



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

GFA Mentoring Circles Program Overview

Group on Faculty Affairs (GFA)

Program Purpose

The GFA Mentoring Circles Program serves to connect mentors with a group of mentees to help them 1) learn about the GFA, 2) engage with GFA colleagues, and 3) find ways to expand their involvement in the GFA.*

Through this year-long experience, participants will be connected with valuable professional development resources, garner advice, and share best practices with members of their Mentoring Circle. By engaging in this unique networking opportunity, mentors and mentees will both build meaningful professional connections across the GFA community that can continue to serve them well beyond the Program's one-year commitment.

*Please note that you must be a GFA member to participate in the GFA Mentoring Circles Program. Please contact gfa@aamc.org with questions.

Program Description

Instead of traditional one-on-one mentorships where a single mentor meets with a single mentee, mentoring circles involve several mentors (usually 2-3) and several mentees (usually 5-7) who regularly convene together to discuss topics of interest that mentors have experience or expertise in.

Program Application, Assignment, and Kickoff

Program Application

An announcement to apply to the [GFA Mentoring Circles Program](#) is emailed each spring from the AAMC to all GFA members with links to mentor and mentee applications. The announcement is also shared with the GFA Listserv and current Mentoring Circles Program participants. All interested GFA members are encouraged to apply.

Circle Assignment

Mentor and mentee applications are reviewed by the GFA Mentoring Circles Coordination Team, who assign participants to a Mentoring Circle based on several factors, such as:

- Career goals of mentees and alignment with mentor expertise
- Roles and responsibilities of mentees at their organizations
- Institutions, so as not to pair mentees and mentors together from the same institution, where possible

Each year, the number of accepted participants determines the total number of Mentoring Circles formed for the Program. Each Mentoring Circle will consist of 2-3 mentors and 5-7 mentees.

Program Kickoff

Selected participants are formally notified of acceptance into the Program by the GFA Mentoring Circles Coordination Team. Mentors are notified first, so that co-mentors can connect with each other and jointly reach out to mentees to welcome them to the Program.

Details about the Program Kickoff Session (usually during the annual GFA Professional Development Conference) are sent to all participants. Attendance at the Kickoff Session is not mandatory for participation in the Program. However, mentors and mentees are expected to connect to collectively define a monthly meeting schedule for their Mentoring Circle that allows them to complete the recommended Program curriculum.

Program Participant Expectations

A successful Mentoring Circle experience requires active engagement from both mentors and mentees. Expectations for each role are described below.

Mentor Expectations

Each Mentoring Circle will have 2-3 mentors, who are expected to:

1. Connect with co-mentor(s) and jointly reach out to mentees to welcome them to the Program and encourage them to participate in the Program Kickoff Session.
2. Attend the GFA Mentoring Circles Program Kickoff Session at the annual GFA Professional Development Conference and engage with assigned mentees. Follow up with all mentees after the Kickoff Session, especially those who are unable to attend.
3. Collaborate with Mentoring Circle mentees to define a monthly meeting schedule that enables completion of the recommended Program curriculum over the course of a year (before the next GFA Professional Development Conference).
4. Facilitate monthly meetings, covering topics on the recommended Program curriculum and encourage mentees to bring topics important to them for group discussion. Collectively digest information during conversations and foster feelings of social inclusion. Co-mentors should share in the responsibilities of managing the Circle.
5. Discuss and set realistic goals or areas of focus with mentees.
6. Introduce and facilitate connection of mentees to GFA members and leadership. Mentees will receive rosters for the GFA Mentoring Circles Program and GFA Steering Committee.
7. Introduce mentees to potential GFA mentors in similar roles/areas of interest.
8. Encourage mentees to utilize the GFA Listserv, apply for GFA Subcommittees, attend future GFA Conferences, and submit abstracts for future GFA Conferences, as applicable.
9. Check in regularly with mentees to ask about experiences in the Program.
10. Complete GFA Mentoring Circle evaluation to ensure continuous improvement of the Program.
11. Share feedback with the GFA Mentoring Circles Coordination Team about your experiences throughout the year, with the intent to improve the Program.

Mentee Expectations

Each Mentoring Circle will have 5-7 mentees, who are expected to:

1. Attend the GFA Mentoring Circles Program Kickoff Session at the annual GFA Professional Development Conference, if feasible, and engage with assigned mentors.
2. Collaborate with Mentoring Circle mentors and mentees to define a monthly meeting schedule that enables completion of the recommended Program curriculum over the course of a year (before the next GFA Professional Development Conference). Mentees are expected to have some schedule flexibility to participate in the majority of scheduled meetings.
3. Discuss and set realistic goals or areas of focus with mentors.
4. Utilize the knowledge and skills of mentors to enhance knowledge of GFA resources, connect with GFA colleagues, and find ways to expand involvement in the GFA community.
5. Collaborate with mentors to identify GFA colleagues with similar roles/areas of interests that would make them potential collaborators or mentors after the year-long Mentoring Circle Program concludes.
6. Share feedback with mentors about experiences throughout the Program.
7. Complete GFA Mentoring Circle evaluation to ensure continuous improvement of the Program.

Program Curriculum, Evaluation, and Closeout

Program Curriculum

Each Mentoring Circle will collaboratively engage in a year-long recommended curriculum provided by the Mentoring Circles Coordination Team. The curriculum includes networking activities, peer sharing/support, and information about the

GFA Steering Committee and Subcommittees, AAMC and GFA resources, and timely events throughout the year, such as abstract submissions for the GFA Conference and GFA award nominations. Program participants also have the opportunity to suggest topics for group discussion.

Program Evaluation

Participants will have opportunities to provide feedback about their experiences in the annual Program via evaluation surveys and directly to the Mentoring Circles Coordination Team at any point during the Program. Feedback is considered when making improvements for future Program years.

Program Closeout

Details about the Program Closeout Session (usually during the annual GFA Professional Development Conference) are sent to all participants. Attendance at the Closeout Session is not mandatory; however, it is a great opportunity to professionally mark an end to a year-long relationship and meet new GFA colleagues.

GFA Resources

The GFA website includes information on GFA news, upcoming events, resources, professional development opportunities, and ways to get more involved in the GFA. GFA members have access to numerous resources on the website, such as:

- GFA Listserv
- GFA Guidebook
- Current and Archived GFA Webinars for Professional Development and Scholarship

The GFA webpage also contains information about the GFA Steering Committee and four Subcommittees that GFA members are nominated to join each year:

- Communications Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Program Planning Committee
- Research and Scholarship Committee

Please contact gfa@aamc.org with questions.