



RUNSTAD DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
College of Built Environments



BSRE UNDERGRAD

MENTOR/ MENTEE HANDBOOK



<https://re.be.uw.edu/>

UW BSRE Mentorship Program Guidelines 2025-2026

Program Overview

Purpose

The Mentorship Program aims to foster professional and personal growth by pairing students with experienced mentors in the real estate industry. Through regular meetings, participants will gain insights into career development, industry trends, and skills enhancement, and build their professional network. The goal is to support mentees in navigating their career journey, refining their career aspirations, and enhancing their knowledge of the real estate industry.

Duration and Commitment

The mentorship program will last a maximum of **9 months**, from October to June. Mentors and mentees are expected to meet at least **once per quarter**. Meetings can be held in-person or virtually, depending on the preferences and location of both mentor and mentee. Each meeting is expected to last between **30–60 minutes** or longer depending on availability. Mentors and mentees should discuss **mentorship agreement** during the first meeting and follow this agreement throughout the program. In addition, mentees should plan to spend time on preparatory work, such as goal-setting or research between meetings.

Schedule of Events

An in-person meeting is organized by the department each quarter. The exact dates and times will be communicated later via email.

1. Mandatory Info-Session for mentees (early October) [mentees only]
2. First Mentor-Mentee Gathering (mid-October)
3. Undergraduate and Graduate Mentor-Mentee Social Event (mid-February)
4. Department Graduation with Mentors (June) [for graduating students]

Roles and Expectations

Student

- Attend mandatory introductory meeting and as many events as possible
- Take the initiative to schedule and arrange meetings with your mentor
- Respond in a timely fashion (within 24-48 hours)
- Show respect to mentor's time
- Come prepared to discuss your needs and expectations with your mentor
- Be committed to carry out agreed-upon goals
- Practice curiosity and active listening
- Be receptive to suggestions and feedback. Actively seek feedback.
- Network through your mentor to meet other professionals and gain access to resources
- Show appreciation for your mentor's support and assistance

Mentor

- Establish realistic and achievable goals with the student and identify ways to achieve them
- Offer constructive suggestions and feedback on their resume or other application materials
- Help student meet with other professionals in desired field within real estate industry
- Increase student's awareness of professional associations and related resources
- Ask reflective questions to help student explore their own values and needs
- Encourage student to explore possible career paths
- Be willing to adjust your goals as student changes interests during — or as a result of — this opportunity for career exploration

Both

- Set goals for the mentorship together and actively work towards achieving those goals
- Try to talk or meet at least twice per quarter

Goal Setting

Setting goals helps provide direction and creates a way to stay focused on what you wish to accomplish. As you set goals you define where you want to be.

Take some time to think about the goals the student wishes to accomplish throughout the mentorship and determine how the mentor can be a helpful resource. The SMART guidelines will help you set effective goals that include a timeline. You can aim for 3-4 SMART goals for this mentorship program.

SPECIFIC	Describe your goals and the steps you'll take to achieve them in detail
MEASURABLE	Quantify your goals so that they are measurable
ACHIEVABLE	Ensure that your goals are within reach given the resources at hand
RELEVANT	Identify the benefits of achieving your goals
TIME-BOUND	Include a reasonable timeline for completion

Sample Mentee Goals:

- Optimize LinkedIn profile, write three posts about mentorship learnings, and engage with industry content weekly
- Conduct a market analysis of a specific real estate sector (residential, commercial, or industrial) and present findings to the mentor in 3 months
- Attend at least three real estate networking events or conferences and make minimum 10 connections by the end of the mentorship program
- Identify and apply to at least 10 internships or entry-level roles with mentor guidance in months 6-9
- Work with mentor to tailor resume for real estate roles and conduct at least three mock interviews in months 7-9
- Learn how to use real estate investment analysis tools (Excel, Argus, or CoStar) and build a financial model for a property investment

Suggested Activities

(depending on time and availability at least two of the below should be explored)

First Meeting

- Discuss backgrounds, current (or desired) career path, interests, skills, hobbies, dreams to get to know each other
- Discuss mentorship agreements (expectations, communication preferences, email or message response time, duration and frequency of meetings, convenient times, etc.)
- Set goals for the mentorship
- Arrange future meeting dates and times if possible

