



International Buddy Program

Mentor Guide
<2020-2021>

International Buddy Program Mentor Guide

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1. Introduction

International Buddy Program is a campus life program under the International Students and Scholars Services. Established in the 1950s, the International Buddy Program, also known as IBP, has gone through multiple changes to better connect cultural differences. Originally called the international friendship group, the program obtained its current name in 2009.

The fundamental goal of the program is to ease the transition of new international undergraduate students. IBP pairs up incoming international students- both freshmen and transfer students- with the current UMN students to help new international students to be adjusted to a new environment which is challenging and exciting at the same time. The mentorship program runs through from the beginning of July to May. Mentors are students who are currently registered to the University of Minnesota and have a living experience in the Twin-Cities area for a year minimum. Buddies are new international students; international students who are in their first year at the University of Minnesota are welcome to join the program regardless of their class. The program serves 200 students- 50 mentors 150 buddies- each semester with special social events and helpful resources. Through the mentorship program, we expect both international and domestic student to:

- Actively interact with other students from different cultural background by providing a safe and open space for cultural exchange
- Build a supportive community for the transition of new international undergraduate students on campus
- Be initiatives that create a safer and more inclusive campus community changing campus climate and clearing out cultural barriers
- Build cultural competency that is essential to be a global citizen
- challenge themselves to take a personal investment in supporting others regardless of cultural difference
- Improve interpersonal cross-cultural communication skills being exposed to a culturally diverse environment
- Develop respect to one another from different cultural resolving misunderstandings and expanding social knowledge

We work to provide students with diverse cultural experiences and recognize their role in creating an inclusive climate within the campus community. Therefore, the program encourages mutual interaction between students regardless of where they are from or where they feel home by providing a mutual connection with the name of the IBP Mentorship program. Many of these relationships have proven to be enriching and longstanding. IBP ultimately aspires to raise

cultural awareness within the campus community and to promote cultural competency that goes beyond the college experience.

*** IBP is committed to a policy of anti-harassment and nondiscrimination for all participating students no matter what.** For more comprehensive information, please access to https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/2019-09/policy_equity_diversity_equal_opportunity_and_affirmative_action.pdf

2. What Is Mentoring and What Is Not:

Mentoring IS:

- Sharing your campus life experience
- Being open minded
- Being culturally embracive
- Expanding your personal network
- Improving communication skills
- Developing interpersonal skills
- Expanding one's worldview

Mentoring is NOT:

- Effortless
- A therapy
- An advising service or tutoring
- A supervision

3. Mentoring Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Encourage your buddies to take initiative with the mentoring relationship

- Be open to buddies' ideas and discussion topics
- Be explicit about your time constraints
- Ask before making a suggest/giving feedback

Don't:

- Assume your suggestions/advices will be followed
- Expect your buddies do not need encouragement or reinforcement
- Avoid discussion of touchy subjects (will explain further)
- End the mentoring relationship without letting IBP board members know
- Avoid communicating problems in the mentorship program with IBP board members

4. IBP Definition of Good Mentorship

What does a successful mentoring relationship look like?

- Mentor is willing to offer helpful advices/suggestions and share experiences to mentees
- Both mentors and buddies feel comfortable sharing ideas with each other
- Mentor and buddies are responsive in communication
- Mentor and buddies attend IBP events or other social events together
- A good connection between the mentor and buddies
- Both the mentor and buddies think this mentorship relationship fulfills their needs and expectations

5. Qualification for Mentors

- **Self-Awareness**
You should have a good understanding of your own strength
- **Accessibility**
You should be willing and able to commit sufficient time to your buddies to offer them support and guidance

- **Communication**
You need to have a good communication skill and be able to understand the ideas and feelings of others. We also require you to be a great listener
- **A desire to help others develop**
You should understand how individuals develop and have experience, either formally or informally in helping others develop
- **Inventiveness**
To be open minded, accept new ways of doing things
- **Empathy**
Ability to empathize with others
- **Understanding**
You are expected to understand different perspectives, approaches, and possibly backgrounds of different buddies
- **Ability to empower**
You should be able to create a comfortable environment where it is safe for buddies to step out from their comfort zone and try out different things
- **Knowledgeable**
You should know how to get things done at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and how things work

6. Communication with Buddies

Suggestions on discussion prompts

- How to achieve great academic performance?
 - Academic planning advice, course feedback if applicable
- How to live on the campus? How's living in Twin-Cities?
 - Mentors are highly encouraged to refer to the IBP Live a Little in Twin-Cities Facebook post series
- Where to buy books, winter supplies, and to go groceries?
- Where to study, visit (museum, theater, coffee shop, ect.)
- Useful campus resources?
 - Academic advisors/ career advisors?
 - Campus connectors?
 - One-stop resources?

- Mental health issue/feeling stressed?

