

# Initiation to Graduation

SELMA UNIVERSITY

## **A Mentoring Partnership**

designed to transform students into servant leaders who will positively impact their communities and society.

Dr. Alvin A. Cleveland, Sr., President

# Initiation to Graduation

## SELMA UNIVERSITY

In our continuous effort to make Selma University the school of choice for equipping students to become servant leaders who will positively impact their communities, the University is implementing a cohort Initiation to Graduation mentoring program. Incoming 2017 freshmen will comprise the first cohort class to be a part of the *Initiation to Graduation* mentoring program. The objective of the program is to provide inspiring mentors, a viable path to graduation, academic resources, and on campus connections for every student in order to increase academic achievement and graduation rates. Program activities include the following:

- Scholastic Rites of Passage program with parents and incoming students
- Freshmen orientation and registration activities
- Candle Light Ceremony to mark the beginning of classes
- Freshmen Experience course

--Path to Graduation Plan

--Personality indicator test

--CAPS connection visits

--Mentoring Mixer

--Mid-term academic advisor visits

--Opening Convocation

--Frequent connection meetings with mentors

- Freshmen Achievement Day

Similar mentoring activities for the cohort will continue during student's sophomore, junior, and senior years, culminating with graduation. Mentors will include accomplished men and women of the Christian faith who embrace the concept of servant leadership. Here is a brief description of each major activity.

**The Scholastic Rites of Passage Ceremony** – During this ceremony family and faculty will celebrate the student's choice to pursue a higher education at Selma University. This ceremony marks the parent's willingness to support and entrusting their child with us for two to four years to attain an academic degree. The student will be given a medallion from the school that represents our promise to provide an appropriate education in the subject matter that he or she chooses. After accepting the medallion from faculty members, the students will then return to their parents, guardians, or confidant and in turn ask that person to keep their medallion for the next two to four years with the promise that, God willing, they will graduate. Upon the day of graduation, the parent, guardian, and or confidant will present their love one with the original medallion.

**Candle Lighting Ceremony** -- The night before classes start, the campus community gathers in the gymnasium to mark the beginning of the academic year. All attending students, faculty and staff should wear black and white for uniformity. The freshman class and transfer students will be seated together in a designated area. The evening provides a

context for the intellectual challenges that students will face over the course of the year. After brief words of encouragement, the University President lights a candle - representing the "Light of Knowledge." He will light a candle and share it with all of the Vice Presidents. The Vice President of Academic Affairs shares his light with the Division Chairpersons, and the Chairpersons will pass it to the students. The Vice Presidents of Student Services and Fiscal Affairs will pass their lights to staff and visitors. The light passes to all the students, forming a circle of light. The candle-lighting ceremony comes to a close with faculty, staff, and students joining together to sing the alma mater and receive the benediction.

**Freshmen Orientation and Registration** – These activities are designed to ensure that students are warmly received and thoroughly prepared for the first day of class. Initially they are provided a highly structured, step-by-step, environment so that students successfully complete all key components of the registration process which includes:

- Placement testing, if necessary
- Proper academic advising
- Completion of Financial Aid Applications
- Course registration
- Campus orientation
  - The CAPS lab
  - Library services
  - Dining services
  - Recreational facilities and activities
- City orientation
- ETC

**Freshman Experience Course** – This is a course designed to introduce students to the college academic environment and prepare them for success in their academic pursuits at Selma University. During the course, students will develop a path to Graduation Plan, connect with their academic advisor, take a personality indicator test, utilize the CAPS lab, have the opportunity to connect with a mentor, and participate in several character building activities. All new or first time University students are required to take this course.

**Path to Graduation Plan (Required Assignment)** – The *Path to Graduation Plan* is a required assignment that must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the Freshman Experience Course. Students who do not satisfactorily complete the assignment will be required to retake the course.

The plan will require students to use the University's list of courses for their selected program of study (major) to map out their individualized academic path to graduation. Within the first few weeks of the course students will receive a block of instruction on completing their academic plans and put together an initial plan. Once the instructor has reviewed students initial plans they will meet with their academic advisors and submit to the instructor, prior to mid-term, a type written plan signed by their academic. Students will receive feedback regarding their Path to Graduation Plans from the instruction within two weeks following mid-term. The final plans must be submitted to the instructor by the course completion date.

