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.

Tips for Engaging Faculty in Your Learning Community

By Jamison Arends
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Students can gain valuable insights from actively engaged Faculty Mentors in your learning community. The tips below can be used by both mentors and coordinators to support these important interactions.

♦ Make sure students in your learning community know who the Faculty Mentors are.
♦ Invite Faculty Mentors to participate by sending them an e-mail or visiting them in person.
♦ Share ideas with the Faculty Mentor about activities that team members can do with the mentor:
  ◆ Some ideas for direct engagement include:
    * A dinner together where discussion is focused around a specific topic (ethics, leadership, etc.).
    * A tour the Faculty Mentor’s office and a discussion about their research and roles at Iowa State.
    * Sharing coffee in a café discussing current events related to the Faculty Mentor’s scholarship.
  ◆ Some ideas for indirect engagement include:
    * Gathering information about various Faculty Mentors’ undergraduate years and presenting tidbits to team members on a weekly basis. This gives your team something to talk with faculty about.
    * Visiting a Faculty Mentor’s lecture together.

♦ Important point: Don’t forget to send thank you notes and have everyone sign them together.

Your role as a Peer Mentor is the key to successful faculty-team interaction. A great relationship with a faculty mentor can’t be formed without your hard work, but remember you also have the support and encouragement of your coordinator.

Developing a rewarding relationship with your Faculty Mentor is worth it, even if the team thinks they won’t learn very much. Instead, your team will walk away with knowledge far greater than expected, and a Faculty Mentor who knows them and can support them.