



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL SERVICE TRAINING COMMAND  
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### NSTC INSTRUCTION 1500.1

From: Commander, Naval Service Training Command

Subj: MIDSHIPMAN MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Ref: (a) Task Force ONE Navy Final Report

1. Purpose. To provide policy, guidance, and responsibilities for the establishment, execution, and management of the Midshipman Mentorship Program.
2. Background. In September 2021, Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) established a pilot mentoring program as a result of the Task Force ONE Navy (TF1N) Final Report that paired Flag Officers with First Class Midshipmen. Feedback from reference (a) of the pilot program, academic, and professional literature on successful mentorship programs suggested the professional gap between mentors and mentees was too large and should be limited to one or two grades. Further, the frequency and time span of meetings between participants should be sufficient to develop and cultivate an effective mentoring relationship. Mentoring is a vital component of leadership development that contributes to mission accomplishment and is a key factor in impacting career success.
3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all selected Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps (NROTC) First and Second Class Midshipmen and NROTC Unit Commanding Officers (COs)/Professors of Naval Science (PNSs) assigned to selected schools. This instruction provides practical guidance to mentors and Flag Officer sponsors supporting the Midshipman Mentorship Program.
4. Policy. NSTC is committed to ensuring each newly commissioned Ensign has opportunities to develop strong mentoring partnerships by fostering a culture of inclusion, creating opportunities, and providing resources to support professional relationships. The Navy's warfighting readiness is dependent on having qualified people in critical positions, retaining experienced people, and the successful passing of knowledge, skills, and experiences from those qualified and experienced persons to the next generation of warfighters. Mentoring efforts are designed to retain talent, strengthen bonds between junior and senior personnel, build morale and *esprit de corps*, and transfer professional knowledge. Mentoring junior personnel is an inherent element of leadership. It is incumbent upon mentors to reach out to their mentees and the responsibility of mentees to seek out mentorship opportunities.
  - a. The Midshipman Mentorship Program is designed to:

- (1) Create a culture where individuals establish and leverage a mentoring support network to increase professional development and career satisfaction.
- (2) Provide all participants with the opportunity to have a mentor and mentoring opportunities that contribute to individual professional development.
- (3) Underscore the availability of mentors as resources for overcoming obstacles to career success.
- (4) Increase professional interaction and networking opportunities between participants.
- (5) Create social networking opportunities and training resources dedicated to mentoring.
- (6) Promote mentorship through training and best practices.

b. All mentors and mentees are highly encouraged to continue the mentoring relationship after the Midshipmen are commissioned.

5. Key Aspects of the Midshipman Mentorship Program. The program's strategy is multifaceted in its focus and approach, underscoring the importance of the chain of command, one-on-one and group mentoring partnerships, networking, communication, and mentoring resources to achieve objectives.

a. Flag Officer Sponsors. Flag Officer Sponsors provide senior leadership perspectives, experiences, and expectations to Junior Officers and Midshipmen that they may not otherwise get in routine relationships with the officers in their chains of command.

b. Chain of Command. The Midshipman Mentorship Program is a tool for augmenting the leadership and guidance provided by the Chain of Command's daily interaction with personnel. Chain of Command support, professional bonds between personnel, and career management tools remain the foundation of all successful mentoring programs. Commanding Officers, NROTC Unit Commanding Officers, Naval Science Instructors, and civilian leadership shall continue to ensure all career development tools are maximized within their commands.

c. One-on-One Mentoring. Taking into account professional objectives and life circumstances, one-on-one insight and guidance helps individuals navigate a path to success with greater ease and satisfaction. Mentoring partnerships are built on trust and a personal connection.

d. Group Mentoring. Group mentoring allows the mentoring group to learn from experiences of others in the group. Trust and confidentiality become important factors in group sessions and in connections between members of the group. Peers play an important role in creating a culture of inclusion. As individuals grow in their careers, peers become trusted confidants who provide counsel regarding professional development.

e. Networking. Networking is an essential first step in developing mentoring partnerships and creating a culture of inclusion. Exposing members to the talent, professionalism, and experience of other members exposes juniors to the opportunities that lay ahead and enables individuals to select mentors/mentees to whom they relate and trust.

f. Communication. Regular communication regarding Navy initiatives, best practices, networking opportunities, and mentoring resources will be promoted.

