

ScholarMatch

Connecting Students with the Community to Make College Possible



Career Connections

College to Career Program



Career Coach Manual

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Thank you for volunteering with ScholarMatch! You are making a difference.



Career Connections Overview

ScholarMatch Mission

Our mission is to make college possible for underserved youth by matching students with donors, resources, colleges, and professional networks.

Why Professional Networking?

At ScholarMatch, we believe that our work does not stop until our students begin their own work. Saint Joseph's University Professor Maria Kefalas indicated "*Networking is one of the most important, but neglected elements of the college experience.*" She quotes John Bennett, Director of the Master of Science and executive coaching program at the McColl School of Business stating "*Research tells us that between 60 to 80 percent of jobs are found through personal relationships.*"¹ To combat our college students' limited professional resources, ScholarMatch is bridging the gap between college life and the professional world by matching students with a Career Coach in their field of study who will support the student in gaining valuable professional and networking skills.

[Read full Kefalas Article](#)

Program Objectives

1. Student grows in professional communication skills, develops professional documents, and gains exposure to a professional in their prospective field.
2. Coaches are able to contribute to the professional development of a college student in a meaningful way.

Working With Students

Typically, ScholarMatch students come from a low-income household and are first in their family to go to college. Because of this, our students face unique challenges during their college and post graduation experience. Attached is a reflective narrative written by a college graduate who comes from a similar background as our students.

[Read Reflections: Bridging Cultures Article by Julia Lara](#)

¹ Kefalas, M. (2014) *Stop Worrying About Your Child Getting Into College. Worry About What Happens Next.* New York Times

Expectations

Participating volunteers are expected to:

- Have a desire to give professional guidance to a college student aspiring to enter their field.
- Participate in an orientation call and an introduction call to “meet” their student.
- Review this manual for resources; submit online form through portal after each student collaboration, and complete feedback survey at the end of program.
- Partner with student for at least 3 (1 hour) collaborations throughout program duration.
- Contact staff if Career Coach has: questions about the training materials or any issues that arise while collaborating with the student.

Procedures:

- Students will request the meeting date and details in advance through the Career Connections portal. An automated email will be sent to confirm meeting details.
- In-person meetings should take place at the ScholarMatch office, at a coffee shop or restaurant, at a public place on campus or at the Career Coach’s office during business hours.
- Once the Career Coach signs up, their profile will be active and available for a student match.
- The Career Connections program will run during 3 different sessions throughout the year. If Career Coach receives a student match request but is unavailable during that session, contact the ScholarMatch staff to be switched to inactive until available to participate again. There will only be one student match per session. Timeline details below.
- If Career Coach develops a strong bond with student and would like to maintain contact after completing the 3 interactions, maintaining communication is encouraged and will no longer require documented interactions.

Student-Coach Collaboration Menu

Below are **five** relevant sessions to help students grow professionally. Students and Career Coaches will mutually agree on which collaboration topics to pursue and the best method to connect. Further details are provided for each session in part II.

- I. **Resume & LinkedIn:** Create and/ or review the student’s Resume & LinkedIn account.
- II. **Interview:** Review interview best practices on how students can stand out as a candidate and rock the interview. Conduct a mock interview to refine interview skills.
- III. **Insider Scoop:** Also known as an Informational Interview, the Insider Scoop session allows for the student to ask relevant questions about a typical career path, development and preparation for a specific industry.

- IV. **Internship or Job Search:** Create a polished Cover Letter draft, review internship and job search best practices, and speak about tips on how to be a successful intern or employee.
- V. **Office Visit:** Student visits Career Coach in a professional setting: at the place of work or a company event. Ideally, the student will meet other professionals within the company.



Program Timelines

Fall Timeline

June	Student registration
July	Career Coach recruitment and registration
August	Career Coach and Student Orientation; Introduction calls
September	Career Coach and Student collaborate to review professional goals
November 30	Program concludes; Complete feedback survey

Spring Timeline

January	Student registration; Career Coach recruitment and registration
February	Career Coach and Student Orientation; Introduction calls
March	Career Coach and Student collaborate to review professional goals
May 31	Program concludes; Complete feedback survey

Summer Timeline

March	Student registration
April	Career Coach recruitment and registration
May	Career Coach and Student Orientation; Introduction calls
June	Career Coach and Student collaborate to review professional goals
August 31	Program concludes; Complete feedback survey



Description of Collaborations

Resume & LinkedIn Account

Create and/or review the student's Resume and LinkedIn profile account.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will email Career Coach a copy of resume for review. Student will create a LinkedIn account and send link to Career Coach for review.
- **During:** Career Coach will provide constructive feedback for the student's resume (format, word choice, and overall appearance) and offer suggestions for student's LinkedIn account.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Student will receive suggestions and make appropriate adjustments to both the Resume and LinkedIn account. Follow up- Student will email an updated copy of their resume for final review and ask any final questions to the Career Coach.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Career Coach:

- The goal of this session is to provide an “expert eye” while reviewing the student's professional documents. Provide industry specific suggestions based off of your industry standards and trends. Suggest any relevant information onto the student's Resume or LinkedIn account to help the student stand out as an applicant.

