

Information for mentors: Guidelines for the semester meeting

The semester meeting is a mandatory part of the mentoring programme. The mentor and the mentee should meet at least once a semester to conduct their semester conversation. The meeting serves the purpose of a reflected review of the last semester, the defined goals, the progress made and an open discussion about possible deficits. In addition, new goals are defined for the upcoming semester. The basis of the discussion is the written semester report of the mentee that she or he should send you in advance.

The mentees are requested to initiate and prepare the semester meeting.

Intention of the semester meeting:

- Integration of the different information/perspectives gained during the semester
- Comparison of self-perception vs. third-person perception
- Delineation of the personal development during the semester
- Goal-setting for the next semester

The semester report as basis for the semester meeting

In the semester report, the mentees reflect their experiences and challenges of the last semester. This written preparation for the semester meeting should motivate the students to formulate their ideas, plans and projects:

- Personal situation at the beginning of the semester: study-specific attributes, personal goals, athletic, musical, and artistic pursuits;
- Self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses;
- Brief presentation of the course of your studies: activities and developments, satisfaction with the academic curriculum, progress in learning, exam performance;
- Special challenges and difficulties;
- Successes and significant experiences;
- Additional extracurricular, non-academic pursuits inside and outside the university;
- Personal assessment of the relationship between mentor and mentee;
- Future developmental needs and personal goals for the following semester and beyond.

Suggestions for the semester conversation

- Overview of the planned schedule, brief personal summary of the student over the previous semester
- Review and interpretation of the semester report regarding special issues to be discussed in the conversation
- Feedback based on the overall self- and third-person evaluation:
 - Assessment based on precise examples of observed behavior,
 - Intensify discussion where self- and third-person evaluation differ,
 - Positive feedback is as important as identifying weaknesses
- Discovering development potential regarding competencies, capabilities, strengths and weaknesses; definition of individual development goals:
 - Set priorities: formulate specific goals
 - Clarify expectations of mentor and mentee
 - Prepare propositions for next steps and activities in order to reach development goals,
 - Setting «milestones» on which the development can be assessed,
 - Define criteria which can be used to evaluate the achievement of objectives,

Appropriate subjects

- Topics around the studies: stays abroad, finding a topic for Bachelor's or Master's thesis, Ph.D. options, papers, presentations, group work;
- Topics around the career choice: discussion on job options, help and feedback on internships;
- Topics around the labour market: information and knowledge about companies, institutions, associations, public sector, different industries;
- Topics around the career start: coaching for applications, job interview, assessment center, contract negotiation, salary expectations, contract conclusion.