The Ball State Public Relations Student Society of America Mentoring Program

Kathryn Boruvka
The Ball State Public Relations Student Society of America Mentoring Program

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

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Abstract

The Ball State Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) is a student-run organization dedicated to educating its members about the field of public relations. One phenomenon in this field, as in any professional field, is the presence of mentoring relationships in the work force. Young public relations professionals just entering the workforce find numerous benefits to being protégés in mentoring relationships with experienced public relations professionals. In order to encourage students in Ball State’s PRSSA chapter to seek out these relationships in the work force, I created a mentoring program that pairs older PRSSA members with younger PRSSA members. Much as in the work force and as scholarly research too suggested, the PRSSA protégés experienced higher rates of success, flattened learning curves more quickly, benefited from their mentors’ networks, and learned the particulars about the public relations major. The PRSSA mentors received the opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills, experienced personal growth, and became more valuable members to the organization compared with non-mentor members. Mentors showed they were committed to the quality and future of their organization. The following paper chronicles my research, how and why I created the PRSSA mentoring program, and my journey through its first year.
Acknowledgements

- I want to thank Professor Robert Pritchard for advising me on this project and for always being encouraging. He is certainly one of my mentors and role models. His vision for and dedication to the Ball State Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America make it one of the top chapters in the nation.
- I would also like to thank Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser for being my other mentor and for teaching the Leadership in the Arts class.
- Finally, thank you to students Krista Quesenberry and Howard Jankowski for checking my paper for technical errors.
Artist's Statement

Universities rarely have classes dedicated especially towards hands-on leadership training. As far as I know, Ball State University has only one, Leadership in the Arts, taught by Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, and it is a class that I have attended every spring since my freshman year. It is a shame that Ball State only offers one of these classes, especially since leadership – integrity, service, communication, responsibility, proactivity, and relationship building – is crucial for achieving success in all aspects of life. Math, science, literature, and history are all wonderful, but without leadership skills the value of these subjects is significantly less than it should be.

Having attending Dr. Lautzenheiser’s class for three years now, I feel that my education would be incomplete without taking the skills learned in those leadership classes and applying them directly. Therefore, I want to establish a student-to-student mentor project within one of the Ball State University student organizations, the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), of which I have been a member for two years. Not only will I receive firsthand experience with leadership, but I will receive working knowledge of how to create and establish a program of this nature.

In addition to obtaining first-hand experience with leadership and the creation of this program, I want to do this project for two reasons:

1. To establish peer-to-peer mentoring groups of new PRSSA members with old PRSSA members within the organization that mirror the mentoring relationships between experienced professionals and new professionals found in the workplace. These mentoring relationships that transpire in the workplace benefit both mentor and protégé immensely. The students in this organization will
eventually be colleagues one day, so developing close ties with one another early will only prove to be beneficial. Students involved in this group will see the benefits of mentoring relationships and actively seek them out in the workplace.

For the protégé specifically in this project, benefits include access to someone who has “been there, done that.” They can receive insider answers to their questions. Mentors can also help protégés navigate their way through their undergraduate careers and beyond. In addition, mentors provide a whole new set of contacts for the protégés’ personal network. Finally, by noting involvement as a protégé on a résumé, potential employers will know that the young professional is willing and eager to learn.

For mentors involved with this project, benefits include gaining great leadership experience and the opportunity to pass on hard-earned information. Plus, future employers will be impressed with résumés that show involvement of this level of leadership. It shows potential employers that the job seeker is interested in helping others, being a leader, and being a team player. Mentors will also increase contacts within their personal networks.

2. To establish a year-long relationship between mentoring groups and Muncie organizations through voluntary service projects. The benefits of community service for all parties involved in a mentoring relationship are well-documented. First, it is a chance for students to give back to their community. Second, it is an opportunity to interact with people outside the microcosm of Ball State University. Community service will help to break down barriers between long-time Muncie residents and short-time Ball State University residents. Next, it
establishes PRSSA as a student organization committed to the community.

Finally, community service will look great on the participants’ résumés.

Dedicated community service shows potential employers that the job seeker is well-rounded and an active participant in sustaining the welfare of the community.

