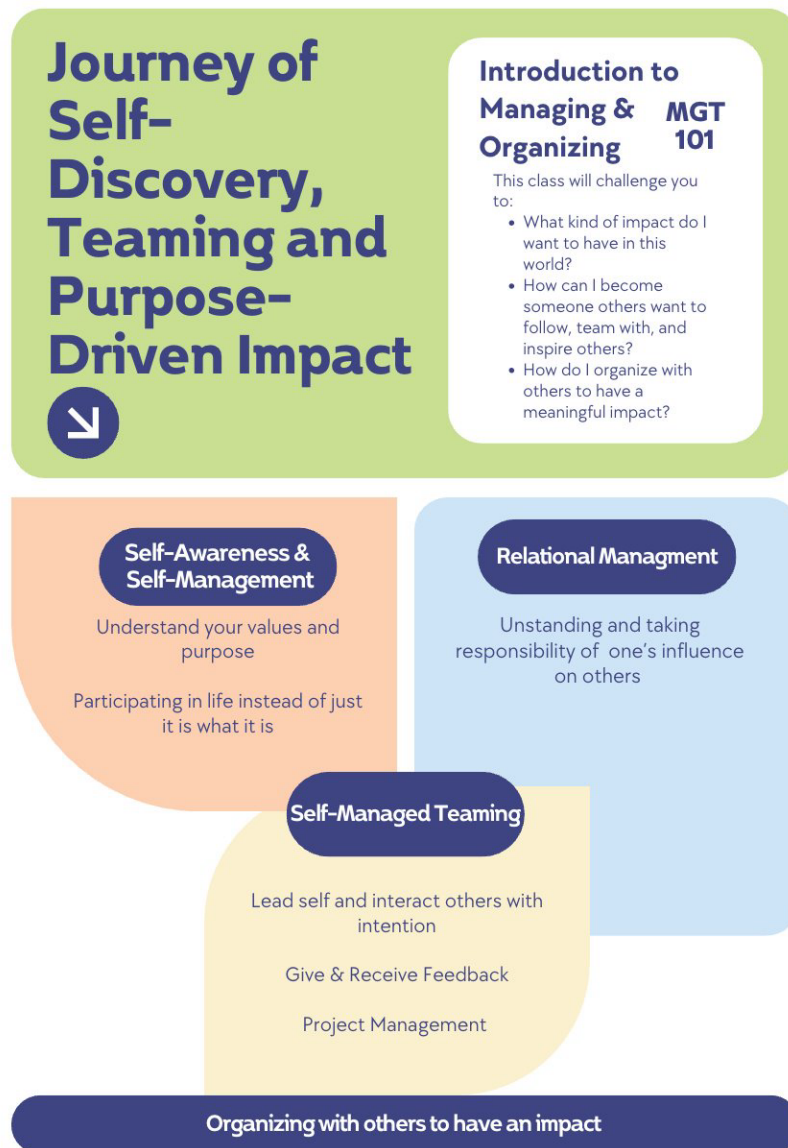


MGT 101: Student Alumni Mentor Handbook

A Guide to Mentoring Students in the Introduction to Managing & Organizing Course at Providence College

