




MENTOR  
RESOURCES




# MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES


**UT Promise scholarship recipients will be required to meet with their assigned mentor a minimum of three times per semester.** We recommend meeting in September, October and November in the fall and February, March and April in the spring. Students do not have to complete mentoring requirements for summer enrollment.


<p><b>IMPORTANT</b></p> 	<p>To report that you met with your UT Promise mentee(s), check off the meeting goals in the Mentor Platform, visit <a href="https://tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors">tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors</a>.</p> <p>Fall goals MUST be <b>completed by December 1</b> and spring goals MUST be <b>completed by July 1</b>.</p>
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The UT Promise Mentor Platform and other tools make it easy to communicate with your students, schedule meetings and meet via video chat in the platform! The UT Promise Team provides resources for mentors that include conversations starters/topics, discussion questions and additional resources. As you navigate through the mentor platform, be sure to check off meeting goals in your inbox as they are completed!

**UT Promise will provide a mentor resources that have conversation topics and discussion questions to guide meetings with your mentee. For each month, we recommend that mentors do the following:**


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**1** Set up a time to meet with your student.
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**2** Review the discussion guides and resources in the toolkit.
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**3** Video chat or meet with your student in person.
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**4** Report that you met with your mentee by completing the short survey on the website: **[tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors](https://tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors)**.

<p><b>IMPORTANT</b></p> 	<p>Even if you meet with your mentee in person, you will still be asked to report that you completed a meeting online at <b><a href="https://tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors">tennessee.edu/ut-promise/mentors</a></b>. Failure to report these meetings could result in the loss of your student's scholarship, so please be diligent about checking off mentor meeting goals in the platform.</p>
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**In addition to completing the three mandatory meetings each semester with their mentor...**



**Mentors should also connect with their student when:**

- A UT Promise deadline is approaching.
- They have resources or opportunities that would assist the student.
- They know the student had a completed a test, interview, or something they were nervous or excited about.
- They wish to check in with the student to build a more meaningful relationship.

**Students should also connect with their mentor when:**

- They have a question.
- The mentor asks a question of them via email or text message.
- The student is excited/nervous/worried about a college experience.
- The student accomplishes a goal and wishes to share with their mentor!

Mentors and students can also create their own goals to complete together or individually. Remember, **completing goals does not take the place of your required UT Promise goals.** The only goal that counts toward maintaining the UT Promise scholarship are the three mandatory meetings each semester.

**MENTOR EXPECTATIONS**



- Provide meaningful, supportive interactions and assist students in setting goals
- Be available to your student
- Help students find ways to be motivated
- Provide personal and professional enrichment opportunities for students
- Reach out to mentee during encouraged check-points
- Update UT Promise if there are any problems or concerns



# MENTOR/MENTEE COMMUNICATION

Before you meet with your student, you will communicate via the UT Promise Mentor Platform to introduce yourself and set up a time to meet (either virtually or in person). **Please be responsive to these notifications.** To the right is an example of how you can reach out to your students and what the response might look like.

## MENTOR TIP

It is important that mentors do not make any assumptions about UT Promise scholarship recipients. While UT Promise students may fall into a similar income bracket, this does not imply anything about their family history/background, racial demographics, life experiences, academic preparedness, college expectations and/or first-generation status.

**All students should feel like they matter and belong.** Making assumptions about their identities and experiences might isolate or marginalize them. Rather than assume what their experience is like, we encourage you to listen to the information they share and ask follow-up questions using the information they provide.



## Example of an Email to Your Student

Hi Jackson,

My name is Thomas, and I am your UT Promise mentor. Congratulations on being a UT Promise scholarship recipient! I am excited to connect with you and to walk with you throughout your collegiate journey.

In order for you to maintain your scholarship, we will need to meet at least three times a semester, but I am happy to connect more often if you need my support or assistance. Let's go ahead and schedule our first meeting for the semester. You can message me here with your availability or recommend a meeting time by using the scheduling tool here in the platform.

