FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE – UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA

STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAMME

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Terms of Reference of the Student Mentoring Programme
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna

1. Background
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna initiated the student mentoring programme in 2019 to encourage students to connect with academic staff members on a professional basis to build up strong, trusting relationships in order to support, motivate and guide them towards their future goals. Further, through this student mentoring programme, the faculty intends to extend support for students to acclimate themselves to university life, as well as prepare them for graduation and entering the workforce. The faculty mentoring program expects to develop productive mentee and mentor relationships and use this platform to share new ideas, diminish isolation, improve engagement, increase retention rates and enhance skill development.

2. Purpose
The main purpose of the student mentoring programme of Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna is to support and encourage the students to manage their academic activities effectively while assisting them in resolving their personal burdens in order to maximize their potential for academic work, wellbeing, and overall performance throughout the university life.

3. Student Mentoring Committee
The Faculty Board shall appoint the Student Mentoring Committee which comprises of one academic staff member representing each department of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna. The chairperson will be the faculty coordinator for the Student Mentoring Committee and the secretary shall be selected from the department representatives selected for the Student Mentoring Committee by the faculty board. The details of the committee are as follows.

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<tr>
<th>To whom shall the committee report</th>
<th>To the Faculty Board, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Chairperson - Faculty Coordinator of Mentoring Programme Secretary (Will be selected among the department representative for student mentoring programme) One representative from each department (Department of Crop Science, Agric. Biology, Agric. Economics, Food Science and Technology, Soil Science, Animal Science, Agric. Engineering,</td>
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Computer Unit

**Selection of members**
By the Faculty Board, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna

**Duration of the term**
Three years

**Meetings**
The student mentoring committee will meet once in every three months. The number of meetings per year shall not be less than four. Depending on the need of the faculty academic programmes more meetings will be arranged to discuss the activities and issues pertaining to the Faculty Mentoring Programme.

**Transfer of documents at the end of the term**
All documents related to Student Mentoring Programme will be kept with the chairperson (Faculty Coordinator of Student Mentoring Programme). Handing over of these should be done at the end of the term of the committee.

### 4. Process of mentoring

#### 4.1 Appointment of mentors

i. Each student will be allocated with a mentor when they start studying at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna as a first-year undergraduate. The assigned mentee will remain unchanged until the student graduates if there is no special request from the student or the respective staff member.

ii. The allocation of mentors will be carried out by the Student Mentoring Committee appointed by the Faculty Board under the direct supervision of the Faculty Coordinator for the Student Mentoring Programme.

iii. A mentor should be a permanent academic staff member of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna. An academic staff member can be appointed as a mentor for many mentees.

iv. The approved list of the mentors and mentees should be displayed at the main notice board of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, and the notice boards at the departments. The same document will be shared with the respective students via official email groups and Learning Management System.

v. An appointment letter should be issued to the mentor including all the names and registration numbers of the mentees.

vi. A mentor for a mentee should be appointed for a period of four years or until that mentee completes his/her degree programme.

vii. A copy of the approved list of mentors should be kept in a separate file with the Student Mentoring Committee for further references.

#### 4.2. Scheduling mentoring sessions

i. A meeting means an official contact between the mentor and mentee.

ii. Mentors are encouraged to organize face-to-face conversations with their respective mentees as much as possible. In case of difficulties in arranging face-to-face meetings,
communication via telephone calls/Skype/Zoom or any other appropriate method can be arranged.

iii. The mentee should meet his/her mentor at least once per month. The Student Mentoring Committee encourages mentors to organize a meeting with their mentees every Wednesday allocating a convenient time. However, it can be vary depending on the requirement and availability of the mentee/mentor.

iv. Before commencing meetings, the mentee should take an appointment from his/her mentor via phone call/e-mail/any other convenient method to the mentor.