[Relevant Resume Article](#)

[Relevant LinkedIn Article](#)

Interview

Review interview best practices on how students can make a positive impression as a candidate and stand out during the interview. Conduct a mock interview to refine interview skills.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will practice highly used interview questions and research appropriate interview attire.
- **During:** First, the Career Coach and student will review interview tips and answer any initial questions. Then, the Career Coach conducts a mock interview using industry specific questions and takes notes. Career Coach provides feedback for improvement.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Follow up- Student and Career Coach have the option to conduct a second mock interview on the phone or in person.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Career Coach:

- Ask questions relevant to the job position or industry that you have been asked or questions that you ask candidates during an interview.
- Replicate a typical interview setting related to the industry (if possible).
- Provide constructive but gentle feedback, as this may be the student's first practice at a professional interview setting.

[Relevant Interview Article](#)

Insider Scoop

Also known as an Informational Interview, the Insider Scoop session allows for the student to ask relevant questions about a typical career path, development and preparation for a specific industry.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will compile a list of questions to ask the Career Coach about the industry.
- **During:** Student will ask questions to Career Coach and Career Coach can add useful insight relevant for an entry level candidate. Career Coach may also share information about his or her own professional and educational journey.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 30 minutes

Tips for Career Coach:

- Remember back when you were a college student or recent graduate and think about the advice you wish you would have known at that age or time in your life.
- Encourage the student to take the lead and guide the discussion. If there are any suggestions you would give to the student about conducting another Informational Interview in the future, share those tips for the student to build those skills.

[Relevant Informational Interview Article](#)

Internship or Job Search

Create a polished Cover Letter draft, review internship and job search best practices, and speak about tips on how to be a successful intern or entry-level candidate.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Student will create a Cover Letter draft or bring their Cover Letter questions to begin the process. Career Coach can compile a list of job search websites specific to industry.
- **During:** Student and Career Coach will review Cover Letter materials and edit the document. Speak about the best internship and job search techniques and go online to review how to search for postings. Student will pick at least one opportunity to apply to in the future. Career Coach will provide tips about the qualities and skills of successful interns.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form. Student will make appropriate adjustments to Cover Letter draft. Follow up- Student will “apply” to the opportunity by showing or emailing Career Coach all application materials (including a polished and personalized Cover Letter, Resume and References). After Career Coach reviews the draft application, student is encouraged to apply to the position.

Recommended method: In person

Time estimate: 1 hour

Tips for Career Coach:

- This may be the student’s first time applying for a job or internship opportunity. Building these skills will be extremely helpful for the student to master to use in their future career. It will be important to be patient as the student may need you to walk them through the process from beginning until the end.
- This session might require follow up. Providing encouragement is key because students may not hear back from the company and get discouraged. Follow up is an important component to applying to opportunities and yet students do not know how to follow up appropriately.
- Provide insight about your experience as an intern or job seeker.

[Relevant Internship Article](#)

[Relevant Cover Letter Article](#)

Office Visit

Student visits Career Coach in a professional setting: at the place of work or a company event.

Sample Structure of the Session

- **Before:** Career Coach prepares student with information on what to expect during the Office Visit. This includes the various employees the student may meet during the visit, what the appropriate attire is, the company culture and environment, as well as the schedule.
- **During:** Career Coach will introduce student to a professional work environment and review the daily activities of the company. Student will take notes and speak with any employees if introduced. Ideally, the student can interact with other staff to see the various job types.
- **After:** Student and Career Coach will decide on the next collaboration date and topic; both submit brief collaboration form.

Only Method: In person

Estimated time: 1 hour

Tips for Career Coach:

- Plan a brief agenda for the job shadow to make most use of your time, your company's time and the student's time.
- Introduce student to any interns or entry level candidates so that the student may ask questions to people in a similar stage of life.
- The job shadow can be short and sweet. Ask the student beforehand to see what he or she is interested in learning or observing during the meeting.

[Relevant Job Shadow Article](#)