



School of
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HANDBOOK

MENTOR CIRCLES PROGRAM

*Guidelines and Expectations for
Alumni and Student Participants*

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master's Mentor Circles program offers small-group, topic-driven conversations that connect Professional and Executive Master's students and recent alumni with SPS alumni who share insights from their career journeys. Designed as a lighter-touch mentorship experience, these sessions provide an accessible way for students to engage with alumni and learn from both alumni and peers in a supportive group setting.

Benefits

For Mentors

- Strengthen coaching, facilitation, and group leadership skills in a low-commitment format
- Broaden your own perspectives by hearing from current students and emerging leaders
- Build connections with other alumni and expand your professional network within the SPS community
- Contribute to a culture of collaboration and lifelong learning among accomplished peers
- Elevate your professional visibility and showcase thought leadership within your field.

For Mentees

- Exchange insights with accomplished alumni who have navigated similar career transitions or leadership challenges.
- Gain fresh perspectives on industry trends, leadership approaches, and best practices.
- Reflect on your own career trajectory and goals in a supportive, discussion-based setting
- Share your experiences and learn collaboratively
- Connect with the broader SPS community and strengthen your sense of belonging

ELIGIBILITY

MENTORS

- **Be a graduate of a degree-awarding program in the School of Professional Studies (EMBA, MTL, MHL)**
- Complete the required Mentor Circle Proposal Application and receive approval from SPS staff.
- Be comfortable facilitating group discussions and welcoming diverse perspectives.
- Be able to commit time to plan the circle topic and communicate with participants.

PARTICIPANTS

- **Be a current student or graduate (within the past 3 years) of a degree-awarding program in the School of Professional Studies (EMBA, MTL, MHL).**
- Be willing to actively engage in small-group discussions and share experiences and questions.
- Complete any required registration steps and provide relevant background information to help the mentor prepare.

PROGRAM STEPS AND TIMELINE

Below is a detailed look at each phase of the Mentor Circles program — so mentors and participants know exactly how to prepare, engage, and get the most value from their experience. This timeline will guide you through the process from start to finish.

Becoming a Mentor

TIMING

STEP 1: PROPOSE A MENTOR CIRCLE

*At least 2 months prior to proposed start date;
Accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year*

- Alumni interested in leading a Mentor Circle must complete a [Mentor Circle Proposal Application](#)
- Prospective Mentors may propose the date, time, modality, location, group size, and a topic aligned with their professional experience or inspired by the [Mentor Circle Topics resource](#).

TIMING

STEP 2: CIRCLE APPROVAL + SCHEDULING

Vetted on an ongoing basis throughout the year

- Brown SPS staff will:
 - Review proposals and email alumni once their circle is approved.
 - Collaborate with alumni on topics and logistical details prior to approval, as needed.
 - Assist in scheduling virtual and/or in-person circle meetings.
 - Add newly approved circles to the [Participant Registration Form](#).
 - Market registration for the circles to SPS students and alumni.

Becoming a Mentor (cont.)

TIMING

STEP 3: REGISTERING PROSPECTIVE MENTEES

Registration opens: 1 month prior to the first circle meeting

Registration closes: 1 week before the circle begins, or once full

- Once an approved the Mentor Circle is added to the [Participant Registration Form](#) by SPS Staff, it will be available for mentee registration.
- SPS staff will regularly update the Registration Form by adding new circles and removing those that are fully enrolled or closed.
- When registration for a circle closes, SPS staff will send the Mentor a roster with each Mentee's contact information, program, and stated goals for the circle.
- Mentors are expected to send an introductory message to their Mentees **at least five days before the circle's start date**. This message should introduce yourself, outline expectations, share discussion topics for the session(s), and offer any reflection questions in advance.

STEP 4: DELIVERY + FEEDBACK

- Mentors are expected to arrive on time and actively engage in their circle meetings, adhering to the expectations outlined on [page 8](#)..
- SPS staff will not regularly monitor Mentor Circle sessions; however, they might occasionally join a session to observe and ensure the program is running smoothly.
- After each circle concludes, SPS staff will email a feedback form to mentors to gather their insights and suggestions.

Participating in a Mentor Circle

TIMING

STEP 1: FIND AN AVAILABLE MENTOR CIRCLE

New Mentor Circles may be approved and posted on an ongoing, rolling basis throughout the year.

- Once a Mentor Circle is approved Brown SPS staff will list it on the Participant Registration form.
- Brown SPS will advertise upcoming Mentor Circles on:
 - BrownConnect+
 - MastersCareers Mentor Circle webpage
 - Monthly Master's Programs Newsletter
 - Instagram

TIMING

STEP 2: REGISTER FOR A MENTOR CIRCLE

Registration opens: 1 month prior to the first circle meeting
Registration closes: 1 week before the circle begins, or once full

- Students + Alumni interested in participating in the mentor circle program must complete the [Participant Registration Form](#).
- Mentor Circle seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Staff will continually update the Registration Form by adding new and removing fully enrolled/closed circles.
- All participants will be notified of their enrollment or wait-listed status.

STEP 3: DELIVERY + FEEDBACK

- Participants are expected to arrive on time and actively engage in their circle meetings, adhering to the expectations outlined on [page 9](#).
- After each circle concludes, SPS staff will email a feedback form to participants to gather their insights and suggestions.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Those hosting or participating in a mentor circle agree to adhere to the following expectations when finalizing their respective applications.

MENTORS:



Understand that mentor circles will serve as a professional development opportunity for current and former SPS students.



Will arrive on time and will be prepared for all of the sessions proposed.



Will notify the Master's Career Services team if cancellation/rescheduling is necessary at least 24 hours before the session is to be held.



Is comfortable speaking about career pathways , sharing lessons learned, and helpful resources.



Will foster an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment where mentees are encouraged to actively participate.



Understand that students may follow-up/connect with you via LinkedIn or Email

Mentors who do not adhere to these expectations may be asked to adjust their approach or, in some cases, may be not receive approval to host future Mentor Circles. Our goal is to ensure a supportive and consistent experience for all participants.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

MENTEES:

- ☒ Are a current student or recent graduate (< 3 yrs) in the EMBA, MTL, or MHL program.
- ☒ Will attend the mentor circle signed up for and arrive on time.
- ☒ Will notify the Master's Career Services team with at least 24 hours' notice if you are unable to attend the session, so we can offer your spot to another participant and respect the mentor's time and preparation.
- ☒ Will come prepared, having read the mentor's bio and thought about questions or topics to discuss.
- ☒ Will accept feedback and guidance, and will engage respectfully and professionally throughout the session.
- ☒ If held virtually, will keep the camera on and will actively engage as if the session was in-person.
- ☒ Will not ask for a job during the mentor circle.
- ☒ Understand this is a learning opportunity and not a recruiting event.

Mentees who do not follow these expectations - including repeated no-shows or disruptive behavior - may lose access to future Mentor Circle opportunities. This ensures that spaces remain available for those who are ready to engage meaningfully and respectfully.