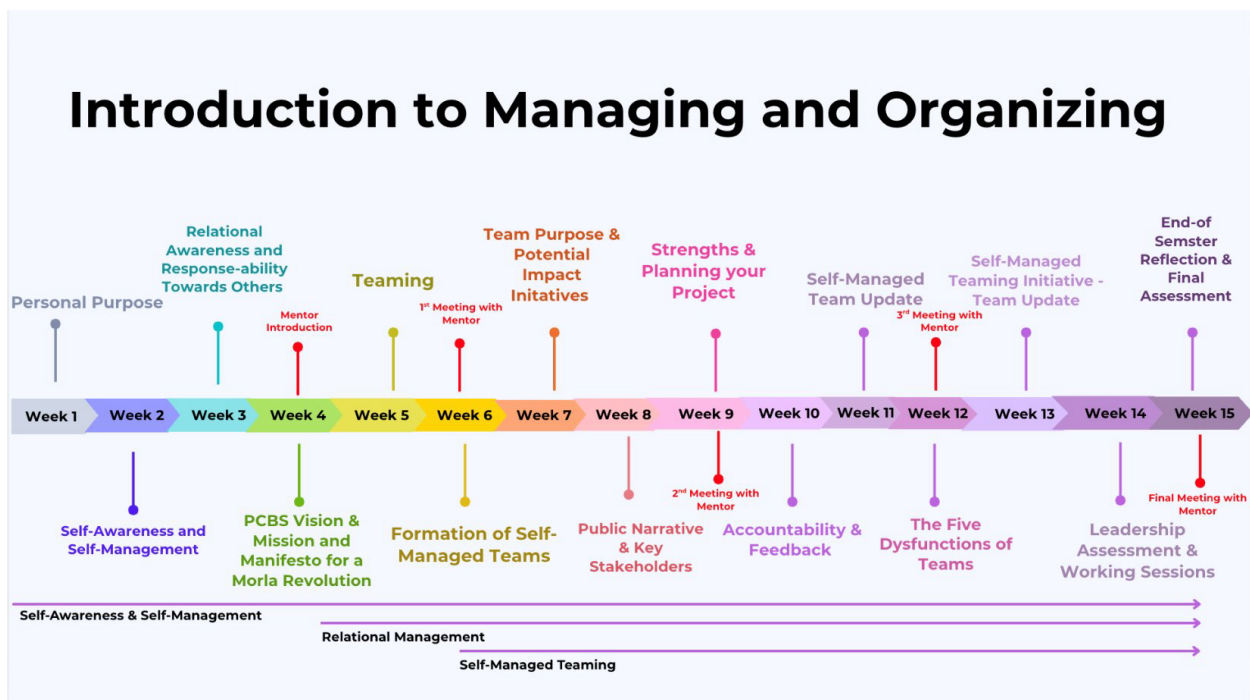


Congratulations, and thank you for stepping into this role as an Alumni Mentor! Your participation in this program is not just an opportunity to give back, it is an invitation to shape the lives of students in a way that transcends the classroom and impacts their personal and professional futures.

MGT 101 is not just another business course. It is a transformative experience that challenges students to step beyond transactional and passive learning and into a space of deep self-discovery, personal responsibility, engagement, and initiative to self-organize in teams to have a positive impact on others. Most students who take this course leave with an increased self-understanding, more self-confidence, and the ability to manage themselves and to be an effective and responsible team member.

Your role as an alumni mentor is to help facilitate that self-transformation, not by giving students the answers or telling them what they should do, but by helping them ask better questions, refine their thinking, take initiative, learn from their experience, and take responsibility for their learning and performance as team member.

Purpose and Context of MGT 101



Introduction to Managing & Organizing is designed to develop students': **Self-Awareness** – and understanding their values, motivations, and impact on others; **Self-Management skills** – learning how to take responsibility for their learning, decisions, actions and who they are becoming; and **Teamwork & Leadership** – teaming, collaborating with partners and

stakeholders, engaging conflict resolution and decision-making, giving and receiving feedback, taking initiative, and fulfilling the team's shared purpose.

At its core, this course provokes and supports students to engage in the world in a meaningful and responsible way. Instead of memorizing abstract theories and concepts, students are required to act and learn through and from their experience — to take initiative, collaborate, lead, and create something that has a real impact on the world beyond the walls of the classroom. The course is structured around a **Self-Managed Teaming Initiative** in which students work in self-managed teams to create and execute an initiative that has a meaningful impact on the RI community, based on their values and passions.

