

Thank you for your interest in helping our classroom explore the world of entrepreneurship. Our students are excited and nervous about the journey ahead, and mentors like you provide the experience and role modeling needed. We are thrilled you are joining us.

Below is a reference guide to help you through this journey. In addition to this guide, please make sure you have access to the lessons outline so you may better see the forest for the trees. As a mentor, it's important that you know how all the pieces fit together.

WHAT IS MY ROLE?

As a mentor, your role is to facilitate learning, which is different than directly teaching. Students will look to you for answers, but what they really need is help learning how to find the answers themselves. Here's a few ways you can do that:

- **Ask breadcrumb trail questions:** these are questions that are open-ended, and intended to help shepherd the student to the answer (not lead them by the nose). Some examples:
 - Well, what do you already know about the topic?
 - I understand why you might be frustrated and not see how to calculate your profits. Let's take it one step at a time. What do you think a "profit" is?
- **Ask students to summarize what they learned yesterday.** You can tell a lot about a student's understanding by asking them to explain or teach you.
- **Watch group dynamics.** One of the things this program focuses on is teamwork. They are learning how to listen to each other, how to respect each other, etc. Help them work together.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Although you're not responsible to ensure the team has a dynamite idea, your responsibilities are threefold:

1. **Know the curriculum roadmap.** We use Lean method to teach entrepreneurship in this course. Make sure you know the pacing and scope of the curriculum so you can help prepare students for upcoming events and leverage what they've already done.
2. **Collaborate with student teams on communication protocols and status updates.** Students are not used to working with working adults, so you'll need to set protocols about how they can and should reach you. Additionally, you will want to tell them how you want state updates. Status updates from teams should happen once a week and occur prior to the face-to-face meetings, so your face-to-face time is used efficiently. Status updates can come in the form of emails, a shared document, or whatever method you like. The purpose is to ensure that you have the necessary understanding of where students are prior to the face-to-face meetings.
3. **Facilitate learning with student teams.** This rarely means you'll be talking to the group lecture style. Your responsibility is to listen and guide and look for opportunity to step in and help. You're more like the coach, not the quarterback. You are expected to meet with the students teams once a week for an hour. It's imperative that you reach out to your student teams to get a status update before meeting with them, so your face-to-face time is efficient. The time you spend with students face-to-face should be strategizing solutions or improvements, not spent on updates.

Role and Responsibilities

4. **Collaborate with the teacher on where and how you can provide content expertise.** Most lessons are very prescribed, which means if you have an area of specialty, talk with the classroom teacher about it so she/he can leverage your expertise best. A word of caution: stick to the curriculum (beware of curriculum creep) and trust in the process. These lessons were designed and tested by educators. So, although it may seem different than what you are used to, they are students who are learning only part of a very complex system. You can't teach them everything all at once, and what we are teaching them - and what we're not - has been carefully crafted.
5. **Support classroom/team management.** This is a natural responsibility of any adult in the room. This means if you see something awry, either let the teacher know or help out.

FAQs

How often do I need to come in?

Your teacher will reach out to you and discuss which days are best for you to come into the classroom. However, we recommend weekly meetings with your team, as those are the teams with the most success.

You do not have to meet with your teams during the class time.

Teams have found success with meetings at a local library, coffee shop, or after school on school grounds. However, please learn the school rules and protocols for meeting with minors outside of school hours or off grounds for school projects. Some standard, common guidelines: never meet with just one student and always meet in a public place.

Can I communicate with students outside of standard class to help?

This is up to the policy of the school and the discretion of the teacher. Talk to the teacher and/or the school to ensure you are within policies.

Why aren't I giving more lectures about my experience and what I've learned?

As you probably recognize, the best learning happens through doing, not listening. If you have lessons to share, share them as teams need them. But remember: the exercise of learning isn't to get it right the first, it's to learn how to eventually get it right.

How can I make my time as efficient and enjoyable as possible?

Frequent, clear communication and collaboration with the teacher is vital to a successful mentor relationship. Also: think about how you can bring some of what you're doing in the classroom back to your place of work. Set up a status report board where you can post notes or updates about what the students are working on. Getting others excited with you can help.

How can I provide feedback about the experience?

At the end of the unit, you will get a mentor survey. Please make sure you complete it.

