

# Mentor Messenger

## A message from the peer mentor subcommittee:

The peer mentor subcommittee was organized to support the needs of mentors and their coordinators. We hope that you will find the tips and information shared in this newsletter useful as you work with your Learning Community students. We also invite you to share tips or to make announcements.

Please send information or comments to [jenl@iastate.edu](mailto:jenl@iastate.edu).

### Important Dates to Remember

- September 25 — last day to drop a first half semester course without extenuating circumstances
- September 29– Understanding Social Media for Student Engagement workshop\*
- October 3—schedule of classes for spring 2010 available for viewing on the Web
- October 5—Building the Next Generation of Leaders workshop \*

\* register by contacting [jenl@iastate.edu](mailto:jenl@iastate.edu)

## Preserving a Professional Relationship with Your Mentees

Now that your mentees are becoming more familiar with you, there is potential to become more relaxed in your day-to-day interactions. While it is beneficial that your students feel comfortable coming to you with concerns, it is equally important to maintain a professional distance for your role.

Here are some recommendations for maintaining a professional relationship:

- ◆ **model ethical behavior:** demonstrate fairness, honesty, responsibility and dependability
- ◆ **convey a positive attitude:** negative attitudes have a way of perpetuating through the community
- ◆ **keep scheduled office hours:** this conveys that you are in a working role, rather than being at your mentees beckon call 24 hours a day
- ◆ **track your interactions through communication logs:** this is useful for identifying how much time you are spending with particular students and their needs
- ◆ **maintain professional distance while remaining open to communication:** seek the balance between concern and over-involvement
- ◆ **make referrals when appropriate so you do not become overly involved:** make referrals to other campus resources when necessary, rather than taking on another's problems that may be bigger than you can handle

- ◆ **uphold a professional online relationship:** review your Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, etc. accounts for questionable images, discussions and affiliations
- ◆ **keep your personal life personal:** avoid inviting your mentees to “hang out” with your friends; steer clear of conversations about any inappropriate antics shared by your friend networks
- ◆ **put your professional communication skills to work:** consider your verbal and body language when corresponding with your mentees; avoid excessive slang, maintain eye contact, and demonstrate good listening by providing feedback and asking for clarification when needed
- ◆ **share information about professional associations with your students:** inform them of the benefits of being involved as this will show that you are taking your career seriously



Not only are these guiding principles important to you, but they will serve your mentees as well. Talking about these issues can help them prepare for future interactions in the classroom, internships, and careers.