Most college student now see their classes as simply a means to an end—a path to a good grade, a strong GPA, and ultimately, a diploma that will help them secure a well-paying job or admission to graduate school. Unfortunately, their attention and effort are not on their learning or develop nor the engaging in the processes that lead to these outcomes. Based on what they have told us, the dominant student mindset is to put in the least amount of work necessary to achieve the highest possible grade across five different courses, then wash, rinse, and repeat for 8 consecutive semesters. While students are often completing their assignments and attending classes, what's missing is meaningful engagement, learning, and development.

Beyond academics, today's students are also navigating more distractions than ever before. These include social pressures, the omnipresence of social media, and a culture that prioritizes short-term rewards over the long-term rewards that require effort, discomfort, persistence, and grit. They have been conditioned to seek immediate answers, quick success, and external validation, often at the expense of developing the grit, discipline, and curiosity that real learning and personal development requires. This course challenges the behaviors that have become habitual for many of our students. It shifts the focus from external validation to internal fulfillment, from passive learning to active engagement, and from seeking shortcuts to embracing the long, sometimes uncomfortable, but deeply rewarding process of meaningful learning and development.

While many students enter this course thinking it's just "another course" — one more requirement to check off — it is more often than not that by the end of the semester, they walk away vocalizing how much more valuable than a grade or a completed assignment this class was for them. As evidenced in their written reflections at the end of the semester and recent graduates, this class provides a rare and transformative opportunity, not just to learn about managing, leading, and organizing, but to truly understand and transform themselves

Guiding students to reach this level of engagement requires a delicate and intentional "dance" among the professor, alumni mentors, and the students themselves. This process is about

building trust, challenging assumptions, asking questions, exploring possibilities, experimenting, and gradually opening students up to committing to this class in a way they haven't had to in the past.

The Self-Managed Teaming Initiative

You will mentor students as they engage in their Self-Managed Teaming Initiatives. In each section of the course, students self-organize into four self-managed teams who will choose, design, and execute an initiative to make a positive impact in the RI community. They must take ownership of the process, from incubation to research to implementation. The course puts students at the center and provides them with a structure and process that facilitates their learning and development as human beings, team members, and leaders over the course of the semester. Students engage in project planning, provide feedback to and receive feedback from their team members, engage in personal storytelling and team presentations, conduct research and interviews, establish relationships with partners and stakeholders, and, overall, reflect on and learn from their individual and collective experience.

Your role as an Alumni Mentor

Your role as an Alumni Mentor is not to give students the answers but to help them ask better questions, challenge their thinking, imagine possibilities, take initiative, learn from their experience, and guide them toward discovering and fulfilling their potential. You to tell them what to do. Rather, you are a coach who supports their learning and development.

The most impactful mentoring arises from coaching rather than instructing. Encourage your students to think bigger, imagine possibilities, step outside their comfort zones, take risks, and embrace the learning process, rather than seeking shortcuts or easy solutions to simply fulfill the requirements of the course. Push them to step beyond their comfort zones, challenge their own assumptions, and act, even when they don't have all the answers. Help students become aware of their preconditioned transactional mindsets and show them the power of deep engagement and purpose. Help them see that their work is not just about completing a project. But that it is about such things as developing as human beings, team members, and leaders by organizing on purpose to positively impact others' lives.

It is important that they are working as a team rather than a group of individuals (e.g., delegating roles and responsibilities in a way that leverages each team member's strengths, rather than allowing one person to shoulder all the responsibility). Spread your communication across various team members, rather than funneling it through a single person—this will encourage shared leadership and accountability.

Most of all, be a mentor who inspires self-confidence and fosters initiative and independence—someone who supports, challenges, and empowers these students to realize that they are capable of more than they ever imagined.

In summary, your role is to:

- Challenge students to think critically and creatively
- Push them to take responsibility for their learning, development, and team's performance
- Encourage them to engage deeply, not just go through the motions
- Support them in imagining possibilities, refining their ideas, taking initiative, and engaging in effective problem-solving
- Help them build self-confidence in their ability to organize to have a meaningful impact
- And most importantly, you are here to show them that they are capable of more than they realize and to fulfill their potential!