6. Responsibilities.

a. Director of Officer Development (OD):

(1) Shall maintain oversight for planning, training, coordinating, and implementing mentorship initiatives across the NROTC domain.

(2) Shall recommend mentorship assignments for NROTC units based on NROTC unit assessments and qualification attainment rates of commissioned officers from NROTC units as made available by Navy Personnel Command.

b. NROTC Unit Commanding Officers:

(1) Shall direct execution of the Midshipman Mentorship Program locally within their NROTC unit in coordination with the NSTC Chief Diversity Officer.

(2) Solicit mentors from alumni of their NROTC Unit.

(3) Assign selected mentors to junior year Midshipmen according to institution, warfare community, and demographics to the largest extent possible.

(4) Notify NSTC Chief Diversity Officer of mentoring assignments and of any manning shortfalls of mentors.

(5) Provide quarterly feedback to NSTC Chief Diversity Officer on frequency and effectiveness of mentorship meetings.

b. Chief Diversity Officer:

(1) Shall serve as the Midshipman Mentorship Program Manager and ensure alignment with Navy mentoring policies.

(2) Shall provide counsel and recommendations to the Director of OD regarding policy and initiatives related to the program.

(3) Assign selected mentors to junior year Midshipmen according to institution, warfare community, and demographics to the largest extent possible.

- (4) Pair Flag Officer Sponsors with three to four mentor/mentee groups.
- (5) Solicit feedback from program participants to assess the need for changes and/or improvements to the program.

c. Mentors:

- (1) Make reasonable efforts to connect with mentees by phone or through electronic means at least once per month in the first year of the mentoring relationship. At least one meeting should be individual. The rest can be group mentorship meetings.
- (2) While there is no requirement for a formal, signed mentorship agreement, both mentors and mentees should discuss their expectations from the mentoring arrangement early in the relationship.
- (3) Shall have no more than three (3) mentees.
- (4) MyNavyHR provides training, handbooks, and best practices for mentors at <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/21st-Century-Sailor/Culture-of-Excellence/> .

d. Mentees:

- (1) Midshipmen will be selected as mentees and assigned a mentor from among alumni mentor volunteers in the second semester of their junior/MIDN 2/C year by the unit CO/PNS. The mentor will not be part of their immediate chain of command.
- (2) Upon the mentee's service assignment, unit COs/PNSs will reassign mentors as necessary to ensure mentees are assigned mentors who are warfare qualified in the mentee's assigned community.
- (3) Upon commissioning and transfer to their first assignments, mentoring partnerships may develop naturally through the course of normal interactions with other officers.
- (4) Other mentoring relationships may require assistance to get started. Take advantage of Wardroom social events, networking luncheons, professional development events, and community groups.
- (5) Mentoring relationships developed outside of this program will not be tracked by NSTC.

e. Flag Officer Sponsors:

- (1) Should meet with their mentor/mentee groups at least once per quarter to provide professional insight, encouragement, and support.

(2) Alternatively, given the difficulty in coordinating schedules, Flag Officer Sponsors may provide email or video correspondence with mentorship groups. Mentors may provide questions and/or suggested topics to the Flag Officer Sponsors in advance to assist in developing subject matter.

7. Mentor Eligibility.

a. Prospective Mentors must be:

- (1) In the paygrades of O2-O4.
- (2) Warfare qualified.
- (3) Within physical readiness standards.
- (4) Recommended by their Commanding Officer.

b. Mentors will be selected and approved by the NROTC unit CO/PNS.

8. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, must be managed per Secretary of the Navy Manual 5210.1 of September 2019.

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215 .17 A, NSTC will review this instruction annually on the anniversary of its effective date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, DoD, SECNAV, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will automatically expire ten years after effective date unless reissued or canceled prior to the ten-year anniversary date, or an extension has been granted.



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Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Naval Service Training Command issuance website,  
<http://www.netc.navy.mil/nstc/NSTC Directives/instructions.html>.