

# **Mentoring Program Handbook & Code of Conduct**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Point Foundation's Mentoring Program. Our program matches scholars with mentors who are highly successful professionals in fields ranging from the arts and sciences, to business, law, medicine, education and other humanities.

Point Foundation mentors are selected based on merit in their respective fields, references, and most importantly, a deep commitment to attending to the personal and professional welfare of Point Scholars. They provide emotional support to scholars, build rewarding personal relationships and serve as much needed role models. They also serve to assist scholars with professional and career decisions, including the pursuit of graduate studies, internship placements and possible job opportunities after graduation. Special emphasis is placed on providing our scholars with mentors who are also deeply committed to supporting Point and our mission as we endeavor to serve the needs of a substantial and ever growing population of LGBT student leaders in higher education. We believe that great mentors change lives.

### **Program Goals**

Point Foundation's Mentoring Program strives to achieve the following goals:

- To build a mentorship that enriches the lives of both our mentors and scholars.
- To attend to the welfare and future of Point Scholars in a world that threatens their livelihood and opportunity for future success.
- To provide Point Scholars with a network of support cultivating their intellectual development.
- To match scholars with mentors who are committed to advancing our students' academic and professional opportunities.
- To establish practical procedures and policies based on the needs and capacities of our mentors and scholars.
- To implement a sustainable mentoring system that enhances the overall quality of Point Foundation.
- To build a clearinghouse of mentors suitable to a diverse set of emerging LGBT leaders.
- To train Point Scholars to serve as future LGBT mentors and community leaders.
- To provide both scholars and mentors with strategies for developing strong, lifelong mentoring relationships and broader support networks.

### **Action Required**

After reviewing this handbook and the Code of Conduct, please remember that each Point Scholar and mentor is required return a signed copy of the last page to Point Foundation's headquarter office.

### Scholar Information

After being introduced to a scholar, each mentor will receive an electronic bio from his/her respective scholar. This bio should help guide the work to be accomplished with each Point Scholar.

### Sample Scholar Bio

Mail From Address:	info@pointfoundation.org
Mail To Address:	info@pointfoundation.org
<b>Mail Subject:</b>	<b>TPF Web Site Mentee Information</b>
<b>Name_Last</b>	Doe
<b>Name_First</b>	Jane
<b>Date_Of_Birth</b>	11/12/1985
<b>Addr_Street</b>	Scholar Address
<b>Addr_City</b>	Scholar City
<b>Addr_State</b>	Scholar State
<b>Addr_Zip</b>	Scholar Zip Code
<b>Phone_Home</b>	Scholar Phone
<b>Phone_Cell</b>	Scholar Cell
<b>Ed_College_University</b>	Scholar School
<b>Ed_Major</b>	Scholar Major
<b>Work_Place_Of_Employment</b>	Scholar Place of Employment
<b>Work_Title</b>	Title
<b>Resume</b>	Scholar Resume
<b>Cover_Letter</b>	Scholar Cover Letter
<b>Community_Service_Project</b>	Scholar Community Service Project
<b>Point_Bio</b>	Scholar Bio
<b>Point_Essay</b>	Scholar Essay
<b>Three_Topics</b>	Topics to Focus On
<b>Misc_Info</b>	Misc.

### Community Service Project

While reviewing the scholar bio, special attention should be given to the scholar's community service project, a central feature of Point's Mentoring Program. Each year, Point Scholars are given a step-by-step guide and required to design and execute a project that will directly benefit an area within the LGBT community. Mentors are expected to serve as sounding boards on this project, and to advise the scholar on how to best complete the project throughout the year.