As an added incentive, I am creating a competition for the most number of community service hours between mentoring groups. People who work together towards a common goal develop a tighter bond. If you shove two people into a room and tell them to talk, the results will be minimal and very surface. Having the mentor and protégé working on a community service project together will break down barriers and allow conversation to flow more easily. Finally, the competition is intended to motivate the teams to strive to achieve as many community service hours as possible. Prizes will be awarded to the group with the highest number of hours.

Finally, of the 248 PRSSA chapters nationwide, Ball State University’s chapter would be the first to create such a program. With the anticipated results, this group would serve as the model for other PRSSA chapters in the years to come.
Literature Review

A Brief History of Mentoring

Cultures in Western civilization have created mentoring relationships throughout history. Some mentoring relationships are even mentioned in history, for example mentor Haydn and protégé Beethoven and mentor Freud and protégé Jung (Stone 8).

The famous beginning of the term “mentor” comes from Homer’s *The Odyssey*. Murray writes that before Odysseus leaves to besiege the city of Troy, he appoints a guardian, teacher, and counselor, named Mentor, to watch over his son (7). Greek society valued pairing young boys with older men in a master/apprentice relationship, now referred to as mentoring. Murray further writes that “the Greeks premised these [mentoring] relationships on a basic principle of human survival: Humans learn skills, culture, and values directly from other humans whom they look up to or admire” (7).

Master/apprentice relationships continue to be important in history. Throughout the Middle Ages, young boys would often enter into apprenticeships with master craftsmen, becoming protégés. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word protégé derives from a French word meaning the protected one (“Protégé,” def. 1a). These protégés/apprentices lived with their masters, often taking over the masters’ businesses and familial responsibilities, such as marrying the widow, upon their masters’ deaths (Murray 8-9).

These master/apprentice relationships evolved into the mentor/protégé relationships familiar to today’s workplace world. While a protégé living with the mentor and marrying the mentor’s widow is now an obsolete practice, the practice of being guided and counseled by an expert – mentoring – remains. Today starting college, entering the workforce, or other such daunting situations are filled with unknown skills, practices, and cultures to be learned.
In order to operate effectively within the new environment, Mentors can facilitate and flatten this learning curve by guiding and counseling their protégés through this process. Stone writes that “every organization creates subtle, complex cultures, structures, systems, processes, and relationships that require interpretation by mentors to reveal what makes them tick” (120).

The Mentor

Requirements

Cloke and Goldsmith write that “Mentors reduce the loneliness and stress of isolated employees and not only create lasting partnerships with those who desperately need assistance but enrich their own lives and careers as well” (118). Being a mentor is a challenging task, but also a highly rewarding one. Cloke and Goldsmith have a list of requirements that a mentor must possess.

For the first requirement, Cloke and Goldsmith state that “mentors require a high level of self-awareness, insight, and understanding regarding their own strengths, weaknesses, and personal agendas” (123). In order for mentors to effectively advise their protégés, mentors must first be able to accurately identify and assess both strong and weak areas of their own personalities and leadership styles. Upon the identification and correction of their own weaker areas, mentors can better benefit their protégés.

The second requirement states that a mentor should possess a significant network of contacts (Cloke and Goldsmith 123). Since relationships are key to success, possessing a significant network is obviously a benefit to the mentors personally, but their networks also give their protégés crucial advantages since the protégés’ networks are not as established as the mentors’. Stone writes that mentors need to commit to building their networks to benefit their protégés (32).
Cloke and Goldsmith write that the third requirement for mentors is that they need to be emotionally intelligent, which includes being intuitive, empathetic, and patient (124). Protégés may not always be the first to talk about skill or cultural issues, so the mentor will need to be able to gauge when it is time to talk about such matters. Intuition enables mentors to know when to help their protégés and when to let their protégés go on their own. Intuition also helps the mentor figure out what stages in the mentoring process the protégé is in. Mentors need to know when to help their protégés up and when to let their protégés stand up on their own. Mentors also need to remember how they felt when they were in the protégés’ shoes years ago. By being empathetic, the mentor will be better able to truly help the protégé since the mentor will ask, “What did I want to know when I first started?”