Student academic advisors will help them select the right courses to take at the right time to make sure they meet their expected graduation date. Having an academic plan is an invaluable tool to ensure students don't waste time taking classes they don't need or spend money on tuition for extra semesters. Additionally, it places the

responsibility for planning and meeting graduation expectations in the hands of the students.

**Personality Indicator Test** – Students will participate in an activity to provide students information regarding their personality. Here are five (5) reasons for conducting a personality indicator test (by Lindsey Homes, HuffPost).

- It can help inform your career.
- It can help you decide what to study in school.
- It will help you understand your strengths and weaknesses.
- It plays a role in social interactions.
- It feels good to know yourself.

**CAPS connection visits** – Student in the Freshmen Experience course will be introduced to the lab and will be given at least one assignment that will require them to use the lab during the semester. The mission of the CAPS program is to provide a systematic approach for increasing student academic achievement and the University's graduation rate.

A vivacious and engaging academic support system that increases student academic achievement and graduation rates by quickly and effectively identifying at risk students and providing them the support needed to ensure that they are successful. The program involves a collaborative team of administrators, instructors and staff, who ensure that every student receives the support needed to achieve his academic goals and develops into a productive and responsible servant leader.

**Mentoring Mixer** – Student will be required to participate in an activity that discusses the positive impact that a good role model can have in a person's life. Also, students will have an opportunity to meet mentors from the *Initiation to Graduation* mentoring program. After the mixer students will be given an opportunity to select a mentor. This activity will be held on campus and all freshman experience students are required to attend.

**Mentoring Match** – during this event, students will meet their mentor and discuss opportunities to maintain contact and ways that the mentor can be of assistance to the mentee. This activity will be held on campus and all freshman experience students are required to attend.

**Mid-term academic advisor visits** – Students will be required to visit with their academic advisors at least one (1) time during the middle of the semester.

**Opening Convocation** – Students are required to attend the University's opening convocation.

**Frequent connection meetings with mentors (throughout the year)** – Students in the Initiation to graduation program will be paired with mentors and encouraged to maintain frequent contact with them. Additionally, students will be expected to participate in various social and group activities throughout the academic year.

**Freshmen Achievement Day (each semester)** – Students who successfully complete their first academic semester of college will be invited to celebratory event in their honor. Parents, mentors, and teachers will be invited to share in the celebration.

## **Mentor Guidelines for Selma University's Initiation to Graduation Mentoring Program**

We are a four year Bible college with a mission to prepare men and women to be servant leaders throughout the world. Selma University seeks to stimulate students spiritually, intellectually and socially and to produce graduates who lead in the profession for which they were trained. Our doors are open to any who has a high school diploma or GED certificate and a desire to pursue a higher education. As such our programs are designed to help underprepared students gain the academic skills needed to be successful at the collegiate level. The University offers degrees at the Associate's, Bachelor's, and Master's level. Selma University is affiliated with and supported by the Alabama State Missionary Baptist Convention. It is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE).

**What is a Mentor?** (<http://www.apa.org/education/grad/mentoring.aspx>)

A mentor is an individual with expertise who can help develop the career of a mentee. A mentor often has two primary functions for the mentee. The career-related function establishes the mentor as a coach who provides advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development. The psychosocial function establishes the mentor as a role model and support system for the mentee. Both functions provide explicit and implicit lessons related to professional development as well as general work-life balance.

Research has consistently found mentored individuals to be more satisfied and committed to their professions than non-mentored individuals (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003). Furthermore, mentored individuals often earn higher performance evaluations, higher salaries, and faster career progress than non-mentored individuals. Mentors can also benefit from a successful mentoring relationship by deriving satisfaction from helping to develop the next generation of leaders, feeling rejuvenated in their own career development, learning how to use new technologies, or becoming aware of issues, methods, or perspectives that are important to their field.

