

The Norco College Success Network is an online registry of committed people who are willing to help Norco College students achieve their personal, academic, and career goals.

The Success Network “mentors” are a group of faculty advisors, peer mentors, alumni, professionals from various fields, and others who would like to share their educational and career experiences with current students. The mentors have registered for the Success Network to give their time and advice to serious students by answering questions, supporting academic goals, enhancing skills and knowledge, establishing a professional network, building self-confidence, and exploring career interests.

In return, participating students are simply asked to listen, discuss, and learn. While mentors do not have all of the answers, they can play a valuable role in helping you make important career decisions.

The following explains the guidelines for using the Success Network to connect with mentors.

## **Terms of Use**

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By participating in the Norco College Success Network, you acknowledge that you have read the following disclaimer and agree to abide by the guidelines specified herein.

You understand that Norco College Success Network “mentors” provide informal advice and guidance based on their personal experiences and may or may not be employees of the college. Any opinions expressed by mentors are solely their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Riverside Community College District. You understand that all participants of the Success Network do so at their own discretion and the information receive from a mentor should be supplemented by additional research and should not be interpreted as a substitute for the use of independent judgment. Norco College does not actively monitor the conversations that take place between mentors and students and is not responsible for the exchange or use of the information that takes place.

The Norco College Success Network is intended to serve as an educational information resource regarding the personal experiences of mentors within various career fields, majors, and/or universities; it is not to be used to exploit the mentors in any way or to solicit any other kinds of information including, but not limited to, requests for job placement, recruitment activities, confidential information, or any other personal or professional information outside of the scope of career and academic experiences.

You hereby agree that in no event will you file suit or otherwise attempt to hold liable for damages, the Riverside Community College District, Norco College, or any mentor, participant, or user of the Norco College Success Network as a result of your participation in this program. As a student mentee, you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Riverside Community College District from any and all claims, suits, actions or proceedings of any kind arising out of, or in connection with, any advice or guidance you receive in relation to the Norco College Success Network.



## Getting Started

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Students can view mentor profiles and make first contact with mentors through the online career services portal, *NC Connect*. Once you have identified a mentor who you would like to connect with, you will need to introduce yourself by providing information such as your name, major, a mention of your academic and career goals, the information that you are seeking, and a preferred contact method.

You might write something like this: “Dear [MENTOR NAME], my name is [YOUR NAME] and I am contacting you through the Norco College Success Network. I was drawn to your profile because [REASON WHY YOU SELECTED THIS MENTOR]. I have a few questions I am hoping you can answer. I appreciate any time you have to share with me and I look forward to connecting with you soon. I can be contacted at [...@email.com] or by phone/text at (###) ###-####.

## Building the Relationship

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The network utilizes e-mail communication to initiate the connection between mentor and mentee, but the relationship may proceed with whichever communication method is preferred by both parties. It will be easier to communicate if you prepare for discussions with your mentor in advance by organizing your thoughts, writing down your questions, and reflecting on the advice your mentor provides.

Your mentor will want to get to know you. Just as the mentors are willing to share their time and experiences with you, you should be prepared to share your stories and your professional aspirations with them. You should think about how you will disclose *biographical* information (such as your relevant history, present circumstances, and future ambitions) and *personal* information (such as thoughts, feelings, and personal goals). Use your judgment to determine what you are comfortable sharing. In whatever you choose to share, be honest, genuine, and authentic whenever possible, and be careful to stay focused on academic and career-related topics.

Remember, you are ultimately responsible for your own professional development. The mentors will do what they can to encourage you in your efforts, but you should also feel free to consult with other sources of information, especially Norco College resources such as the Career Center, Counseling Department, and other college personnel.

## Moving On

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While there is no predefined time period for the duration of Success Network relationships, interactions typically continue until one or both parties feel that the relationship has reached its maximum benefit. When you are ready to bring the relationship to a close, it is important to do so in a way that affirms the contributions of your mentor and summarizes what you learned from the relationship. A great way to do



this is in the form of a thank you note or e-mail in which you (1) thank the mentor for their time, (2) review what you learned from the relationship, and (3) explain how you will use the information you gained for your future career development. Tying off the relationship in this way ensures that you and your mentor can both assess the effectiveness of your time together and feel comfortable moving on.

Always remember, the best way to thank a mentor is to become one yourself someday. 😊