Patience is also key for mentors since people learn at different rates. Another crucial element regarding patience is that mentors must be patient enough to allow their protégés to make mistakes. A lesson learned “the hard way” will usually stay with protégés far longer than the single act of passively receiving advice will allow.

The fourth requirement for mentors is that they need to understand their organization’s culture and the skills they use to operate within that culture. When mentors expose the inner workings of an organization’s culture, their protégés can make smarter decisions that will enable faster and more frequent successes (Cloke and Goldsmith 126). For example, mentors should teach their protégés who their organization’s power players are and how to work with those power players, so they will know who to go to in order to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Another example is that mentors will also be able to communicate their organizations’ values to their protégés so they will quickly learn where it is important to place one’s focus.
A fifth requirement, and certainly as important as Cloke and Goldsmith’s requirements, comes from Stone who writes that mentors must possess strong communication and interpersonal skills (9). A mentor should be an excellent active listener and be able to paraphrase what a speaker has just said to ensure communication (Stone 9). A mentor should also be able to communicate verbally and use body language well. Communication break-downs can quickly disintegrate a mentoring relationship.

Roles

Stone writes that mentors must fill three roles: role model, broker, and advocate (29-35). The broker refers to mentors actively working on increasing their networks for themselves and their protégés, a topic that has already been discussed.

As for the mentor’s responsibility towards being a role model, a protégé wants to emulate someone successful who has integrity, so the mentor needs to be setting a good example (Stone 29-30). Mentors need to “walk the talk,” as the saying goes, because the protégé is always watching the mentor’s actions. Mentors also need to be considerate of others’ feelings, be authentic, and be able to keep a protégé’s confidence (Stone 30). A mentor’s character ranks high, right beside communication skills and organizational knowledge. Since protégés are in such a developmental stage, a mentor’s character can heavily influence a protégé’s.

The third role mentors must fill is that of an advocate. For their protégés, mentors must give positive feedback, act as a cheerleader, and give constructive criticism when necessary (Stone 35). Mentors must be there for their protégés in order to build trust.

Benefits

At first glance, a mentoring relationship seems to benefit only protégés; however, being a mentor is highly rewarding and its challenging requirements test a mentor’s leadership abilities
and allow mentors to grow further as individuals. Mentoring relationships also enable mentors to look critically at their personal performance (Stone 4). Upon the identification and correction of their weaker areas, mentors can then grow personally as people and as leaders – so mentors learn from their protégés.

Mentors are also viewed as more valuable to their organizations compared to their colleagues who do not go the extra mile to become mentors (Stone 4). Mentors enable new employees or new members to become great assets to their respective companies and organizations, which in turn makes their companies and organizations more successful. This earns the mentor recognition in the organization for enabling that success.

**The Protégé**

*Requirements*

Obviously, as the leaders, mentors have specific character requirements; however, protégés also require specific character traits. Murray lists four requirements for protégés.

Murray’s first requirement is that protégés must possess a desire for self-growth (15). Mentoring relationships are designed to help the protégé grow. If protégés do not desire self-growth, they should not be entering into a mentoring relationship.

But a desire for self-growth is only the beginning. The second requirement is that a protégé must have a “willingness to assume responsibility for his or her own growth and development” (Murray 15). Not only must protégés desire self-growth, they must take it a step further and take responsibility for their own growth. The old adage rings true: “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” Only when protégés are personally willing to take responsibility for their self-growth will they be ready to accept the challenges and reap the rewards that mentoring relationships have to offer.
The third requirement for protégés is that they have “assessed and self-perceived growth potential” (Murray 15). Protégés must be able to recognize that they have the potential to experience enormous self-growth from mentoring relationships. But the protégé’s organization must also be able to recognize that the protégé has growth potential and is ready to learn.

Murray’s fourth requirement for protégés is that they must have a “receptivity to feedback and coaching” (15). The mentor is there to give feedback and advice to the protégé. If a protégé is not willing to obtain feedback, encouragement, and constructive criticism from the mentor, the mentoring relationship simply will not work.

