



Mentoring process at Stella Maris College

Student well being and success is one of the primary goals of any institution of higher education. Mentoring is one of the methods adopted at Stella Maris College to ensure that there is a consensual and meaningful relationship between the Mentor and the Mentees that leads to their overall growth and development. Mentoring and guiding of students had always been an integral part of the teaching learning process at Stella Maris and faculty were appointed as Faculty Advisors to monitor student performance and growth. In order to enhance the process it was institutionalised and formally acclaimed as a full fledged mentoring programme since 2009-10. Faculty are provided orientations and specific training programmes on Mentoring and their roles as mentors.

Mentoring has become an increasingly integral part of the curricular and co curricular activities of HEI s and students are in need of counselling and guidance at every stage of their student life.

The Process of Mentoring involves the allocation of a set of mentees to a designated faculty in every department with the flexibility to opt for mentors of their choice in case of need. The mentoring process helps to keep track of the student performance academically and in other co curricular activities as well.

The role of the mentor is to:

- listen actively and patiently and create an active and conducive environment for open communication
- possess a non- judgemental and objective approach
- build trust which is one the biggest challenges of mentoring and a good mentor should establish a relationship grounded in trust and absolute confidentiality
- assist in determining personal and career goals of the mentee

- provide a clear assessment of the mentee's strengths and weaknesses and help in goal setting
- help identify resources both financial and otherwise
- to guide the mentees to identify and avail existing opportunities to better their performance and to meet their goals
- also be able to identify limitations in providing counselling and escalate to a professional counsellor or psychiatrist as the need arises
- share knowledge, skills and experience to validate the mentee's doubts and queries
- empathise with the mentee's problems and circumstances
- encourage, motivate and inspire the mentee in order to ensure that they achieve their goals
- Ensure regularity and sincerity of the mentee in attending classes and exams

The role of the Mentee is to:

- Reach out to the mentor in times of need
- Communicate effectively and honestly about any problems and issues
- Engage and participate actively in the mentoring process
- Acknowledge and accept the support provided by the mentor in identifying goals
- Work sincerely towards the goals set consensually
- Maintain and improve inter-personal skills

The Mentor-Mentee relationship is not merely a student - teacher relationship but can be very enriching for both the mentor and mentee in several ways. Mentoring is multidimensional and includes life skills development, academic and co-curricular development, career exploration and securing financial assistance. The relationship evolves into a supportive setting to develop a focused plan for overall development that is tied to skills, knowledge, and actions.

The process is also an opportunity to use and develop leadership skills and results, to enhance and strengthen interpersonal and coaching skills for the Mentor as well.

The process is achieved by pairing a faculty member with students within a particular over the course of an academic year and the list of mentees under every mentor is documented officially. Scheduled meetings and timings are allocated within or sometimes outside of class hours, in a comfortable environment. During such one-to-one meetings with the mentor the

students will be given the opportunity to talk about her academic needs, share her goals, and discuss concerns and needs.

All of the meetings as well as the personal details of the student and academic record of tests and exams are recorded in a prescribed format in an individual mentoring booklet which is given to each student and maintained by the mentor. The Mentor also ensures that the mentee's performance is constantly monitored and if necessary the parents are also informed about the progress of their ward.

There are several challenges to this process such as time constraints which is being currently addressed by allotting a specific time slot within the timetable or working hours to ensure the regular meetings between the mentor and the mentee. The ratio between students and teachers is also being worked upon to optimise on the time space limitations.

Currently this process of recording information and academic records are maintained online. Even the possibility of online mentoring is being explored by faculty and it helps in ensuring continuity and also to reach out to the students during non working days or during prolonged closure of insitutions such as during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The year long process of consistent sharing and communication through mentoring promotes academic excellence, self-esteem, and personal growth of the students. The mentoring programmes is undertaken in all earnestness and has emerged as one of the best practices of the college as it also reiterates the mission of the college to empower young women to face the challenges of life with courage and conviction.