

Finding your CUNY BA Faculty Mentor

Having a faculty mentor is central to CUNY Baccalaureate's philosophy and structure. Securing a faculty mentor is your responsibility. You do not need to have a faculty mentor in order to apply to the program, but you will be required to have a mentor and submit your official [area of concentration \(AOC\)](#) form by the end of your first semester in CUNY BA.

You will need a faculty mentor for each area of concentration (AOC). If you are planning an interdisciplinary area, you will need a mentor from each discipline (e.g., for "Culinary Journalism," you need a mentor in Culinary Arts and a mentor in Journalism).

Eligibility

Mentors must be full-time faculty members at a CUNY college (that is generally the rank of full, associate or assistant professor or lecturer), teaching in the same (or closely related) field as your area. We highly recommend that you maintain your relationships with adjunct faculty, but they cannot serve as official mentors.

Finding a mentor

Students find their mentors in different ways. You can:

- ask a professor you like, from a class you are in now or one you've completed;
- ask adjunct faculty to recommend or make introductions to full-time faculty members in your field of study
- ask classmates about faculty members with whom they have had positive experiences;
- reach out to relevant departments: speak to a department's faculty advisor, chairperson, or program assistant for ideas;
- research faculty members' profiles (usually on department websites) to find out their areas of expertise.

And if one professor says they cannot do it, ask them for a referral.



It is important that your mentor be someone you find approachable and knowledgeable about your specific academic goals, someone who has the time to advise you and takes an interest in your studies. The mentor relationship that you build will be one of critical importance to your academic and career goals.

Close to 400 faculty members volunteer their time as mentors; new mentors are always welcomed. If you experience difficulty finding a mentor, consult your [CUNY Baccalaureate Academic Advisor](#).

If a faculty member expresses an interest but wants to know more, explain what you know, and direct him/her to our faculty handbook, [Partners in Learning](#), available on our website. They may also consult Teresa Curmi, Interim Academic Director (Teresa.Curmi27@cunyba.cuny.edu or 212.817.8222).

Working with your mentor

Once you identify someone, schedule a meeting. Bring a copy of your personal statement and the outline of the courses you proposed in your application to the program so you are ready to discuss your goals. Be open to guidance and suggestions. Be prepared for all your interactions with your mentor — you both have very busy schedules. Any upper-level courses you have taken in your area prior to joining CUNY BA or prior to finding a mentor are still subject to the mentor's approval.

Once the two of you agree on the courses, fill out the area of concentration form. Have your mentor sign it, make a copy for each of you, and scan and email a copy to your academic advisor at CUNY BA. AOCs are due by the end of your first semester in the program; the due date is indicated on your degree contract. You may not change your mentor after this point, so choose wisely. Any course changes you need to make will have to be discussed with your mentor and approved by him/her in writing to the program in advance.

Find out if your mentor prefers to be in contact by email, phone, or in person (e.g., office hours). Sometimes faculty mentors supervise and evaluate independent studies, fieldwork, or research projects with their students; they also often advise students about graduate study and write letters of recommendation. Even if you don't work with your mentor in these ways, keep them informed of your progress and activities at least once a semester.