Benefits

Protégés can gain obvious benefits from being in mentoring relationships. For example, Stone writes that protégés gain helpful career advice from their mentors, since mentors have already experienced what their protégés are currently going through (6). By receiving career advice, protégés can flatten their learning curves and achieve success and goals more rapidly.

Another way that mentoring relationships enable protégés to achieve the aforementioned benefits is that their mentors know how the organization really works (Stone 6). In other words, protégés learn the “inside scoop” from their mentors. Protégés learn from their mentors who the power players in the organization are, and will then know who to go to when certain tasks need to be accomplished. Protégés also learn about their organizations’ culture and values. Mentors teach protégés what the true focus of the organization is and how to properly act in particular situations. Protégés socialize much faster with a mentor, learning appropriate behaviors such as what type of humor the people in the organization appreciate and what topics are never to be discussed with certain members, which can be crucial when establishing relationships within an organization.
Protégés also benefit from their mentors’ network of contacts (Stone 6). Mentors, having been involved with the organization and profession longer, will have a larger network than will protégés. Mentors can put their protégés in contact with people who can further their development and create job opportunities. Mentors’ larger networks can help protégés establish and build their own networks.

Another benefit for protégés is that they receive performance feedback from their mentors (Stone 6). People cannot correct a mistake that they do not realize they are making. With the help of their mentors, protégés can make fewer mistakes, which will propel them forward more quickly in their organizations than their un-mentored peers.

Finally, protégés receive the comfort of knowing that their mentors are looking out for them in their new situations and organizations (Stone 6). Being the new person can be very lonely; mentors alleviate that loneliness. When protégés need advice, they always have someone to go to.

The Mentoring Program

Mentor Training

Training before beginning the mentoring program is crucial to its success. A formal meeting should be set aside with a presentation by a mentoring program expert. At the meeting, the leader of the mentoring program should give a program overview. The program overview should include information like character traits needed to be a mentor and a protégé, the expected level of commitment, expectations, and a summary of the policies of the program (Stone 151). Besides the program overview, mentors need to know what “stumbling blocks like miscommunication, neediness, interfering responsibilities, and productivity peaks and valleys”
can occur (Stone 151). This troubleshooting can prepare the mentors for possible issues before they occur and may even prevent some issues from occurring (Stone 151).

*The Stages of Mentoring*

Mentoring relationships move through four different phases. The first phase is identification, where both collaborate on what they want out of the relationship (Cloke and Goldsmith 121). The protégé will identify with and idolize the mentor, seeking the mentor’s approval and guidance (Smith 8). The protégé will emulate the mentor as much as possible, placing the mentor on a pedestal. In this stage, the mentor must provide a great deal of support to the protégé. Smith says that mentors should protect the reputation and self-worth of their protégés, praise when praise is earned, and inspire the protégés with stories (9).

In phase two, the growth phase, the protégé will begin to gain confidence and actively seek challenges (Smith 10). For example, the protégé will seek to attain leadership positions within the organization. At this stage, the mentor needs to provide challenges and support the protégé in developing strategies to deal with those challenges (Smith 10). During this phase, mentors remind protégés of their goals and commitment to excellence (Cloke and Goldsmith 121).

Stage three begins the separation of the mentor and protégé. The mentor, in order to help the protégé attain self-reliance, should begin to step back. For example, mentors should acknowledge the protégés’ concerns, but allow the protégés to address those concerns and fix situations on their own (Smith 12). The protégés’ behaviors will range from being angry at their mentors for “pulling away” to feeling confined by the mentoring relationship and choosing to distance themselves (Smith 11).
The final stage is mutuality, the end of the mentoring relationship (Smith 13). The protégé will want to redefine the relationship so that they are equals rather than protégé and mentor (Smith 13). The mentors will be able to observe their protégés' self-confidence in the way they move and speak (Smith 13). At this point, the mentor must step back even further. Mentors must show their protégés that they can stand alone and bring the relationship to a formal, empowering end (Cloke and Goldsmith 122). If the mentoring relationship does not come to a close, it can end up being an unhealthy crutch for the protégé (Cloke and Goldsmith 122). If this phase ends well, the protégé feels gratitude towards the mentor and values the entire mentoring relationship process (Smith 13).
The idea for creating a mentor program came from a conversation with Professor Robert Pritchard, fellow student Leigh Young, and myself during the 2004 spring semester. Leigh and I were reminiscing and thought about how much we would have appreciated having an upperclassman advise us as freshmen. From this, we came up with the idea for the Public Relations Student Society of America mentor program, which would become my senior honors project. Leigh and I would become co-mentoring directors until she graduated in December 2004. We each had particular projects that we were in charge of, with the other person helping the project leader when needed. Her project was the recruitment social at the beginning of the 2004 fall semester while mine was the mentoring program itself.