**Mentor Job Description** (William Waheed, Cosmo-D Productions, L.L.C)

**Job Title:** Mentor

**Accountable to:** Selma University Office of Academic Affairs

**Specific Duties:**

- be a friend
- serves as positive role model
- be a good listener
- contacts student at least once a week
- reinforces student's success
- enhances positive self-esteem

- reports on partnerships requested and completes evaluation form
- helps student build a road map for success

**Qualifications:**

- Age: suggested minimum age of 23 and a college graduate or in a professional career (minister, etc.).
- Education: Has demonstrated a high value for education
- Experience: Worked with children, demonstrated commitment to education excellence, and effective interpersonal skills.
- Other: No criminal record, does not engage in substance abuse, is stable, accepts responsibilities, is economically stable, cares about helping children

**Time Requirements:** Minimum of one hour per week

**Benefits:** Being a positive influence in the life of a child

**Training Requirements:** Attends mentors orientation program and occasional group meetings.

**Expectation for Mentors (Selma University)**

- To attend mentors orientation
- To collaborate with peers to assess program and provide feedback
- To follow guidelines of the program
- To be committed to the mentoring relationship
- To maintain a Godly lifestyle throughout the relationship
- Present a professional

**Things to Do and Things to Not to Do**

**DO's** (William Waheed, Cosmo-D Productions, L.L.C, no. 5-12 --w/edits by SU)

- Recognize when a student needs professional help and counseling and make the appropriate suggestions.
- Conduct visits on campus and in an open area that is well-lighted.
- Report any acts of aggression or inappropriate conduct to the mentoring coordinator and Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- Preserve the mentor/student relationship in the proper perspective/friendship.
- Dress appropriately and in line with the student's dress code.
- Always listen carefully.
- Be yourself. Show trust, respect, and understanding to the student. An honest relationship will develop.
- Be patient. Ask for feedback from staff members who may see the results which you don't see.
- Be a friend! Support, challenge and care about your student.
- Decide in advance how much time and energy you can give.
- Say so, when you see the match isn't working. You can be paired with another student.

- Know that even though you may not see the benefits, the student will always remember that you cared.

**DON'T'S** (William Waheed, Cosmo-D Productions, L.L.C, no. 4-11, w/edits by SU)

- Say comments, make signs, or show displays of affection that are inappropriate or may be misconstrued by the student or observers.
- Take students off campus or provide them with products that are against school regulations.
- Complete students class work or assignments.
- Attempt to replace parents in situations that the parent should handle.
- Attempt to intervene in parent/student disputes.
- Be insincere or over identify with your student.
- Expect quick changes.
- Represent yourself as an overbearing authority figure.
- Become overly involved.
- Get discouraged if the student gets worse before getting better.
- Feel as though you have personally failed if the student doesn't respond/improve.

### **Character Traits of Mentors**

(Adapted in part from, "5 Traits to look for in a Mentor for Your Child" by Lauren Taylor, with edits by SU)

1. A mentor confesses a belief in Jesus Christ and leads a Christian life style. Selma University is a Bible college that prepares students be servant leaders throughout the world. Faith in Jesus Christ is essential for teachers, staff, and mentors.
2. A mentor empowers students to make Godly choices. We all face decisions in life. Some decisions are easy, while others may take careful consideration. Mentors empower youth to consider outcomes and repercussions by using life skills and Godly principles to help them in the decision making process.
3. A mentor encourages students to take ownership in their learning. The best learning comes from doing, not through lectures. Mentors should help students seek challenging tasks and push themselves to develop new skills. The goal is for students to become independent, sound decision makers.
4. A mentor helps students develop life skills. Setting attainable goals, overcoming challenges, learning techniques to manage thoughts and emotions – these are skills students need to learn and apply to all aspects of life.
5. A mentor helps students develop core values.

Mentors should guide students to understand and develop key values. The scripture is our primary guide for sharing principles and teachings that will help to guide their daily living and ethical decision making.

6. A mentor strengthens interpersonal skills and peer relationships. Mentors can model and encourage students to appreciate diversity and show respect to oneself, friend, playing partners and fellow competitors. Additionally, mentors should help students learn how to manage conflict in a peaceable way.

7. A mentor encourages appropriate dress and appearance. First impressions are often lasting ones. Whether you are an employee, manager, or owner, if attracting others is important for what you are doing, appropriate dress makes a difference.

