

Trinity College
First-Year Seminar Program
Mentor Description and Responsibilities
Fall 2025

Mentors are essential to the success of First-Year Seminars and Gateway Programs, working collaboratively with faculty and Bantam Network Nest personnel (such as Residential Learning Coordinators) to support the academic experience of first-year students. Each seminar instructor selects an outstanding member of the junior or senior class to serve as mentor. Mentors must show evidence of high academic achievement; strong writing and verbal communication skills; and competence in research and problem solving. First-Year Mentors play a critical role in helping new students make a successful transition to college life at Trinity. Specifically, mentors help to connect a diverse group of first-year students to all of the resources and opportunities of the College and serve as a role model for those students. Accordingly, mentors should be well integrated into the Trinity College community, have good interpersonal skills, and should be willing to help students with their overall academic adjustment (e.g., time management, organizational skills), while providing assistance with the seminar content and assignments. First-Year Mentors work not only within their individual seminars, but they also join a community of other mentors, led by the First-Year Mentor Coordinator, Leo Schuchert. First-Year Mentors also participate in Nest-related activities and maintain open communication with Residential Learning Coordinators.

First-Year Mentors will be registered in the fall for one credit, which will be graded in large part by the seminar instructor based on the expectations outlined below. Mentors also earn a stipend of \$1,500 for their role.

EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY AND MENTORS:

- Faculty and mentors should communicate with each other regularly and establish, before the semester begins, clear expectations of how the mentor can best support the seminar. Faculty should clearly communicate the following information to mentors: role of the mentor during seminar sessions, expectations for availability of the mentor outside of class, special projects or areas of interest the mentor might develop, agreement to meet regularly to discuss seminar-related issues, exact ways in which the mentor will support student writing, etc.
- Faculty should communicate their expectations to mentors from the very outset; as the semester unfolds, faculty should not introduce last-minute projects or deadlines for mentors.
- Faculty and mentors should decide, together, how best to use the seminar budget (\$600 for FYSMs; Gateway budgets to be determined by each individual program).

EXPECTATIONS FOR MENTORS:

- Mentors should attend all First-Year Seminar classes;
- Make themselves regularly available to seminar participants;
- Attend informational meetings/training workshops for mentors in May and August;
- Assist with Check-In Day and New Student Orientation at the beginning of the Fall Term;
- Meet approximately **three times during the fall semester** with a larger group of mentors and **twice in small groups**, organized by the First-Year Mentor Coordinator;
- Work with seminar students to develop their writing abilities, capacity to contribute to group discussions and presentations, time-management skills, and ability to navigate the College's electronic resources, including Moodle, TC Online, and the Trinity Portal;

- Work with the instructor to plan and organize any activities or events, including an introduction to library services and resources;
- Conduct an evening or Common Hour session for seminar students in the mid-semester, focused on good organizational skills, study skills, and other strategies to promote effective learning and good academic performance in courses;
- Meet at least once (by the middle of the semester) with a Residential Learning Coordinator to discuss students in the First-Year Seminar, especially those who might benefit from additional academic or social support, and to coordinate programming/events;
- Attend Nest events (to be determined in collaboration with Nest personnel) when possible; and
- Participate in mid-semester and end-of-semester evaluations of their experience.