For the mentoring program, I first established the program’s goals, requirements and incentives. I had four goals for the program:

1. To create a PRSSA mentor project where mentor groups, consisting of PRSSA members paired as mentor and protégé, compete with other mentor groups for the most community service hours. No other PRSSA organization in the United States has created a program such as this.

2. To create mentor groups where PRSSA members can give and receive essential advice, thereby improving the quality of their experienced education.

3. To serve the Muncie community by doing community service.

4. To raise awareness of Ball State University’s chapter of PRSSA.

As for the requirements, each group had to do five hours of community service and attend the mentor group socials. The incentives consisted of earning PRSSA points, which is a system where members who attend and participate in PRSSA events earn recognition through amassing
points. (Those in the highest earned points bracket at the end of the year are recognized at the J-Gala, the journalism department’s awards banquet, and earn a certificate to place in their portfolios.) The other incentive included a prize for the group that did the most hours of community service.

I then began the recruiting process at the beginning of the fall semester. In order to recruit, I wrote an article for the chapter’s PRSSA Newsletter describing the new mentor program and its benefits (see Appendix A). At a general meeting, I handed out information slips to the membership (see Appendix B). Those who were interested filled out the slips and returned them to me Tuesday, September 28, 2004.

Once interested members returned their information slips, I divided the people into the “mentor” category or the “protégé” category (see Appendix C). As recommended by Stone, when creating the mentor and protégé groups, I did not create any cross-gender mentoring groups (125). Mentors were mostly juniors and seniors. They had been in PRSSA for awhile and were well-acquainted with the public relations department. Protégés were mostly freshmen and sophomores who were new or relatively new PRSSA members. Since some of the mentors were graduating in December 2004, I made notes of how the groups would adjust for the 2005 spring semester. Due to uneven numbers of mentors and protégés, some of the groups had one mentor to one protégé while others had one mentor to two protégés.

The number of people who showed interest in participating in the mentor program was a pleasant surprise. The total came to 24 individuals, including Leigh and myself.

The introductory meeting for the mentoring groups was at 8 p.m. on October 7, 2004. At the meeting, I announced the groups and explained the requirements for the program.
On Sunday, October 31, 2004 at 3 p.m., the mentors attended a training session taught by Kathy Smith, Associate Director of Leadership and Service Learning. She did her presentation entitled “Mentoring in the Moment” and the mentors filled out a mentoring profile assessment to discover where their strengths and weaknesses lay.

In late November, the mentoring groups participated in a scavenger hunt, which was the fall group social.

By the end of the semester, the mentors turned in their information logs about when they met with their protégés and how many hours of community service they accomplished. Judging by the mentors’ comments and my own group’s time constraints, I realized that I had made the requirements for the groups too steep. Nobody had enough time to complete the five hours of community service. In fact, nobody completed any community service hours; the groups had just met for lunch or coffee instead. Since no group completed any community service hours, no group received the award for most community service hours.

During winter break and after speaking with the PRSSA officers, I revamped the mentor group requirements for the spring semester. Still hoping to achieve the community service goal, I lowered the community service hour requirement to three instead of five. Upon the PRSSA officers’ suggestion, I reopened the mentoring program to the chapter members. I also contacted the fall semester’s participants to see if they still wanted to be members.

