



## ALAO Mentoring Program Guidelines

### Developing a Mentoring Relationship:

Since both you and your mentor/mentee have volunteered to participate in this program, it makes sense that you are looking forward to developing a mentoring relationship that works. Here are some suggested guidelines to consider as you develop your relationship:

- **Respect:** Respect each other's time when working through your contract and carrying it out.
- **Schedule:** Create a mentoring schedule that is doable for both of you, including locations/methods of meeting, as well as frequency and length of meeting times, and make a commitment to stick to it. Consider setting actual dates and times up front and putting those on your own calendars. Keep rescheduling to a minimum.
- **Communication:** Establish communication ground rules that will allow a comfortable, open, honest, respectful, and confidential exchange.
- **Goals:** Establish a realistic set of mentoring goals given the amount of time each of you can devote to the relationship.
- **Behavior:** Demonstrate professional and ethical behavior with each other by making this about professional development of the mentee/peer mentee and not complaint sessions about workplace issues (e.g., OK to ask for advice on navigating tough workplace issues, but best to not include names of individuals in the process).

### Setting Mentoring Goals:

Identifying a realistic set of mentoring goals is the first challenge in your relationship. If you are open and honest with each other, you will begin learning about each other during this process. Please complete your mentoring contract within the first month after being notified of your partnership, and please remember to submit your signed contract via email to the ALAO Professional Development Committee member who notified you of your partnership.

- **Mentees:** to identify your mentoring goals, you might consider what it is that inspired you to sign up for this mentoring program? What do you want to work on? What do you hope to gain from this relationship?
- **Mentors:** when you discover what your mentee wants to work on, be honest as to which of those goals you know enough about to be of help to the mentee. Also, given your experience, you might consider suggesting goals that could target what your mentee is wanting to gain from the relationship, especially if the mentee is having difficulty identifying her/his goals.
- **Peer mentors/mentees:** share your lists of goals with each other, prioritize them, and identify a reasonable number of goals to work on together. Be careful to include some goals that each peer considers top priority so both of you end up with satisfying results.

### Reaching the End of Your Contract:

When you have either reached your goals, the agreed upon duration of your contract is reached, or you have decided to end your relationship early, it is best to have a final meeting to tie up loose ends and conclude your official ALAO Mentoring Program relationship. Please notify the Coordinator of the ALAO Mentoring Program when this has been done. You will then be asked to complete an evaluation of the program to help ALAO assess whether or not the program should continue after the pilot program is complete.

### Questions or Issues That May Arise:

There are no hard and fast rules in a mentoring relationship, yet we recognize that mentoring pairs may have questions, get stuck, discover incompatibilities, or simply need to bow out for whatever reason. The ALAO Professional Development Committee understands this. If you want to talk with someone on the committee, a list of committee members is at: <http://www.alaoweb.org/committees/proffdev/index.html>. Their contact information can be found here: <http://www.alaoweb.org/board>. We suggest you contact the current Chair of the committee, but if you would prefer someone else, others on the committee can be contacted as well. If you are simply needing to bow out of your relationship, please notify the Chair of the ALAO PDC.