### **Tips for a Successful Mentorship**

- After the scholar-mentor introduction has taken place, be prepared to discuss relevant topics. You may begin to prepare by reflecting back on life experiences — including challenges and milestones — as they are manifested within the contexts of topics such as careers, academics, family relationships, coming out, etc.
- Remember that the mentor–scholar relationship has an initial phase. During this phase we suggest that you get to know and trust each other.
- Build rapport through small talk. You can't jump into a deep discussion on coming out or engage in intellectual debate until you've gone through the typical icebreakers. Chat about the weather; favorite academic subjects, books, art, etc. Make sure you both know the type of support you are willing and able to provide to each other.
- Establish how you may best be reached: by phone, e-mail, or fax or at a designated meeting location. Experience proves that calling or e-mailing is usually the best way to make contact.
- Establish a regular time and phone number where you can usually answer calls or make contact.
- Maintain contact. Consistent communication is the most important aspect of mentoring. E-mail or call each other at least twice a month. If you do not have time to reply, simply drop a quick e-mail: i.e., Thanks for your note, I'll be in touch very soon, and hope you're doing well! Always return phone calls. Surveys of Point Foundation Scholars suggest that in-person contact is desired. At least once a year or more frequently if possible, try to plan a time where the two of you can meet in person. Don't ignore your protégé or fail to respond to their efforts at communication. This is a sure way to alienate and break trust with the other person.
- Mentors do not need to be an expert in their scholar's field of interest; research on mentoring suggests that successful relationships are prevalent among mentor-scholar pairs representative of divergent backgrounds — e.g., professionally, ethnically, or by gender. Remember, there is no "perfect" match.
- A mentor should not be perceived as a teacher, parent, disciplinarian, therapist or Santa Claus. It is counterproductive to assume roles other than dependable, consistent friends. Present information carefully without distortion and give all points of view a fair hearing. Listen carefully and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Don't criticize or preach. Think of ways to problem solve together rather than lecturing.
- Academics, family reconciliation and coming out are often three major stress factors in the lives of Point Scholars. Such factors can at times elicit depression, anxiety, and withdrawal. While mentors should listen to scholar concerns and offer guidance, if a scholar is in physical or mental danger, immediately contact Point Foundation's headquarter office. It is important for mentors to be constant and authentic sources of support, but mentors are not expected to handle serious situations on their own.
- Handle conflict with effective communication skills. Point Scholar-mentor pairs are expected to always maintain a professional, caring attitude with each other. If for some reason, a conflict arises that cannot be resolved, please contact Point Foundation's headquarter office and follow the grievance policy that is outlined in the Mentor Program Code of Conduct. Do not try to handle the situation on your own.
- Unsolicited gifts to scholars are the exception, not the norm. Scholar solicitation of money or gifts from mentors is not permitted. Modest birthday or holiday gifts, care packages, or "just because" gifts are fine. Mentors should spend no more than \$500 per year in gifts, meals, ticketed events, etc.

## **Mentoring Program Code of Conduct**

**Please fax a signed copy of the last page of this document to  
Point Foundation's headquarter office (323) 933-3232**

The purpose of Point's Mentoring Program Code of Conduct is to outline the basic rules and expectations for all participants of Point Foundation's Mentor Program. **Each Point Foundation Mentor and Scholar is required to sign and submit a hard copy of the following code.** This document does not supplant any other contracts or codes that Point Regents, Directors, Mentors, staff, and Scholars sign.

Violations of any of Point's Mentor Program Code of Conduct will be viewed seriously. Depending on the severity of the violation, legal repercussions may result. It is imperative that the Foundation avoid any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

### **Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment**

Point Foundation reviews its sexual harassment policy annually with each scholar. Mentors may obtain a copy of this policy by contacting Point Foundation's headquarter office. Sections of the policy that relate to mentoring are shown below.

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#### **Purpose**

Point Foundation believes in respecting the dignity of every employee, scholar, regent, mentor, contractor, donor and volunteer and expects every person involved with Point Foundation to show respect for all of our colleagues. Respectful, professional conduct furthers Point's mission, promotes collegiality, minimizes disputes, and enhances our reputation. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Point Foundation that all employees, scholars, regents, mentors, contractors and volunteers have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination and conduct, which can be considered harassing, coercive or disruptive.

Point Foundation is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. Point strictly prohibits harassment of any kind, including harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity), pregnancy, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition (including genetic characteristics), veteran or marital status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, independent contractors, scholars, regents, mentors and donors of Point.

#### **Prohibited Conduct**

The conduct prohibited by this policy, whether verbal, physical, or visual, includes any discriminatory action and any unwelcome conduct that is inflicted on someone because of that individual's protected status. Among the types of unwelcome conduct prohibited by this policy are epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, intimidating acts, and the circulation or posting of written or graphic materials that show hostility toward individuals because of their protected status. Point Foundation prohibits such conduct, even if the conduct is not sufficiently severe or pervasive to constitute unlawful harassment.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a problem that deserves special mention.

Harassing conduct may be sexual in nature. Sexual harassment includes the harassment of women by men, men by women, and those by the same gender and includes conduct by employees or third parties (such as contractors, vendors, visitors and clients) directed at employees, consultants or contractors.

Point Foundation's sexual harassment policy forbids any employee, scholar, regent, mentor, donor, or third party doing business with the Point Foundation from harassing any Point employee, scholar, applicant, regent, mentor, or donor of Point on the basis of sex. Harassment of a sexual nature includes harassment based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, regardless of whether the offensive conduct is sexual in nature. Any unwelcome conduct based on gender is also forbidden by this policy regardless of whether the individual engaged in harassment and the individual being harassed are of the same or are of different genders.