Career Conversations

- Identify student's talents, skills, and interests and discuss their application to various career options
- Discuss how mentor's personal and professional life fit together
- Discuss mentor's educational background and educational preparation needed for the field
- Discuss employer types and organizational culture
- Discuss how your individual values have impacted your career choices
- Investigate discipline-related clubs and organizations
- Discuss a current event, issue, or recent research in your field
- Discuss current real estate market, emerging or alternative career paths, and strategies for adaptation
- Discuss skills and typical tasks of particular roles of student's interest
- Discuss professional standards and unspoken rules of etiquette that exist in your field or workplace
- Discuss the transition from school to work and identify ways to help the process run smoothly
- Search the Internet together for job resources and other information related to your field
- Go out to lunch or dinner and discuss proper etiquette for a business lunch
- Company tour, learn about the company, role of the mentor, meet colleagues, and, if appropriate, sit in on a meeting

Resume / Interview Activities

- Critique the student's resume, cover letter, portfolio, or projects
- Practice for a job interview or arrange for a mock interview with a professional colleague
- Review LinkedIn profile and suggest personal branding strategies

Expand Professional Networks

- Compile a list of contacts the student could meet with in the mentor's field
- Attend a networking event together
- Practice for and schedule informational interviews
- Help arrange informational interviews for student with colleagues or others in the field
- Prepare an elevator pitch for networking situations
- Provide guidance on professional LinkedIn etiquette, including how to connect and engage with industry leaders
- Attend a professional meeting, conference, or program together

- Participate in a company tour or attend a professional recruiting career event
- Participate in a job shadow day
- Connect with other Runstad Department alumni through the Alumni Chair or LinkedIn

Events or Activities

- Co-work together for the morning/afternoon/day
- Attend a lecture, concert, or sporting event together
- Critique a school project the student is involved with for a class
- Practice for a presentation; help student refine presentation skills
- Discuss industry podcasts, books, or reports
- Discuss real estate case competitions, hackathons, or local projects

End of Mentorship Program

- Send a thank-you email to the mentor at the end of the program. Invite for a coffee as a thank-you if applicable
- Stay connected with the mentor after the program, connect on LinkedIn, show active and passive following (like posts, post comments, share your career updates, how their guidance helped you, relevant articles, etc.), reach out every few months if you have updates, etc.

Student Resources and Tips

General Tips

- Try to respond to your mentor within 24-48 hours
- Keep messages/emails concise and professional
- Be respectful of your mentor and their time, follow the agreement throughout the mentorship program. Be flexible and considerate of their schedule
- Arrange meetings at least a week before, send calendar invites (with meeting location/zoom link depending on the agreed format) and an email with meeting details
- It is okay to be unsure about your career goals right now! You have a chance to explore it with your mentor but make sure to set clear goals for this mentorship program
- Spend some time before your meetings. Be prepared. Prepare questions to discuss and a meeting agenda
- Remember, your mentor is not expected to offer you a job or internship or solve all of your problems. Try to be realistic about being in a mentorship relationship

Email Templates

(these emails are only templates that you can use. Feel free to adapt as needed.)

Arranging the first meeting

Subject: BSRE Mentorship Program - Meeting arrangements

Dear [Mentor's Name],

My name is [Your Name], a BS [majoring/minoring] in Real Estate, and I feel honored to be selected to be your mentee as part of the BSRE Mentorship Program. I truly appreciate the opportunity to work with you throughout the program.

I would love to set up a time for our first meeting. I am available on [Your Availability]. Please let me know your availability and preferred setting (place/zoom). I'd be happy to take care of the arrangements to ensure it's convenient for you.

My contacts are: [Your Email and Phone].

Looking forward to our first meeting!

*Best regards,
[Your Name]*

Arranging other meetings

Hi [Mentor's Name],

I hope you're doing well. Thank you again for our last meeting—it was great connecting and learning more about you. I especially appreciated our discussion on [mention key takeaway or topic discussed], and I'm looking forward to working on our set goals.

For our next meeting, I'd love to discuss [proposed or agreed-upon topics]. Based on our availability, I propose meeting on [suggest date and time] via [zoom/location]. Please let me know if this works for you or if you'd prefer a different time or format.