4.3 Responsibilities of mentors

i. The mentors’ role is to act on behalf of the faculty to support a mentee who is enrolled in a degree programme at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna.

ii. The mentor will act within an agreed range of confidentiality and will ensure they have the best interests of the mentee in mind at all times.

iii. In each mentoring session, primary attention should be provided regarding the academic performance, mental status, and social behaviour of the student that might affect the student's academic performance.

iv. The mentor should review the academic progress of each mentee at the end of the semester and necessary actions should be taken to enhance the academic performance and progress of the student.

v. In addition, it is expected that mentors will provide the following support for mentees where necessary.

   a) Provide proper guidance for newly enrolled students to be responsible and respectful university students throughout his/her university life
   b) Guiding students for their academic activities whenever necessary
   c) Supporting students to manage their challenging issues within the university
   d) Provision of information about the institutional framework and management process in the faculty and university
   e) Provision of information about the services and facilities available in the faculty and university for students
   f) Identification of differently able students and their necessities and communicate them to the administration whenever necessary
   g) Encouraging students to identify their inherent talents and skills and helping them to develop their self-confidence, direct students to improve their soft skills, personality, and social responsibilities.
   h) Provide students with constructive feedback in a way that they can identify their strengths and weaknesses and plan their future course of action on their own
i) Periodically taking feedback from mentees regarding the mentoring sessions and adjusting accordingly

j) Help mentees to manage time, plan and prioritize work, set goals and action plans, gain a better understanding of their work

k) Maintenance of records of mentoring with confidentiality

l) Direct the students for counselling if mentee requires and act as a facilitator for the process

4.4 Best practices for mentors for effective mentor-mentee relationships

i. The mentor should be an active listener and learning facilitator.

ii. The mentor should explore the issue with the student by deep questioning and answering sessions.

iii. The mentor can share his/her own experience, lessons learned, and advice upon the mentee’s request.

iv. The mentor should encourage, inspire, and challenge the mentee to achieve his/her goals and help to build the mentee’s confidence through supportive feedback.

v. The mentor should always maintain a trustworthy relationship with his/her mentee by keeping conversations and other communications confidential, honouring scheduled meetings and calls, consistently showing interest and support, and being honest with the mentee.

vi. Maintain a friendly tone and be positive.

vii. Be aware of the background information of the mentee.

viii. Give positive feedback when your mentee is doing something right.

ix. Set goals with the mentee concerning the academic activities.

x. Always try to provide feedback constructively. Help the mentee to develop their own plan to come up with solutions for their problems/difficulties.

xi. Do not discuss confidential information and do not share private information.

xii. Maintain the highest level of confidentiality of the details of the mentee.

4.5 Maintaining mentoring records

All mentors are expected to complete the initial contact form (Annex 01) during their first meeting with the assigned mentee.

The mentor should maintain a separate file for each mentee by fastening this of the mentoring form as the first page and by adding student mentoring records (Annex 02) of the consecutive meetings relevant for each mentee.

The mentor should maintain a registry for mentoring sessions with themselves.
After the first meeting, all mentees will be requested to keep proper records of their student-mentor meetings through their “mentoring logbook” (Annex 03) and all mentors must supervise whether the students are completing their logbooks accurately.

The mentor should strictly maintain the privacy of all the records.

5. Directing for Student Counselling

If the mentor feels that the mentee needs counselling in particular situations, he/she can contact the Faculty Coordinator of the Student Mentoring Programme for any further advice. Then the relevant mentee can be directed to the Student Counsellors through the Deputy Senior Student Counsellor at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna. It is expected that the relevant mentor will stay along with the mentee throughout the process as a facilitator to support him/her through the counselling process.
Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna
Mentoring Programme for Students

INITIAL CONTACT FORM
Date: .................................................................

Name with Initials: ............................................................
Index No (Temporary): ............................................................
Contact telephone number: ............................................................
Current address: ............................................................
Email: ............................................................
Year of entry: ............................................................

Home address: ............................................................
Home telephone: ............................................................

Accommodation: □ Hostel available □ Others
Scholarship: □ Mahapola □ Others

• What do you understand by the mentoring programme?
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• Do you like to get the service of the faculty mentoring programme?
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Faculty of Agriculture – University of Ruhuna

Student Mentoring Record

Name of the student: ………………………………………     Index Number: ……………………………

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<th>Facts discussed/ Issues</th>
<th>Measures Taken/Remarks</th>
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Faculty of Agriculture – University of Ruhuna

Student Mentoring Logbook

Please refer to the attached soft copy of the Student Mentoring Logbook of Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna.