WiSE Peer Mentoring Program

Attending the University of Iowa the fall of 2017?

Interested in getting an awesome MENTOR to help guide you through your first year on campus?

The Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) Program will begin its 24th year at The University of Iowa in the fall of 2017! WiSE provides academic and social support to undergraduate women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) majors through three main programs: the Peer Mentoring Program, the Living-Learning Community, and the WiSE Ambassadors.

The WiSE Undergraduate Peer Mentoring Program, started in 1996, is the longest-running mentoring program at The University of Iowa! We are very proud of this program and its success. First-year women who participate in our Peer Mentoring Program as mentees graduate with STEM degrees at twice the national average!

One thing we know: Mentoring Works!

Each first-year student (mentee) who enters UI majoring in engineering and/or a science-related field is matched one-on-one with an upper-level student (mentor) who has a similar major or career interest. The mentor provides academic and social support for her mentee in one-on-one settings, and the WiSE Program supplements this relationship with larger group activities, including an orientation supper for all participants (around 200 students), workshops on topics such as campus involvement, research opportunities, and career development and preparation, as well as several social activities. And while our mentors are not ‘tutors,’ WiSE does provide free academic services for participants in our three undergraduate programs (Peer Mentoring, Living-Learning Community, and Ambassadors).

So why should you, as an entering student, be a WiSE mentee?

- Women who have participated as WiSE mentees are retained in STEM majors (through graduation) at significantly higher rates than their peers at UI.
- WiSE mentors assist first-year students in learning about campus resources and activities, job/internship opportunities, study abroad options, and excellent professors.
- WiSE workshops introduce students to professional women who have interesting medical, technical, health-related, and engineering careers.
- The mentors are upper-level women in science and engineering fields, many of them were mentees themselves! WiSE interviews each candidate to make sure she will be the best mentor possible for you.

What activities are included in the WiSE Mentoring Program?

- There is an All-WiSE Orientation before classes start to help you become acquainted with the University of Iowa and the different WiSE programs. Attendance at this event is mandatory.
- You will attend a Welcome Party the second week of classes to meet the whole group of WiSE mentors and mentees! Attendance at this event is mandatory.
- Then, you will participate in at least one mentor/mentee meeting each month. Academic and career development workshops are also offered at various times throughout the year. Because college students are busy with homework and the many activities on campus, we set reasonable expectations for involvement, but many mentors and mentees meet more frequently.

Sample activities and discussion topics with your mentor:

- Attend a sports event, concert, or play;
- Bake cookies, cook dinner, or try a new restaurant;
- Study together at the library or local coffeehouse;
- Discuss study strategies, course selection, and campus/local resources;
- Learn about housing options, summer jobs, volunteer opportunities, etc.
Basic Information About the Mentoring Program

How to I sign up to be a WiSE mentee?

- Complete an application online at https://uiowa.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_cuosDORPXZM1ved
- You can also access the application through our website http://www.uiowa.edu/wise.
  - Click on the Peer Mentoring tab at the top of the homepage
  - Then click on the “Become a Mentee” link on the left side of the page
  - The link to the survey will be located on this page.

Is there a fee associated with become a WiSE mentee?

- Yes. It costs $175 to participate in the WiSE Mentoring Program as a mentee.

How do I pay the program fee?

- Once you complete the online application, we will charge the $175 fee to your U-Bill after September 1, 2017.

Is there financial assistance available to help student’s pay the program fee?

- Yes. We have scholarships to cover the program fee available for students who demonstrate financial need. Please send an e-mail to wise@uiowa.edu for more information.

If I sign up for the WiSE Mentoring Program and then decide to withdraw from the program, will my program fee be refunded?

- No, refunds will not be given to students who withdraw from the WiSE Peer Mentoring Program.

When will I be matched with my mentor?

- Matching begins at the end of July and continues throughout the summer until our mentor/mentee pool is exhausted or our program reaches capacity. We match on a first-come, first-served basis, keeping in mind students’ majors and career interests. Our goal is to contact mentors and mentees with their matches at the beginning of August so you can start communicating with your mentor before you come to campus.

Please check out our website at www.uiowa.edu/wise for more information on all WiSE undergrad programs!

“During my undergraduate years at Iowa, the WiSE program provided me with support that I couldn’t have received anywhere else in the University environment. I successfully completed my BS and became the first individual in my family headed for graduate school. I had no idea what I needed to do to make myself a competitive applicant! Through WiSE events and workshops; the guidance of my peer mentor; and question and answer sessions with graduate students, I learned how to not only become a stronger student but also how to maintain an active life outside of the school. Most importantly, this program was encouraging, not competitive or intimidating, which is crucial to the success of young women scientists and is difficult to find in other school-wide programs.”

--Former WiSE Mentee and Peer Mentor

NOTE: Registering for participation in the Peer Mentoring Program through WiSE is a separate process from the one used by Housing to assign rooms in the Be-WISE Living-Learning Community (LLC). You may participate in Peer Mentoring, the Be-WISE LLC, or both, but separate applications are required. Questions? Contact wise@uiowa.edu.