Looking forward to getting to know you! In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions or need any support.

Sincerely,  
Thomas

## Example of an Email Reply from Your Student

Hi Thomas,


Thanks for contacting me. I am excited to meet you as well! No one in my family has been to college, so I am kind of nervous about the experience. I am thankful you have chosen to support me throughout this journey.

Does next Tuesday at 3pm work for us to have our first meeting?

I will see you soon!  
Jackson

Please note that the UT Promise Mentor Platform's administrators will have access to all communication sent between mentor and mentees.

**IMPORTANT**



Remember, text messages and emails **do not count** toward the 3 mandatory meetings per semester; rather, these communications should be a supplement to the mentoring meetings!

The UT Promise Mentor Platform is a safe place to communicate with your student that protects your privacy. Messages sent through the platform will go directly to the recipients' email platform's inbox without ever sharing your personal email information.\* However, if you feel comfortable, we do encourage you to share phone numbers and email addresses as students may be more responsive to text. This also allows for you to quickly check-in and encourage the student in a more informal way. You and your students should discuss expectations for communication at your first meeting.

After you make initial contact, it will be important to keep your student engaged. In addition to your monthly meeting, send weekly emails or texts following up on any clues the students' have given you about their successes, challenges, and concerns.

If a student or mentor ever encounters anything that causes concern, they should reach out to UT Promise administrators at [utpromise@tennessee.edu](mailto:utpromise@tennessee.edu) so the appropriate measures can be taken. In addition, if immediate action is needed, a student or mentor can report abuse and block their connection through the UT Promise platform by going to the message thread, clicking "Manage Conversation," and then click "Block User/Report Abuse."



# TIPS AND TRICKS

## CONNECT WITH YOUR STUDENT

### **Share your own life experiences**

- You may be matched with students with similar identities, so we encourage you to be open about your own life experiences when appropriate in order to make the student feel like they are not alone.

### **Find common interests**

- Ask questions to determine what you have in common (like basketball, geography, music, a favorite TV show, etc.) and then enjoy sharing your passion for it with each other.
- Show interest in the student's personal life and well-being to foster deeper discussions.
- Make note of items the student mentions in your meeting and follow up on them with a text or bring them up the next time you meet.

## COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

### **Ask open-ended questions**

- Open questions encourage the student to continually talk without asking for specific information: What courses have been your favorites? What made them interesting? What have you enjoyed about community service? How do you plan to get involved?

### **Practice active listening and demonstrate empathy**

- Focus on the student, ask clarifying questions and validate the student's communication. Show attentiveness and communicate care and concern through your nonverbal and verbal cues.

### **Don't be afraid of silence**

- Allow the student time to think about the questions you are asking and reflect on their own experiences.

## SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND BOUNDARIES

### **Establish communication guidelines**

- Consider appropriate means and times for communicating. Is email, call or text better? Can your student reach out after 10 p.m.? Set mutually beneficial guidelines early on.

### **Discuss the expectations for mentor/mentee meetings**

- Do you have a preference on how often you meet or how you meet (in-person, video chat or phone call)? Who will be responsible for reaching out to set up meetings? Discuss and decide these things together.\*

### **Respect each other**

- Discuss attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate respect, such as showing up on time for meetings or not going beyond the allotted meeting time. You might encourage each other to always respond to email or texts, even with a simple thank you, so you know the communication was received and so you both stay engaged.

Remember, the UT Promise Mentor Platform is a great place to email and video chat, and even if you meet in person, you will still need to check off your goals in the platform.



# MENTOR TIPS

College can be a challenging time as students face many pressures. Below are some of the more common challenges your students may be facing and how to help them:



## TIME MANAGEMENT

In high school, students' day-to-day schedules are determined by others. As college students, they are able to determine a schedule of their own. Being able to plan each day and schedule time for studying and social activities is critical to having a successful college experience.

