

# AMHERST COLLEGE PATHWAYS

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## **MENTEE Quick Start Guide**

*An Amherst mentor is a guide, a friend and a resource.*

AMHERST COLLEGE



## Sample Mentoring Topics

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**What to discuss:** You can explore a range of academic and professional topics with your Pathways mentor. If you are having trouble deciding what to focus on, you can look to the table below for some sample ideas.

If you want to focus on figuring out who you are, what matters to you, and how these inform your choices, you might concentrate on **Self-reflection**. If you want to learn more about what opportunities are out there in the world, you might concentrate on **Exploration**. If you are looking for guidance on taking concrete steps toward a goal, you might concentrate on **Action**. Of course, there is much overlap between the topics below, so don't be afraid to blend them together in whichever way works best for you!

<b>SELF-REFLECTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exploring your values, skills, and interests.</li><li>• Reflecting on what kind of professional and/or academic environments might fit with your personality.</li><li>• Identifying and understanding the family, cultural, and/or societal influences that shape your decision-making.</li><li>• Drawing connections between your interests, skills, and experiences.</li></ul>
<b>EXPLORATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Researching different major and/or career options.</li><li>• Networking with professionals to learn about their work and build professional relationships.</li><li>• Learning about leadership, including different definitions, styles, and examples.</li><li>• Learning about professional behavior and skills.</li><li>• Finding out how studying abroad fits in with your academic and/or career goals.</li><li>• Investigating the needs of your communities and how you can help serve them.</li></ul>
<b>ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing good academic habits and study skills.</li><li>• Making the most of your major.</li><li>• Balancing academics with extracurricular activities, volunteer work, and/or part-time jobs.</li><li>• Engaging in a job or internship search.</li><li>• Navigating a study abroad experience.</li><li>• Writing a senior thesis.</li><li>• Pursuing graduate school.</li></ul>





## Reflective Questions

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**Reflect on critical questions:** Strong mentors will encourage you to think deeply and reflect on the issues and experiences you share with them. The questions below may help you think about how to have a more critical conversation with your mentor ahead of your meetings. The more you are able to share with your mentors, the better guidance they will be able to offer.

- What are your strengths?
- What do you find difficult?
- Whom do you look to as a role model?
- Where do you see yourself in 6 months? A year?
- When are you happiest? Most productive?
- What do you love?
- What do you value?
- What do you dream about?
- What do you worry about?
- What are your talents?
- What do you want to achieve now and in the future?
- What is your desired goal?
- When do you realistically expect to achieve your goal?
- What intermediate steps or goals can you identify?
- How important is achieving your goal?
- What will success look like?
- So what happened? Tell me about it.
- What led up to the situation?
- What details can you provide?
- What is your intent?
- What role did you play in the situation?
- What is the challenge or obstacle?
- Who else is involved in or affected by this situation?
- What have you attempted so far?
- What has prevented you from success?
- How much control do you have over the outcome?
- What resources do you need in order to move forward?
- What important facts should you consider before moving forward?
- Are there different ways to achieve your goal?
- How can you get started?
- Who could help you?
- What options have you decided to pursue?
- How much of your goal will this option achieve?
- What criteria will you use to measure success and progress?
- What are your next steps?
- What are your concerns?
- What resistance or challenges do you expect?
- How will you overcome those challenges or resistance?
- How committed are you to taking action?
- Is anything preventing you from taking action?





## First Meeting Agenda Sample

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### Introductions

- Exchange bios, resumes, and share a brief history of your experience.
- If comfortable, provide personal information like hobbies, passions, etc.
- Establish rapport by identifying points of connection and exchanging information.

### Discuss Mentoring

- What words come to mind when you think of mentoring?
- Have you ever been engaged in a mentoring partnership before? Describe the circumstances.
- What have you learned or gained from a previous mentoring experience?
- What is your preferred style for learning new things?

### Determine Goals

- What do you want to learn from this experience?
- Articulate goals using the SMART model—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

### Determine Expectations

- What do you want out of the mentoring partnership?
- What does a successful mentoring relationship look like?
- Who will be responsible for scheduling meetings?
- How often will you meet and for how long?
- Who will run the meetings? Will there be an agenda?
- Will you correspond in between meetings? How often?
- How will you manage time conflicts with scheduled meetings?

### Discuss Ground Rules

- Where do you define boundaries (time availability, etc.)?
- Discuss guidelines around confidentiality. What does confidentiality mean?
- What topics are off-limits?
- What are your personal values?
- How do you define respect? How will you respect one another's time? Values? Limits?

### Complete the Mentoring Partnership Agreement

- Fill out the template using the information discussed above.
- Both participants sign and keep a copy of the agreement for their records.





## Mentoring Partnership Agreement

**Mentoring Term** (Start – End Date): \_\_\_\_\_

### Meeting Schedule

Responsibility for setting meetings: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency and duration: \_\_\_\_\_

How will schedule conflicts be managed: \_\_\_\_\_

### SMART Goals

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### Partnership Expectations

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**Ground Rules** (e.g. confidentiality, respect, boundaries, values, limits, vulnerability)

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### Communicating Feedback Guidelines

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We agree to honor the agreement as outlined above and will assess our progress on the following date, \_\_\_\_\_, as well as at the scheduled conclusion of the partnership. At that time we may enter into a new mentoring agreement if both partners agree to it. If we decide to end the partnership prior to the scheduled conclusion, we will appropriately notify one another and the Career Center.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Discussion Guide

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### Suggested Activity

1. Your mentor may ask you to develop a personal vision statement.
  - a. Think about where you want to be five years from now.
  - b. What steps may be necessary in order to get there?
  - c. What is your “personal brand”?
  - d. What is your value proposition or what sets you apart from others?
  - e. What kind of impact do you want to have on others?
2. Write out the vision to discuss in the next meeting.
3. Use the vision statement to develop goals and create an action plan.

### Review Previous Meeting

- Review action items from previous meeting.
- What progress was made on those items?
- What insight or learning was gained in the process?

### Current Meeting

- Define goal: What is the objective? How does this relate to the final goal?
- Define the situation: What are the facts? Context? Who is involved?
- Define options: What can you do? What are alternatives?
- Create action plans: What actions will you take? How will you overcome obstacles? When will you do this?

### Meeting Debrief

- What was helpful? Why or how?
- Is there anything that should be done differently?
- What did you learn?
- What worked well?
- Revisit goals, expectations, ground rules, and communication guidelines from partnership agreement.
- Update mentoring partnership if necessary.

### Next Meeting

- Determine action items for next meeting.

### On Your Own

- Reflect on each meeting.
- Journal ideas, revelations, reflections, and insights between meetings.

