



Handbook for Mentors

Employment Training Daily Living Skills Godly Focus Educational Focus

Overview of Program Model

The Union EDGE Program will provide an inclusive college experience for students, ages 18-26 who have documented intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD) and who have graduated from high school. Students will be eligible based on the definition of intellectual disability that is outlined by the Higher Education Act:

A student:

- A. With a cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in:
 - i. Intellectual and cognitive functioning; and
 - ii. Adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and,
- B. Who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

As university students, Union EDGE participants will have the opportunity to be a part of the Union University community academically, socially, and residentially. The Union EDGE program will provide students with the skills needed to become gainfully employed through traditional academic coursework, special topics classes focused on technology and employment skills, and internships and externships. The ultimate goal of the Union EDGE program is to prepare individuals with ID/DD to work in a preferred job setting by strengthening academic, social, communication, technological, and vocational skills.

The course of study for each student will be individually determined based on that student's skills, interests, and career goals. We seek to provide peer and staff supports to encourage academic growth and facilitate social relationships for Union EDGE students through classes, internships, and extracurricular campus activities. The goal of the Union EDGE program is for students to have a job in place and be prepared to live and work as independently as possible at the completion of the program.

"The only disability in life is a bad attitude." Scott Hamilton

Responsibilities for Union EDGE Mentors

1. Commit to a mentoring schedule and exchange contact information with the mentee
2. Participate in a mentor training program.
3. Contact the mentee ahead of time if unable to meet due to unforeseen circumstances.
4. Provide information and support to mentee when requested. If the mentor doesn't know the answer to a question, then she/he will take the initiative to help the mentee access resources to find answers.
5. Look for opportunities to build upon the mentees strengths and interests through extra-curricular activities, campus events, organizations, and volunteer opportunities.
6. Attend college events with mentee to support him. her in the whole college experience.
7. Honor the mentee's request for less support- be sure to notify the program director if less support is given than previously agreed upon.
8. Provide prompting, encouragement, and support as needed in the least intrusive manner.
9. Notify the program director as soon as any problems or concerns arise.
10. Maintain confidentiality of the mentee's personal information, and interactions that the mentor has with the mentee that may be sensitive in nature.

Responsibilities for Union EDGE Mentees

1. Work with the program director to schedule classes.
2. Follow the class schedule and attend each class at the correct time, place, and day.
3. Know or have available at all times their student ID card, phone number, email address, email user name and password (these allow you access to email, moodle, student union activities, library services, campus event, etc.)
4. Carry at all times a cell phone that is on and charged, with volume set to vibrate for class.
5. Carry at all times a copy of your course syllabi for the day's course.
6. Check email and moodle regularly.
7. Set aside study hours each week to complete homework independently of mentor.
8. Turn in assignments on the scheduled due dates.
9. Email or call mentors for help with homework when needed.
10. Be respectful to the mentors. If unhappy with something the mentors are doing or saying, tell him/her. Contact program director if uncomfortable telling the mentor directly.
11. Utilize the Center for Academic Success and Disability Services for additional academic support.

General Information about Intellectual Disabilities

Intellectual disability occurs before age 18, and is characterized by delayed development in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. The intellectual disability may vary from mild to profound. The Union EDGE program will accommodate those students with mild intellectual disability. This is defined as an IQ between 50 and 70. Below are some characteristics that you may expect to see.

Academic Functioning

- May have short attention span and be easily distractible
- May not be confident in school and easily frustrated
- Difficulty with working memory tasks
- May have difficulty comprehending and summarizing what has been read
- May operate at a concrete rather than abstract level of thinking
- May need help to handle money and to plan and organize their daily routine
- May learn to read and write in appropriate educational setting
- Likely to develop reading, writing, and math skills at a basic level

Social Functioning

- Can independently participate in most leisure activities within their community
- Will have important relationships with the people in their life
- May struggle in certain social situations
- May marry and raise a family with support
- May have a job suited to their skills
- May live and travel independently with support
- May be clumsy
- May have trouble linking actions to consequences
- May use simple language with short sentences
- May display some obsessive/compulsive behaviors

What Can You Do to Help?

Communication

- Be explicit in what you want the mentee to do
- Use short and simple sentences to ensure understanding
- Repeat instructions or directions frequently
- Ask them if they need clarification
- Be encouraging and supportive
- Do not assume what the mentee understood yesterday, they will understand today
- Demonstrate what you mean rather than just giving verbal instructions
- Speak directly to the mentee
- Ask one question at a time and provide adequate time for mentee to reply
- Keep conversations as normal as possible for inclusion with peers

Teaching/Tutoring

- Maintain high, yet realistic expectations to encourage social and educational potential
- Use visual supports when relating new information verbally
- Allow more time than you would for yourself
- Provide the mentee with hands-on materials and experiences
- Ask mentee for input about how they learn best, and help them be in control of their learning
- Inter-mix high probability tasks (easier tasks) with lower probability tasks (more difficult)
- Use mnemonics
- Use strategies for remembering, such as elaborative rehearsal and clustering information
- Use strategies such as chunking, backward shaping (teach the last part of a skills first), forward shaping, and role modeling
- Remove distractions

Behavioral Issues

All Union EDGE students are under the same rules and regulations as typical undergraduate students. If there is a behavioral issue that you feel causes a danger to the EDGE student or others, please report to Res Life immediately. There is on-campus support through the EDGE Assistant Director on nights and weekends. You will be provided the number to call.

Title IX and Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Union University that bullying, discrimination, and harassment within our community, in any form, is prohibited. For the purposes of this policy, harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, based upon a person's protected status (race, color, gender, age, religion, marital status, national origin, veteran status or disability as defined by applicable federal and state laws and regulations) and which affects tangible job benefits or opportunities; interferes with work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. In most instances, harassment involves an abuse of power or authority by an individual who has control over the employment or academic status of another. However, harassment can occur between peers (e.g., student-against-student harassment).

One form of harassment, sexual harassment, merits a more detailed discussion. Special provisions relating to sexual harassment are included in the following section.

All members of the University community are urged to immediately report all incidents of harassment whenever they occur. The following sections address the Requirement to Report, Complaint Procedure, and Protection from Retaliation for all instances of harassment.

TITLE IX INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Sexual Harassment

Union University is committed to providing its faculty, staff, and students with an environment free from explicit and implicit coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the wellbeing of any member of the University community. No student or employee, male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, whether verbal, written, or physical. This includes inappropriate behavior from a member of the same sex. Sexual harassment of any type will not be tolerated and is expressly prohibited. Those who engage in sexual harassment may be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Sexual harassment is grounds for disciplinary action, which may include reprimand, demotion, dismissal, or other appropriate action, depending upon the nature of the harassment.

Sexual harassment is especially destructive when it threatens relationships between teachers and students, or supervisors and subordinates. Through control over grades, salary decisions, changes in duties or workloads, recommendations for graduate study, promotion, etc., a teacher or supervisor can have a decisive influence on a student, staff, or faculty member's career at the university. Sexual harassment in such situations constitutes an abuse of the power inherent in a faculty member's or supervisor's position. Faculty and staff are asked to be especially sensitive to the fact that they are in a position of authority over students and that authority carries with it a responsibility to be mindful of situations in which they are dealing with students in private, one-on-one associations both on and off-campus.

Sexual Harassment Defined: Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially accepted nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome; is offensive; harms morale; creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment; and which consequently interferes with work effectiveness. Normal, courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, or non-coercive interactions acceptable to both parties are not considered to be sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual attention of a persistent or offensive nature made by a person who knows, or reasonably should know, that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes sexually oriented conduct that is sufficiently pervasive or severe to unreasonably interfere with an employee's job performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing. Students and employees are prohibited from harassing other students and employees whether or not the incidents of harassment occur on the University premises and whether or not the incidents occur during working hours.

Sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct. The examples listed below are not intended as an exhaustive list of prohibited conduct.