## **Jesus Models Mentoring**

Dr. Stanford E. Angion

Mentoring is a widely used and reliable method for transforming and channeling the behavior of people into that of responsible and productive citizens in society. This we know from the Bible and other historical sources. Mentoring is often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (mentor) assists another (mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth.<sup>1</sup> For our discussion, Jesus is the mentor and his twelve disciples, His inner circle, are the mentees. We will briefly look at His relationship with these men and seek to discover some practical ways that we can become more effective mentors.

This model briefly reflects on Jesus' life prior to mentoring or discipling his apostles. In this example, mentoring must be distinguished from preaching, teaching, motivational speaking, counseling, serving as a spiritual advisor, etc. All of these ministries are powerful, and an integral part of the Body of Christ. Nevertheless, Jesus' model of mentoring is markedly different from these callings and ministries.

In the calling and mentoring of His twelve disciples, we observe four noteworthy considerations. First, Jesus prepared himself; secondly, he chose his mentees; thirdly, he gave the process priority; and fourthly, he commissioned his disciples to become servant leaders.

### **Preparation of the Mentor**

Although Jesus was born as the Son of God, the Savior of the world, yet He was born in lowly conditions, a stable and manger, and raised among common folks. Jesus lived and experienced life as other children of His community and culture, growing up in subjection to His parents. "Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."<sup>3</sup> Here are some interesting things about His preparation period.

**Jesus experienced human growth and development.** This was important because it lets others know that Jesus experienced what it is like to grow up in a common community and deal with the challenges of humanity. Perhaps His human experiences were more for us than for Himself. Consequently, His life demonstrates to us his love

and compassion, and ability to empathize with us. “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet he did not sin.”<sup>4</sup> He grew physically, mentally, emotionally, and in favor with God and man.

**He received confirmation and power.** After a period of physical growth and development, Jesus went to the Jordan River and demonstrated his submissiveness to the will of God and the need to publicly acknowledge His commitment to doing the will of God, His Father. Emerging from Baptism, the Holy Spirit filled Him with power for Earthly ministry and the voice of God Himself confirmed that Jesus was His beloved Son.<sup>5</sup>

**He underwent a period of separation and consecration**—His wilderness experience, prior to announcing his call, helps us to understand the need to strive for separation and consecration.<sup>6</sup> Such devotion helps us to reflect on who God is and our relationship to Him. It also helps us to learn more about our own humanity and need for the power and protection of the Savior.

When we mentor others, we open our lives and attempt to pour of ourselves, that which God has given us and made us to experience, into our mentees. Therefore we must seek to separate and consecrate ourselves unto the Lord before attempting to pour into others.

Prior to calling his twelve disciples, Jesus had grown from a child into an adult. Consequently we can presume He experienced the challenges that humans face growing up in a society and culture. His experiences may have included getting along as a member of His family, carrying out chores and being submissive to His parents, dealing with siblings, peers and the social issues of His day. As a young man He worked as a carpenter. After living for thirty (30) years among His people, growing in wisdom and stature, establishing a visible relationship with God, receiving confirmation of His call and consecrating Himself, Jesus then chose twelve mentees.

### **The mentor calls His mentees**

When Jesus was ready, prepared, He invited by name a limited number of men, 12, to become a part of His Life—His inner circle. This was not the call to salvation; this was the call to mentorship--a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person.<sup>7</sup>

Prior to calling His twelve (12) disciples, Jesus had many followers, disciples, who followed Him and listen to His teaching, and participated and/or witnessed great miracles performed by Jesus. They were his followers by will and He gladly received and ministered to them. However, the level of ministry was limited and Jesus often parted ways with them to get rest and teach others. Jesus did this for about a year. Then He became less committed to teaching crowds, and spent a significant amount of time teaching and grooming His twelve mentees and less committed to the multitudes. Why would Jesus do this? Doesn't it make sense to reach as many as possible, so that the work could flourish? Let us reflect briefly.