CURRICULUM W/ GUIDED QUESTIONS

Unit 1: Ideation

Topics Taught:

- Entrepreneurial Mindset
- Lean Method & BMC
- Ideation
- Competitive Analysis
- Value Proposition

Questions to ask:

- What problem are you interested in solving?
- Who has this problem and really needs it solved the most?
- If you solved this problem, what is the biggest benefit for the customer?

Unit 2: Customer Discovery

Topics Taught:

- Customer Segmentation
- Problem Interview
- Solution Interview
- Intro to Market Sizing

Questions to ask:

- What was the inspiration for your idea?
- What problem is your idea addressing?
- Who have you talked to to validate if that problem exists with others? Did you find the problem was common among that group?
- What are the people currently doing to solve this problem?
- How will your solution be different / unique?
- Who would be your early adopters? Who would be your fast followers?
- Is the potential customer segment large enough for your business concept?

Unit 3: Customer Segmentation

Topics Taught:

- Positioning
- Distribution Channels
- Customer Relationships
- Marketing for Startups

Questions to ask:

- How will your business be distinctive relative to existing businesses that address the same problem?
- Why should the customer believe you?
- What can you do right now to reach potential customers?
- How can you test customer responses to your business idea?

Unit 4: Finances

Topics Taught:

- Financial & Revenue Modeling
- Cost Estimation
- Pricing
- Initial Revenue Estimating
- Financial Statements & Health Analysis

Questions to ask:

- What will you charge for your business product/service? Why?
- How did you arrive at that price?
- What do similar businesses charge for their product?
- How did you estimate your expenses to make your solution?
- What volume/revenue is needed, at the price you are charging, to break even? Is that realistic?

Unit 5: Building Your MVP

Topics Taught:

- MVP Design
- Website Creation
- MVP Funding
- Prep for Pitch
- MVP Pitch

Questions to ask:

- Will your business concept use web or app communication? Why? How?
- How can the business concept be tested so that the team has many learning cycles using little money?
- What adjustments have you made to the BMC? Why?
- How are problem/customer responses incorporated into the MVP Pitch?
- How much money are you asking for to test your MVP? How would you use it?

Unit 6: Validation & Experimentation

Topics Taught:

- Implementation Planning
- MVP Experimentation
- Legal
- Revisiting SG&A and Startup Costs

Questions to ask:

- What comments from the Board of Advisors should be addressed during the MVP phase? Why?
- What are the top 3 steps to implement the team's MVP?
- What is the action plan and the timeline? How will you ensure that everyone is helping?
- If the customer response is not what you expect, how will the team respond?
- Key watch out is procrastination, not because students don't want to do the work, more due to fear of failing. Failure is fine. It's how you handle failure, learn and adjust or....?

Unit 7: Promotion

Topics Taught:

- Storytelling
- Marketing Planning
- Sales Planning
- Financial Story

Questions to ask:

- What are you hearing from customers/vendors?
- What are you learning?
- How will that learning be applied to your business model canvas and/or MVP?
- Have issues raised by the Board of Advisors been addressed?

Unit 8: Pitch

Topics Taught:

- Forecasting & Minimum Success Criteria
- Funding Requests
- Preparing for the Pitch
- Pitch
- Preparing for Launch

Questions to ask:

- What adjustments need to be made, based on learning from market?
- What is the team story at this stage?
- Does the financial model make sense? Is it realistic?
- Can we practice the pitch so I can give you some suggestions and feedback?
- Every team will do an “Academic Pitch” in the classroom. Some teams will be invited to an optional “Final Pitch,” a competition.

MENTOR FACE-TO-FACE MEETING AT-A-GLANCE

Use the following to help prepare your team and yourself for each face-to-face meeting time you have.

When	What
2 days prior	If team hasn't sent you confirmation of meeting or status updates, email a reminder of the meeting and request status update.
1 day prior	Night before the meeting, take a peek through the status update so you know what areas of discussion you'll be having with the team.
Day of meeting	<p>Meet with your team. Strategize solutions or areas of improvement with the teams based on what they're learning.</p> <p>Make sure the team is on track, and that all members of the team are actively participating in the business.</p> <p>Let the teacher know if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not everyone is contributing to the business equitably. This includes if there's a student who is taking ownership of too much: delegation is a key skill to learn too. ● Team is off track or not making progress on their tasks. ● Team dynamics is off or inappropriate. ● Any other concern