volunteer to keep minutes of the November meeting.

Campus Inventory from Simone:

### **Student-to-Student Mentorship**

To my knowledge, there are no structured *career-focused* peer-to-peer mentorship programs. (There are Academic Peer Tutors and First-Year Mentors assigned to groups of first-year students. However, the Academic Peer Tutors provide exclusively academic advice while the goal of First-Year Mentors is to acclimate first-years to the Wellesley experience at large and foster friendships.) Some organizations, such as societies and certain clubs (ex. the Biochemistry club) assign "Bigs" and "Littles" among their members. However, these relationships typically focus on friendship more than career advice.

That said, I believe natural mentoring relationships have emerged organically in a number of student clubs, including WeStart, the entrepreneurship club on campus. Additionally, Wellesley Women in Business is actively trying to build student-to-student mentoring relationships through a campus-wide event in October where all students interested in business will congregate and offer each other advice about internships, etc.

Additionally, younger students sometimes will reach out to talk with older students who have worked in certain companies or industries that they are interested in, etc. However, this is something that very proactive students do and is not widespread.

Moving forward, I think an ideal student-to-student mentorship system could exist through a combination of effort on the part of career-focused clubs, support from Career Education, and an overall shift in attitude on campus towards recognizing its importance. (For instance, perhaps the Career Community Advisors could organize events for students centered around their particular Career Community, and could encourage student-to-student mentoring during these events?)

### **Alumnae-to-Student Mentorship**

As we know, there is not yet a structured alumnae-to-student mentorship program. For students who do have alumnae mentors, typically they met the alum through an event on campus or in some other setting, like a local alumnae club in their hometown. Otherwise, students with Wellesley friends who are a couple years older than them often go to those recent grads for advice on applications, classes to take, resumes, etc.

Students interested in additional mentorship from alumnae typically will reach out to alums over LinkedIn and continue to build their relationship through phone or email conversations.