1. Jesus called His mentees—He chose them by name. Perhaps Jesus' mentees were designated to him by the Father.
2. He was accountable for his mentees. While praying to the Father for His disciples, Jesus mentions that He “protected them and kept them safe” and that none of them were lost except the “son of perdition,” that is, the one who was already in a damned state.”<sup>8</sup>

3. They were connected by and for purpose. By trade several were already fishermen, Jesus would mentor them to become fishers of men. <sup>9</sup>
4. They were needy –institutionally and internally oppressed (Jesus too, had been raised as such can anything good come from Nazareth?).<sup>10</sup>

### **The impartation process**

Mentees require personal attention. They must see, touch, hear and interact with the mentor. Jesus could, and for a while did teach, advise, lecture, inspire, and encourage multitudes; But He only chose to personally mentor the twelve (12). Jesus wasn't limited by His potential, but by the ability of the pupil. His mentees demanded much attention for learning and retention. The impartation process included:

- Teaching and learning –parables and principles
- Practical application—observing Jesus' interactions with others, dealing with issues and conflicts
- fellowshipping with mentees

Too often mentors engage in a relationship, and find that they are too busy to commit the quality time necessary to seek out and mentor the mentee. Although Jesus took 30 years to prepare, he was ready when He chose His disciples so he gave them his life. They got to see Jesus at his best and otherwise. They saw him at morning, noon and night. They saw how he dealt with people and situations in public and private. In this way, they knew firsthand how they were to live and minister. How they were to interact among themselves and others.

### **Commissioning and transforming of mentees**

Nearing his earthly departure, Jesus called his disciples together, spoke of the significance of his death and suffering, prayed, commanded them to carry on the work of making disciples and empowered them to do the work.

1. Institution of the Lord's Supper – This practice was intended to aid the memory and keep fresh the relationship that had been formed and the purpose for which Jesus came and gave His life. They were to practice it and do it often.<sup>11</sup>
2. Great Commission – Jesus commanded his disciples to engage in the work as their mission. This was the commander's intent. Today Christians still use this command as the guiding text for evangelistic ministry.<sup>12</sup>
3. Empowered by the Holy Spirit – Jesus said to His mentees that He must go away but he would send them the Holy Spirit, who would serve to empower them for the work of the ministry, without which they would be ineffective.<sup>13</sup>

### **Summary**

In an effective mentoring relationship, the mentee is transformed into a responsible and productive servant leader. Four noteworthy considerations in Jesus' relationship with his twelve disciples are preparing to be a mentor, connecting with mentees, impartation to mentees, and the commissioning and transforming of mentees.

During His time on earth, Jesus only mentored twelve (12) oppressed men. He led eleven (11) of them through the commissioning and transformation process. The son of

perdition was the only one lost. His disciples became the pillars of the Christian Church and were invaluable to establishing and supporting the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the world.

Today, more than 2000 years later, Christianity is the largest religious body in the world and it continues to grow.

# SELMA UNIVERSITY

## Initiation to Graduation Mentoring Program Mentor's Commitment Declaration

This declaration makes clear my fitness and great desire to serve as a mentor for college students at Selma University. Therefore, I will answer each question truthfully and to the best of my ability.

*Please answer **true** or **false** to the questions below as it pertains to your past.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I have no criminal record, nor have I ever been convicted or found guilty of child abuse, neglect or child endangerment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I do not engage in substance abuse, is stable, accepts responsibilities, is economically stable, and cares about helping children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I have never been arrested or found guilty of possess, use, or selling illegal drugs or substances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am not listed as a sex offender.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I have never served time in jail, detention, prison, etc. for committing a crime.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. To my knowledge there is no character flaw or criminal act that I have committed that will reflect negatively on the University or mentor relationship with a mentee.

*Please answer **yes** or **no** to the statements listed below regarding your level of commitment to serving as a mentor.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am a confessed believer in Jesus Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I have read and will abide by the list expectations for Selma University mentors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I will devote at least one (1) hour a week to contacting and sharing with my mentee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I have read and will abide by the do's and don'ts in the University Mentoring Guidelines.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I will communicate with my assigned mentee at least once a week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I will attend occasional group meetings with other University mentors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. When I can no longer effectively perform my duties as a University mentor, I will formerly relinquish my duties in a graceful manner.

By signing this commitment sheet I acknowledge that I have read and understand the statements above and has truthful responded to each of them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Coordinator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Date