THE FIRST CONVERSATION: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

**Getting Started**

We encourage you to kick off your mentoring relationship with an in-person meeting, phone call or Skype chat so you can have a more personal connection. The most important thing to do in your first conversation is to introduce yourself and build rapport. Building rapport simply means attempting to get to know someone on a personal level. It might be helpful to reread your mentor’s profile and ask questions based on the information he/she provided. You can think about what you want to share with your mentor about your background, UMW experience and interests.

Following are some question ideas to ask your mentor. Choose a few beforehand and then let the conversation flow.

Tell me about what you do for a living

What do you wish you did while you were at UMW?

What jobs have you had in the past?

What did you like best about UMW?

Where are you from originally? Or what is it like to live in…?

The mentors are excited to talk with you so don’t worry too much about saying the right thing. Remember to communicate your enthusiasm and gratitude about working with your mentor.

**Setting Goals and Expectations**

We communicate to the mentors the importance of setting goals and expectations for the mentoring relationship, and ask them to take the lead in having this conversation. But if your mentor does not initiate this conversation, feel free to ask him/her about it as it is a critical step in developing your relationship.