The result of losing a few participants due to busy schedules and gaining a few more participants from the general chapter membership was a restructuring of some of the mentor groups (see Appendix D). I moved two protégés, Jenny Rice and Jamie Wirtes, to the mentor role due to their excellent demonstration of leadership skills during the fall semester.
In order to keep the chapter updated on the progress of the mentoring program’s first year, I wrote another article for the chapter’s newsletter (see Appendix E).
Feedback and Anecdotal Results

As the final part of the mentoring program, I asked for and received feedback from the program participants. I asked the respondents to reply to questions that addressed what they would prefer to keep about the mentor program and what they would prefer to change about it.

Participants agreed that the mentor program was a great concept. Protégés and mentors agree that the program allowed them to make personal connections with each other. For the protégés, the program made them feel that they were valued members of PRSSA. One mentor mentioned that the program helped her break away from her circle of friends in order to get to know new members. As for feedback on the social, participants felt that the mentoring social was a fun and enjoyable part of the program.

Since they enjoyed the social, participants recommended that more socials be scheduled. Another suggestion was that the requirements were too steep for the participants’ busy schedules – many felt that the volunteering aspect was too much. One member suggested that maybe the entire program should volunteer as a group for a one-time event. The final suggestion was that mentors and protégés meet as separate groups throughout the year to discuss any positive or negative issues about the program.

As for anecdotal results and successes in the program, protégés became more involved in the public relations student organizations by taking on leadership positions. This was a wonderful example of how mentoring enables protégés’ to achieve success faster and easier. For example, three of the four PRSSA officer positions next year will be held by protégés from this year’s mentoring program. Listed below are a few of the protégés’ accomplishments while being involved in the mentoring program:
- Maggie Branson, who was not involved in PRSSA during the past school year, joined Cardinal Communications, the student-run public relations firm. She was initiated into Kappa Tau Alpha, a journalism and mass communication honor society, and is the PRSSA national conference chair for the 2005 to 2006 school year.

- Leah Logan joined the PRSSA executive board after only one semester as a protégé. She was also hired by Cardinal Communications.

- Protégé Jonathan Neal received his internship contact through his mentor during the first semester.

- Jenny Rice was a protégé her first semester in the mentoring program. After demonstrating her leadership skills, she became a mentor during the spring semester. She is the PRSSA president next year.

- Amy Rumschlag will be taking over my position as mentoring director for the 2005 to 2006 school year.

- Emily Sailor took on director positions for the PRSSA Regional Conference and the Chili Cook-Off. She was also an account executive, the second-in-command, for Cardinal Communications this year. She is the PRSSA secretary next year.

- Jamie Wirtes also demonstrated her leadership skills and showed excellent character during her first semester as a protégé. She became a mentor during the spring semester. After one semester in the mentoring program, she took on the position of PRSSA secretary for the following semester. She is PRSSA vice president for the 2005 to 2006 school year.
• Ali Zuidervliet was the co-chair for the PRSSA newsletter position on the executive board.
Lessons Learned

The participants’ feedback mirrored my own personal evaluations of the program. After cutting back on the group requirements for the spring semester, I decided to try the “hands-off” approach recommended by Cloke and Goldsmith that says, “Following training, mentors should be permitted to define and implement the program as they see fit, without interference or control from above” (120). I do not feel that this was the best decision. The “hands-off” approach may be better for an already established mentoring program, but not for a new program like this. Given the comments from the participants, they want scheduled activities and socials but not the volunteer requirements. If volunteering is important to PRSSA, the entire program could volunteer for a single event rather than individual groups volunteering for separate events. This would give the participants time to socialize with the entire group, which the feedback results suggested was an enjoyable and valuable part of the program. I suggest that the meeting requirements – minus the individual group volunteer expectations – be continued. The mentoring groups can choose to meet after the bi-weekly PRSSA meetings or during individually scheduled meeting times.

I would also create a protégé orientation session that would delineate the program’s expectations, policies, and time commitments. The mentors should continue to participate in the training session. Holding these sessions would ensure that mentors and protégés know the requirements and expectations of participating in the mentoring program. I would also recommend having Associate Director of Leadership and Service Learning, Kathy Smith, teach the sessions for the mentors and protégés.
Finally, I would also make the mentoring program a year-long commitment for mentors and protégés. The mentors and protégés would be able to create a stronger bond by being paired for a year rather than a semester.