Media to communicate with buddies

- We do not limit the communication channel. Mentors and buddies can feel free to find their communication channel that works best for them. However, IBP highly encourages mentors and buddies to exchange their phone number for efficient communication, once buddies arrive in MN and get a sim card.
- One thing to note is that students are not allowed to use Gmail in China. Therefore, if you have buddies residing in China, please use other alternatives, Zoom, WeChat, for example .

How frequent should you reach out to your buddies?

- In the first month of their arrival, communicate with buddies every week- afterwards, please do every two weeks at least
- Meet with your buddies in-person at least once a month, until the end of academic year (Fall semester + Spring semester)

7. Requirements for Mentors

- Check-in with the buddies once a week via Text or email in the first month of their arrival- afterwards, every two weeks
- Meet buddies in person at least once a month
- Submit the IBP mentorship hang-out form every time you meet buddies
- Submit the IBP Mentorship Agreement and the Action Plan
- Attend mentor in-person check-in
- Attend the Cross-cultural Leadership Retreat at the beginning of the fall semester
- Attend the first IBP event on the first Friday of the fall semester

*** IBP board members will gradually notify mentors if they do not meet requirements and expectations. Mentors are expected to adjust their behavior and reach out for help if needed. In the case IBP does not see the change in mentors' behaviors overtime, they are subject to be disqualified.**

8. How To Kick-Off The Mentorship

Before the first in-person meeting with buddies:

- Mentors should send out the first email to their buddies
 - Email template is provided at the end of the mentor guide
- Read through the IBP Mentor Guide and clearly understand the program
 - Please do not hesitate to email IBP, if you have questions or concerns
- Response to your buddies' emails or texts within 72 hours
- Keep being responsive in communications

During your first meeting with your buddies:

- Clearly define the relationship to meet the expectation of both buddies and yourself
 - Please feel free to use the Mentorship Agreement Contract as a mutual agreement to manage the relationship
- Complete the Action Plan together
 - Take time to discuss each others' needs, goals, and time commitment to the mentorshiping program
- Take a photo for the IBP Mentorship Hang-out Google Form

9. Recommendations on What Mentors and Buddies Can Do Together

- Things Mentors and Buddies can do together:
 - Have a campus-tour together before the beginning of the semester
 - Attend IBP events throughout the semester and enjoy free food

- Take short trip to Minnehaha Fall, Chicago, Duluth, etc, during the spring break
- Get volunteer experiences together at local art museums such as Walker and Minneapolis Institute of Art (MIA)
- Go shopping for winter apparel at Twin Cities Outlets, Mall of America, etc
- Study and chat at cafe near campus

10. Campus Resources

- ISSS (International Student and Scholar Services) - <https://iss.umn.edu/>
 - When will I refer to this resource?
 - When you buddies ask questions related to VISAs, OPT, going back home, international traveling, working, getting a social security number, scams, ect.
- Boynton Health - <https://boynton.umn.edu/>
 - When will I refer to this resource?
 - When your buddies ask about health related problems, sexual health, flu shots,
- Student Counseling Services (SCS) - <https://counseling.umn.edu/>
- OneStop - <https://onestop.umn.edu/>
- Student Jobs - <https://humanresources.umn.edu/student-jobs/find-student-job>
- Writing Center - <http://writing.umn.edu/>
- Student English Language Support - <https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/sels/>
- Gopher Link - <https://gopherlink.umn.edu/organizations>
- Center for Community-Engaged Learning (CCEL) - <https://ccel.umn.edu/>
- CLA Career Services / Other College Career Services
- CAPE (Center for Academic Planning and Exploration) - <http://www.cape.umn.edu/>
- Academic Advisor (MLK, CLA, Carlson, CSE, CFANS, CDES, CEHD, CBS)
- Student Unions & Activities (SUA) - <https://sua.umn.edu/>
- MDining - <http://www.dining.umn.edu/>
- Community Advisor (if the buddies are living in university housing and have one)
- Health Advocates (if the buddies are living in university housing and have one)
- Tandem Plus - <https://tandem.umn.edu/>

11. Email Templates

Introducing Yourself to Your Buddies

Things to include in your email:

- Introduce yourself
- Why you joined IBP and what you're looking forward to doing
- Method of communication you'd like (texting, GroupMe, emails)
- Be open to questions and concerns buddies might have
- Be mindful of buddies' situations. They might not be in the US, they might not have a US phone number yet, ect.

Hello [name of your buddies],

My name is [your name] and I am a [school year] studying [(intended) major, minors]. I am more than excited to be your mentor for the year and learn about your cultures, backgrounds, and languages while helping you navigate your new life on UMN campus. I would love to help you with [things you would feel comfortable doing for or with your buddies]. I love [your hobbies].

I prefer [method of communications you prefer]. If there is a preferred method you would like to use, feel free to let me know. I can't wait to see you in person and talk more about IBP and anything in general! Let me know when you will be on campus and when you are free so we can set up a time to hang out. Please feel free to ask me any questions or tell me any concerns you have even prior to coming to Minnesota. Safe travels and I hope to hear from you soon!

