CEC/CEC-PD MENTORING PROGRAM

WHY IS THE ROLE OF THE FACULTY ADVISOR SO IMPORTANT TO THE MENTORING PROGRAM?

The faculty advisor acts as the liaison between the student and the Mentoring Program; addresses questions/concerns raised by the mentee and discusses these with the coordinator of the mentors and/or the student’s mentor; provides input to the Program coordinator relative to the objectives and intended benefits of the Program to the students; and facilitates resolve to any challenges that might arise during the mentoring process.

One of the most important roles of the faculty advisor is the ability to personally discuss issues and problems that arise with the student. As the majority of the mentoring is done electronically, if it was not for the ability of the faculty advisor to have this personal contact with the students, issues raised by both mentees and mentors would not be identified nor resolved in an efficient and, usually, successful manner.

The faculty advisor will:

Recruit students to join CEC.
- importance of being active in professional organizations (advocacy and professional development)
- benefits of being a member of CEC (networking, online information, print materials, insurance, professional development, convention attendance)
- Opportunity to participate in the CEC/CEC-PD Mentoring Program

Raise awareness of the Mentoring Program with all potential mentees.
- describe the Mentoring Program (the responsibilities of the students; potential benefits; expected outcomes; and the communication process)
- arrange for past mentees to present at the first student chapter meeting
- use quotes and comments from past mentees regarding the personal benefits received through participation in the Program
- solicit interested student members to consider participating in the Program

Select students to participate in the Mentoring Program.
- criteria (current members of CEC; must maintain this membership throughout the duration of the Program; responsible; genuinely interested in a mentoring partnership; follow up with responses to mentors; anxious to learn different views on the various aspects of educating children and youth with exceptionalities)
Discuss the Student Guidelines for the Mentoring Program with the students on a personal level.
- prior to their application to participate in the Program
- periodically during the mentoring process when issues arise

The faculty advisor is in a unique position to discuss the guidelines directly with the students. In this way, the students are fully aware of their responsibilities throughout participation in the Program; able to understand what can be expected from the mentoring relationship; can learn how to address challenges that might arise; and are afforded the opportunity to ask questions before committing to participate.

Highlight the most important student guidelines.
- importance of bi-monthly (at least every two weeks) contact with mentor
- importance of responding to the mentor's communication even if it is just to acknowledge the receipt or to say "thank you"
- importance of quickly notifying faculty advisor if there is a problem or lapse in communication
- importance of participating in the Program's evaluation process

Facilitate the initial contact between the mentor and mentee.
- once the list of mentor-mentee assignments has been sent by the coordinator of the mentors, notify the students of the matches
- monitor and make sure the connection is made (even though it is customary for the mentor to make the initial contact, sometimes the faculty advisor may recommend that the students initiate this original contact)
- introduce yourself to the mentor via e-mail (thank them on behalf of the students for mentoring; share information about the special education program at your university/college; etc.)

Communicate with Linda Marsal, coordinator of the mentors (CECPDmentoring@cec.sped.org, 252.353.8919).
- contact Linda Marsal when a challenge arises in the mentoring process so that resolve can be achieved
- communicate both positive news and challenges/issues that arise
- personally contact students when a challenge is reported
- participate in the two conference calls per year
- provide input in the annual Program evaluation

NOTE: This information is based on material that Lynn De Capua, the Faculty Advisor to Georgian Court University CEC Student Chapter #0970 (New Jersey), provided at the presentation about the CEC/CEC-PD Mentoring Program at the 2011 CEC Annual Convention & Expo. Lynn was a faculty advisor in the Program from 2007-2012. Additions have been made to the original material.