What This Looks Like in Practice

You will be assigned two of the four teams to meet with twice and then you will switch to meet with the other two teams twice. These meetings will be on Teams, unless you happen to be in the area and can meet with them in person.

When students ask for the answer, help them find their own.

When they want to take shortcuts, remind them that real progress comes from effort.

When they get discouraged, show them how much they've already grown.

When they struggle, help them work through it, not avoid it.

You are trying to facilitate the practice of teaming and learning from their experience of teaming.

We explain it to the students this way: What does every professional athlete say they had to do to get to the top? Practice. What does every great musician say they had to do to master their craft? Practice.

This course is their practice ground. Let them struggle, refine, iterate, and learn from their “failures”. Help them see the value in the process, not just the outcome.

Some Suggestions for Effectively Engaging with Students

Below, find some questions you can ask to help students expand their thinking, explore new possibilities, and raise their awareness of their own potential:

Helping Them Clarify Their Purpose & Vision

- Why did you choose this initiative? What personally draws you to this work?

- What impact do you hope to have? How will the world be different because of this initiative?
- What excites you the most about this project? What scares you the most?

Pushing Them to Think Bigger & Take Initiative

- Who else can you talk to that might have insight on your project?
- What's one thing you can do this week that will push this initiative forward?
- What's holding you back from taking that next step?

Encouraging Problem-Solving

- What challenges have you faced so far? How have you approached solving them?
- If you had unlimited resources, what would you do differently?
- What feedback have you received? How are you integrating it into your work?

Taking Responsibility for Self and Team

- How did you participate in your team's failure to...?
- What will you do differently going forward, based on what you have learned from...?
- How can you better support your teammates to thrive and team's performance?

Guiding Reflection & Growth

- How have you grown since the beginning of this course?
- What's something you've done in this class that you never thought you were capable of?
- What skills have you developed that you can take with you beyond this class?

Final Thoughts

As an Alumni Mentor, you have the opportunity to be a coach, guide, and source of inspiration to students as they navigate their Self-Managed Teaming Initiative. It might be the first time these students have been challenged to take initiative, manage uncertainty, and create something from the ground up. Your role is to be the open door and a safe space where they can bring their ideas, ask tough questions, refine their thinking, learn from their mistakes, and gain confidence in their ability to execute.

The fact that these students have a mentor they can depend on, who believes in them, and who is committed to helping them explore, struggle, and grow is invaluable to the learning and development. You are not just offering advice; you are offering perspective, experience, encouragement, and the kind of support that can turn a good idea into something truly impactful.

Your obligation as a mentor isn't overwhelming, but it does require attention and intention. Being there for the monthly Teams meetings, responding to students when they reach out to you, and ensuring they feel supported are essential parts of this commitment. No one should feel burdened by this role, but it's crucial that students know they can trust and count on you.

The Structure of the Mentorship Program (Approximate Dates of Fixed Obligations. The semester is composed of 28 class meetings and a final)

Class 8 – Introduction to Mentorship & Your Role

Meet students, introduce yourself, and set the tone for the semester.

Explain how you will be supporting them but also challenging them.

Week of Class 13 – Refining Their “Why”

Help students define their initiative’s purpose and intended impact.

Emphasize taking initiative, conducting research, and engaging stakeholders.

Week of Class 18 – Progress & Problem-Solving

Check in on their progress and help them navigate challenges.

Guide them through their GNATT chart and next steps.

Week of Class 24 – Finalizing & Strengthening Their Work

Review their initiatives and help them refine execution strategies.

Push them to ensure meaningful impact.

Finals week before Final Presentation – Preparing for Their Final Presentation

Provide feedback on their trial run.

Encourage them to communicate with confidence and purpose.