Encourage students to use a planner. Learning how to manage time for school and social life is a necessary tool that will be useful through graduation and beyond.



## STRESS

Not only is college more academically challenging, but there is also stress that comes from learning how to navigate new life experiences.

Consider encouraging students to intentionally relieve stress through activities like exercising or listening to music, and share how you manage stress in your life.



## FINANCES

Many students in college have the opportunity to manage their own money for the first time. A lack of financial planning can result in challenges for students. Advise students to make a budget to keep track of their expenses and savings.

Direct them to college counselors that may be able to offer financial advice or even financial planning courses.



## RESOURCES

Often, students are unaware of the many resources that are available to them on campus. Encourage students to take advantage of resources such as tutoring centers, counseling services and advising offices.

Let them know seeking help is a wise step that will help them succeed.

**A full list of UT Promise policies and requirements are listed on pages 9-13 in the UT Promise Program Handbook.**

If you have questions about maintaining your eligibility, contact your campus Financial Aid Office or email [utpromise@tennessee.edu](mailto:utpromise@tennessee.edu).



# MENTOR FAQS

## **How will I know which students I will be working with this year?**

You will be paired with your students through the UT Promise Mentor Platform. Once the students have been added to the platform, the system will match you with your students. You will receive an email notifying you of the students with whom you've been matched.

## **When should I contact my students?**

You will be required to meet with your students at least three times a semester, but we ask that you contact your students at least every two weeks. Feel free to contact your students more often! The more you reach out, the stronger the connection.

## **How many students will I mentor?**

The UT Promise team prioritizes one-to-one matching when possible; however, there may be times when mentors may be paired with additional students, depending on the preference they selected in their mentor application.

## **Am I allowed to give a student a ride?**

UT Promise discourages mentors from transporting students to and from locations.

## **What if I do not hear from my students after I contact them?**

Students will be required to meet with their mentor to maintain their scholarship. Students may prefer to communicate via text message to set up your scheduled meetings. If you have not tried sending them a text message, do so! If this does not work, please let UT Promise know and we will attempt to help facilitate a conversation.

## **Does a student lose their scholarship if they do not participate in mentoring?**

Yes. Participation in the mentoring program is a mandatory requirement to maintain UT Promise. Students will be required to meet with their mentor three times a semester to maintain their eligibility. They will not be required to do beyond the required check points; however, we do encourage you to contact your students more than the required communication to build a strong, supportive relationship.

## **What if the parents of my students are not engaged in the college experience?**

Many of our students are the first in their families to attend college and sometimes parents are not aware of the steps and experiences involved when attending a postsecondary institution. This is the reason the students need you! You serve as an individual who can walk with students through this important process.

## **As a faculty or staff member volunteering to mentor, must I still report to Title IX?**

Yes, faculty and staff are still mandatory reporters while serving in this volunteer role.

## **Who do I contact if I do not know an answer to a question?**

You can contact UT Promise staff at [utpromise@tennessee.edu](mailto:utpromise@tennessee.edu). We are always available to you!



# MENTOR CHECKLIST

RECEIVE MENTOR PLATFORM REGISTRATION EMAIL FROM UT PROMISE	<input type="checkbox"/>
COMPLETE PROFILE ON UT PROMISE MENTOR PLATFORM	<input type="checkbox"/>
RECEIVE MENTOR/STUDENT MATCH EMAIL	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONNECT WITH STUDENT AND SCHEDULE FIRST MEETING	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN SEPTEMBER	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN OCTOBER	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN NOVEMBER	<input type="checkbox"/>
ENSURE ALL FALL MENTOR MEETINGS HAVE BEEN REPORTED	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN FEBRUARY	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN MARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEET WITH STUDENT IN APRIL	<input type="checkbox"/>
ENSURE ALL SPRING MENTOR MEETINGS HAVE BEEN REPORTED	<input type="checkbox"/>