



# The Dos and Don'ts of Establishing a Faculty Mentor Relationship\*

**DO** seek out more than one faculty mentor.

*A great way to meet a faculty mentor is through your courses or in your major department.*

[Department Contact Info](#)

**DO** try to cultivate a relationship with a faculty member early.

*This allows you to get to know each other more fully and may make it easier for your faculty mentor to advocate for you in the future.*

**DO** engage with your professors in and outside of class.

*Going to office hours and appointments to discuss course material is an easy way to meet with a potential mentor. Just be sure to ask informed, well-thought out questions or bring a list of relevant topics.*

**DO** initiate contact.

*Make sure you initiate contact in the preferred method of your professor, whether calling the departmental office staff to make an appointment, going to posted office hours, or emailing your professor directly.*

**DO** address your professor by his or her professional title.

*If your professor has a doctorate, address him or her as Dr. If you aren't sure, you can always appropriately address them as Professor.*

**DO SHOW UP!**

*If you do not come to a meeting you have arranged with your professor, you are being very disrespectful of his or her time. If you have an emergency or your plans change, please alert your professor as soon as possible.*

**DO** come prepared with a purpose.

*Just like you, faculty members are busy people and juggle many responsibilities. Your appointment or office hour time will go more smoothly if you prepare some questions or topics to discuss before your appointment.*

**DON'T** end contact after the semester is over.

*A mentorship is like all other relationships; you have to have contact and communication. Check in at least once a semester with your faculty mentor to discuss career choices, course options if appropriate, or internships/research opportunities.*

**DON'T** forget to show your appreciation.

*If a faculty member has made a difference to you or has written a recommendation letter which led to acceptance into an internship, graduate school, or employment, let them know! They like knowing about the successes of their students.*

**DON'T** ask questions when the answer is readily available.

*For example, don't ask: what is the drop deadline or how can I pay my parking ticket? You can easily find these answers online or by going to the relevant campus office. Faculty mentors want to help you with your academic and career aspirations.*

**DON'T** be discouraged if you don't hear back right away.

*Faculty members receive a lot of email. If you haven't heard back from an email in a reasonable amount of time, it is OK to email them again.*

**DON'T** be intimidated.

*Although your professors have impressive credentials, they are interested in your academics and career aspirations. By approaching your professor respectfully and by being well-prepared, you can enter into a beneficial mentorship.*

*\*This is a general guide. Please note that expectations will vary among faculty members at the University of Kansas.*