I feel that the mentoring program went well for its maiden voyage. As with any new program, it had its growing pains; however, I believe the success of the program and its participants clearly demonstrates that the mentoring program is an essential element in the future success of the Ball State University’s chapter of PRSSA. The dramatic and rapid advancement of the underclassmen who were part of the mentoring program clearly mirrors the advantages and results of mentoring programs outlined in the leadership literature. As a result, I would most strongly recommend a continuation of the program within the chapter.
Appendix A

Fall PRSSA Newsletter Article

Mentor and protégé – you will probably be both at various times throughout your career. The relationship between the two is a special one. These close relationships will help you with questions, networking, projects, résumés, jobs, and getting insider information.

Not only will the PRSSA Mentor Program give you this, but it will take you one step further. You will receive the unique opportunity to give back to your community while you’re establishing meaningful relationships.

So what’s the PRSSA Mentor Program all about? Once you sign up, you will either be assigned to the role of mentor or protégé in a group. That group will consist of two to three people. To get the program underway, all of the groups will meet for an introductory meeting. Teams will sign up to perform a few hours of community service with Habitat for Humanity. After that, each group will choose an organization in Muncie and do community service work for that organization. Your team will compete against the other mentor groups to see which group can work the most community service hours.

Group members will be assigned roles. Old PRSSA members will be assigned the roles of mentors. If you’re a mentor, you know what’s going on. Remember all of the questions you had as a new member? Here’s your chance to help another person find answers. Oh, and let’s not forget about résumés. When potential future employers see that you were part of an official mentoring program, they’ll know that you are a leader and a team player.

New PRSSA members will be given roles as protégés. If you’re a protégé, here’s your chance to get the real insider answers to your questions. You’ll get answers to questions like: Where do I start when looking for an internship? How do I put my portfolio together? How do I make my résumé stand out from all of the others? Aside from having your questions answered, a mentor can help you navigate your way through your undergraduate career and beyond. Mentors also provide a whole new set of contacts for your personal network.

As for incentives, you get the chance to give back to your community. You’ll also get the opportunity to create meaningful relationships within your group. Don’t forget about how great community service looks on your résumé! Plus, each person will earn a significant amount of PRSSA points at the end of the year. The team with the most community service hours will also win prizes. In addition to all of this, you’ll be able to say that you were a part of Ball State University’s premier PRSSA Mentor Program, the first PRSSA program of its kind in the nation.
Appendix B

Information Slip

Please fill out and return the form below by **Tuesday, September 28** to Katie Boruvka or Leigh Young if you are interested in participating in the PRSSA Mentor Program as either a mentor or protégé. You may also e-mail your information to Katie at kjboruvka@bsu.edu. Thank you!

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Semester and year that you first became affiliated with PRSSA: __________________________

Phone: ___________________________ E-mail: ___________________________

Year in college: ___________________________ Major: ___________________________


Appendix C

Fall Semester Mentor Groups

*Dyads*

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<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Protégé</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katie Boruvka</td>
<td>Ali Zuidervliet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Midkiff</td>
<td>Amy Rumschlag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zach Edsall</td>
<td>Seth Bowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyson Runkle</td>
<td>Jonathan Neal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leigh Young</td>
<td>Chantal Brenton (will become a triad with</td>
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*Triads*

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Appendix D

Spring Semester Mentor Groups

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<td>Jaimie Wirtes</td>
<td>Amy Rumschlag and Katie Lenover</td>
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Appendix E

Spring PRSSA Newsletter Article

The mentor program is off to a great start for the spring semester! Three new protégés joined the program this semester – Tabitha Clarkston, Claire Gallam, and Katie Lenover. They’ll be wonderful additions to the program.

Some of the requirements for the individual groups have changed since the program’s maiden voyage last semester. Since everybody’s schedules are so busy, the teams will only have to meet five times during the semester. Two of these will already be taken care of simply by attending the two mentor program socials.

For the remaining three meetings, each group is asked to complete three hours of community service together. Groups will choose an organization in Muncie to volunteer for.

The program has already experienced marked success after only one semester. Many of the protégés from last semester stepped into leadership positions on PRSSA’s E-board. One protégé even found an internship with the help of his mentor.
Bibliography