Looking forward to continuing our discussions!

*Best,
[Your Name]*

Example Questions To Ask From a Mentor

Career Path and Industry Insights

- What inspired you to pursue a career in real estate?
- How did you get started in the industry, and what were your biggest challenges?
- What are some key trends currently shaping the real estate market?
- What skills or knowledge do you think are most valuable for success in real estate?
- How do you stay updated on market trends and industry changes?
- Can you share a challenging deal or project from your experience and describe how you navigated through the obstacles?
- What lessons from a past real estate transaction would you consider essential for someone entering the industry?

Education and Skill Development

- Are there any specific courses, certifications, or licenses that you recommend?
- What technical skills (e.g., data analysis, financial modeling) should I focus on developing?
- How important is networking in real estate, and how can I build strong professional connections?
- What strategies have you found effective for building long-term relationships with brokers, investors, and other industry professionals?
- How did you initially break into the industry, and what advice do you have for establishing a strong professional network early on?
- Can you recommend any books, podcasts, or online resources for learning more about real estate?

Career Growth and Job Opportunities

- What are the best entry-level jobs or internships for someone starting in real estate?
- What qualities do employers look for in new hires in the real estate industry?
- What advice would you give for standing out in job applications and interviews?
- How can I transition into different areas of real estate, such as investment, development, or brokerage?

Practical Industry Knowledge

- What factors should I consider when analyzing a property for investment?
- How do you assess market conditions when making real estate decisions?
- Can you walk me through a typical real estate transaction process?
- What are the biggest mistakes new professionals make in real estate, and how can I avoid them?
- What specific market indicators do you monitor regularly, and how do you interpret their impact on property values?
- Can you share an example of a recent market trend and how it influenced your investment decisions?
- Which valuation methods (e.g., discounted cash flow, comparative market analysis) do you find most effective in the current market?
- How do you adjust your valuation approach in areas with rapidly changing demographics or economic conditions?
- How is PropTech, such as AI-driven analytics or virtual tours, reshaping the way you evaluate or manage properties?
- Are there any specific tools or software platforms that you recommend for someone starting out in real estate analysis?
- Could you walk me through your process for assessing risk on a potential real estate investment?
- How do you balance risk and opportunity when deciding whether to invest in a property or a market segment?

Entrepreneurship and Long-Term Planning

- What are the key steps to starting my own real estate business?
- How do you build and maintain relationships with clients and investors?
- What are some financial strategies for long-term success in real estate?
- If you could go back and give your younger self one piece of career advice, what would it be?

Meeting Checklist

Before meeting

- Research your mentor's background, current career, projects, and any other relevant information
- Start a mentorship document, journal, diary, or drive to take notes, document progress and meeting takeaways
- Prepare discussion topics, questions, and an agenda
- Send an email with meeting arrangements (date, time, location or zoom link) and discussion topics
- Send a calendar invite (with a possible title 'Your Name/Mentor's Name meeting') with Zoom link or location included

During meeting

- Be 5-10 minutes earlier at the arranged location
- Maintain a positive and engaging attitude
- Start with a quick update: progress on goals, projects, new interests, challenges, etc.
- Ask questions and facilitate conversation
- Take notes
- Wrap up the meeting: summarize key takeaways, discuss activities and/or topics for the next meeting, next meeting arrangements, tasks to complete if any, and express gratitude for their time and advice

Sample wrap-up statement:

(This is a sample wrap-up statement. You do not have to memorize)

Thank you so much for your time today. I really appreciate the insights you've shared, especially about _____. It was helpful to get your perspective on _____. For the next meeting, we agreed to work on _____. I'll make sure to work on _____ before our next meeting. I will send the next meeting arrangements shortly. Thanks again for your guidance, I truly appreciate it.

After meeting

- Send a thank-you email or message
- Go over notes from last meetings
- Complete any assigned tasks

- Create an action plan to share with your mentor if applicable
- Prepare for the next meeting

Recommended Resources

- [What is mentorship? Mentorship vs sponsorship vs coaching](#)
- [Networking strategy, framework, and example message request for a meeting](#)
- [Email template requesting an informational interview](#)
- [Informational interview tips](#)
- [Asking for an email introduction](#)
- [Networking strategies for Real Estate professionals](#)