- A. Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults, and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature (e.g. pinching, patting, touching the body, brushing up against, tickling, hugging, kissing, or other similar physical conduct).
- B. Continued or repeated unwelcome offensive behavior including sexual flirtations, advances, propositions or other sexual comments (e.g. whistling, leering/ogling, lewd gestures, noises, off-color or suggestive language; lewd remarks, innuendoes, sexual jokes, or comments about a person's body, appearance, sexuality or sexual experience). This includes behavior directed at or made in the presence of any individual who indicates, or has indicated in any way, that such conduct in his or her presence is unwelcome.

- C. Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to a student or employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any individual to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- D. Displaying or distributing any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters, drawings and cartoons that are sexually suggestive, sexually demeaning or pornographic.
- E. Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of employment or academic status (e.g. assignment, compensation, advancement, career development), as well as offers of job benefits, or academic opportunity in return for sexual favors.

Sexual harassment may result from an intentional or unintentional action and can be subtle or blatant. The context of events and the totality of the circumstances surrounding those events are important in determining whether a particular act or series of events constitutes sexual harassment.

Requirement to Report: In order for the University to take appropriate corrective action, it must be aware of any instance of harassment or related retaliation. Therefore, the University requires anyone who believes that he or she has experienced or witnessed sexual or other form of harassment or related retaliation to seek assistance from the appropriate campus resource (as outlined in the next section) by coming forward promptly with concerns or complaints.

Supervisors must deal expeditiously and fairly with allegations of sexual harassment within their department, taking all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment seriously. They are to ensure that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is reported to the Office of Human Resources immediately so that a prompt investigation can occur. Supervisors should take any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from reoccurring during and after any investigations or complaints. Supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

Complaint Procedure: If a student or employee believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment or any unwanted sexual attention, they should make their unease and/or disapproval directly and immediately known to the harasser whenever possible. If the situation is not immediately resolved, or if the employee is unable to or uncomfortable to address the alleged harasser directly, he or she should report the incident to the appropriate authority as outline below.

A student with a complaint of harassment against a faculty member, staff member, a member of the administration, or another student should make initial contact with the Dean of Students. Alternate contacts include the Associate VP of Human Resources, Provost and the President. The contact person will complete a written incident report and forward to the Associate VP of Human Resources.

To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, the complainant should provide a written record of the date, time and nature of the incident(s) and the names of any witnesses.

The University will handle the matter with as much confidentiality as possible. The University will conduct an immediate investigation in an attempt to determine all of the facts concerning the alleged harassment. The investigation will be directed by the Associate VP of Human Resources. However, if someone from that office is the subject of the investigation, the Office of the Provost (faculty) or the Dean of Students (staff or student) will direct the investigation.

The Associate VP of Human Resources, or the leader of the investigation, is responsible for ensuring that both the individual filing the complaint and the respondent are aware of the University's sexual harassment policy and investigation. He or she is to explore informal means of resolving sexual harassment complaints and notify the police if criminal activities are alleged.

As a part of the investigation of the claim of sexual harassment, the contact person, the complainant, and the respondent will be asked to provide statements regarding the incident. Once the report is reviewed and investigation is concluded, a finding may be that sexual harassment did occur, and corrective action (reprimand, demotion, dismissal, or other appropriate action) will be communicated in writing to the

complainant and respondent. Appeals to this process may be conducted in accordance to the most recent revision of the faculty and staff handbooks under the section(s) entitled "Violation of Standards of Conduct" or "Grievance Procedures."

All documents, except disciplinary action documents, related to an incident will remain in a file other than the employee's personnel file. Although filed separately, all personnel related files will be kept in the Office of Human Resources. In cases involving students, all documents will be maintained by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Protection Against Retaliation: There will be no retaliation of any kind against individuals who, in good faith, report instances of sexual or other form of harassment, or who participate in or are witness to a procedure to redress a complaint of sexual or other form of harassment is prohibited not only by University policy but also by state and federal law. Retaliation is a serious violation which can subject the offender to sanctions independent of the merits of the harassment allegation. Any individual found to have violated this provision will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

If you experience any problems or issues, please contact Mrs. Graves or for Residence Life issues, Dr. Ken Litscher.

**These young men and women have earned the right to be treated with love and respect,
just as you have.**