Best wishes,
[your name]

Example:

Hello Luenna and Rebecca,

My name is Seoyeon and I am a Sophomore studying Psychology and Strategic Communication focusing on advertising. I am more than excited to be your mentor for the year and learn about your cultures, backgrounds, and languages while helping you navigate your new life on UMN

campus. I would love to help you with talking about cultural differences, finding places on campus, going to events together, and sharing my experience so far at the U. I love dancing and photography. I watch a lot of shows and movies too.

I prefer to use GroupMe since we are a group of 3 or group text. My phone number is 612-***-****. Feel free to text me your name when you get a chance to. If there is a preferred method you would like to use, feel free to let me know. I can't wait to see you in person and talk more about IBP and anything in general! Let me know when you will be on campus and when you are free so we can set up a time to hang out. Please feel free to ask me any questions or tell me any concerns you have even prior to coming to Minnesota. Safe travels and I hope to hear from you soon!

Best wishes,
Seoyeon

Monthly Check Up

Things to include in the email:

- Some update of your own life
- Asking how the buddies are doing
- Asking the buddies to meet up in ways you are comfortable with

Hi [names of buddies],

It's been [the amount of weeks or months it has passed] since school started. I hope you are doing well and that school is going great. I have been [what you have been doing for the past few weeks]. I'm just wondering how you're doing so far with school, finding community, and adjusting to the U as a whole. If you need anything at all, please feel free to contact me! And here is my schedule for the semester so if you want to grab lunch, tea/coffee, or chat in between classes!

Best wishes,
[your name]

Example:

Hi Luenna and Rebecca,

It's been a month since school started. I hope you are doing well and that school is going great. I have been working, doing school, and finding more community on campus. I'm just wondering how you're doing so far with school, finding community, and adjusting to the U as a whole. If you need anything at all, please feel free to contact me! And here is my schedule for the semester so if you want to grab lunch, tea/coffee, or chat in between classes!

Best wishes,
Seoyeon

End of the Year Email

Things to include in the email:

- Talk about how you want the relationship to be in the future with your buddies after the program ends
- Thank the buddies for how they helped you learn and grow for the year

Hi [you buddies' names],

You made it to the end of the year! I am so happy that we did this together by growing with and learning from each other. I am truly grateful for all the experiences we had together as a mentor and buddies. I've learned [things you've learned in the past year]. I've grown in ways that I wouldn't have been able to without you as my buddies. Although the IBP program ends here, I will always be your friend, your resource, and you place to talk to about anything you have in mind. If you loved being a part of IBP, consider being a mentor yourself next year. It's been an eye-opening year all thanks to you and I will always have a special place in my heart for IBP. Thank you all so much for this wonderful experience and I hope to hear from you again in the near future. Thank you again and take care!

Best regards,
[your name]

Example:

Hi Rebecca and Luenna,

You made it to the end of the year! I am so happy that we did this together by growing with and learning from each other. I am truly grateful for all the experiences we had together as a mentor and buddies. I've learned Chinese culture and how to make Korean food. I now know how I can interact with others from different backgrounds and be open-minded to new cultures and identities. I've grown in ways that I wouldn't have been able to without you as my buddies. Although the IBP program ends here, I will always be your friend, your resource, and you place to talk to about anything you have in mind. If you loved being a part of IBP, consider being a mentor yourself next year. It's been an eye-opening year all thanks to you and I will always have a special place in my heart for IBP. Thank you all so much for this wonderful experience and I hope to hear from you again in the near future. Thank you again and take care!

Best regards,
Seoyeon

Mentorship Agreement Contract

Date: _____

I have read and understood the expectations outlined in the mentor guide. I will do my best to contribute to the effectiveness of the International Buddy Program (IBP). I understand that it is my responsibility to sustain communication with my buddies, as well as set up meeting times and keep record of these interactions. In addition, as a qualified mentor, I need to fulfill all the required responsibilities listed in the mentor guide.

I will participate in activities, programs and workshops as they relate to this program to the best of my ability. I will refrain from behavior that endangers the safety and wellbeing of my buddies or fellow mentors, and adhere to the nondiscrimination policy outlined by the program. If I am unable or unwilling to adhere to the policy therein, I understand that I will be asked to leave the program. I will uphold and fulfill the mission of the IBP program, and abide by the expectations of me held by the IBP board and the people involved in the program as a whole.

Mentors disqualification process:

- IBP will gradually notify mentors if they do not meet the requirements and expectations
- Mentors should adjust their behaviors and reach out for help if needed
- If IBP does not see the change in mentors' behaviors overtime, their mentor status will be disqualified and the buddies will be reassigned
- Mentors who are disqualified can re-apply to be mentors for the coming semesters but their previous performance will affect their candidacy

IBP Mentor Printed Name

IBP Mentor Signature

Date

Please list any concerns related to the program or your position