This policy forbids harassment based on gender regardless of whether it rises to the level of a legal violation. Examples of gender-based harassment forbidden by this policy include (1) offensive sex-oriented verbal kidding, teasing or jokes; (2) repeated unwanted sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; (3) verbal abuse of a sexual nature; (4) graphic or degrading comments about an individual's appearance or sexual activity; (5) offensive visual conduct, including leering, making sexual gestures, the display of offensive sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters; (6) unwelcome pressure for sexual activity; (7) offensively suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations; or (8) offensive physical contact such as patting, grabbing, pinching, or brushing against another's body.

### **Reporting Procedure**

If you feel that you are being harassed, or if you have witnessed harassment or other conduct in violation of this policy, Point Foundation urges you to report the facts of the incident. Scholars should report the incident to the Scholar & Alumni Program Director. Mentors should report the incident to the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director. If you do not feel comfortable discussing the matter with your respective program director, you may report the incident to Point's Chief of Staff or Point's Executive Director.

### **Point Foundation's Response**

All reported complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and all information disclosed during the course of the investigation will remain confidential, except to the extent reasonably necessary to conduct the investigation and take any remedial actions. Point Foundation may put certain interim measures in place, such as a leave of absence or a transfer, while the investigation proceeds. Point will take further appropriate action once the report has been thoroughly investigated. That action may be a conclusion that a violation occurred, as explained immediately below. Point might also conclude, depending on the circumstances, either that no violation of policy occurred or that Point cannot conclude whether or not a violation occurred.

If an investigation reveals that a violation of this policy or other inappropriate conduct has occurred, then Point will take corrective action, including discipline up to and including unpaid suspension or dismissal (if appropriate), or termination from the program, as is appropriate under the circumstances, regardless of the job positions or relationship to Point of the parties involved. Point may discipline an employee for any inappropriate conduct discovered in investigating

reports made under this policy, regardless of whether the conduct amounts to a violation of law or even a violation of this policy. If the person who engaged in harassment is not employed by the Company, then the Company will take whatever corrective action is reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances.

### **Policy Against Retaliation**

Point Foundation forbids employees, scholars, regents, mentors, donors and volunteers from treating any person associated with Point adversely for reporting harassment, for assisting another in making a report, for cooperating in a harassment investigation, or for filing an administrative claim with the EEOC or a state governmental agency. Any person associated with Point who experiences or witnesses any conduct he/she believes to be retaliatory should immediately follow the reporting procedures stated above.

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### **Exploitive relationships**

No mentor shall have any, or pursue in any way, any sexual/romantic relationship or encounter with any Point Scholar. Each mentor shall avoid all situations where there might be the appearance of a sexual/romantic relationship or where an allegation of a sexual/romantic relationship or encounter could be made and not readily refuted.

### **Mentor Screening Process**

Each Point Foundation mentor must undergo a comprehensive screening process. The screening process includes completion of an application, personal interview, reference checks and a background check.

### **Alcohol Consumption**

(21+) If a Point Foundation Scholar is 21 years of age or older, it is permissible for the mentor and the scholar to drink alcoholic beverages over dinner or at other appropriate occasions. However, neither the mentor nor the particular Point Scholar should drink to excess or to the point of inebriation, and it is the affirmative responsibility of the mentor to insure that such excessive drinking not occur during any such occasion.

(21-) Drinking alcoholic beverages by individuals younger than 21 years of age is strictly prohibited, regardless of whether such drinking occurs during a formal Point Foundation or mentoring event or during unstructured time between any affiliated members of the Foundation. This includes mentors, regents, foundation staff, and/or other scholars.

Underage solicitation of alcohol by Point Scholars is strictly prohibited during any Foundation function as well as unstructured time between any affiliates of the Foundation.

### **Illegal drugs**

There shall be no illegal drug use by any mentor or scholar during or in connection with any activity undertaken by any mentor and any scholar at any time. Regents, mentors, foundation staff, donors, scholars, and any other associates of the Foundation have an obligation to be familiar with these rules and should recognize individual responsibility for their enforcement.

### **Monetary Gifts**

Gifts of money to Point Scholars (not earmarked for a specific purchase) is prohibited

### **Overnight stays**

Overnight stays are allowed only if the scholar is 18 or over and where a private bedroom (other than the mentor's bedroom) is provided for the scholar. Otherwise, local hotels or other accommodations are required.

- For hotel stays, separate, non-adjointing rooms are required.
- Overnight stays are never permitted in the scholar's home.
- Transportation away from the location of the overnight stay must be provided in advance (in the case of airline tickets) or on request.
- Mentors may not permit the scholar to engage in sexual activity in the mentor's home
- Prior to an overnight stay, the mentor is required to notify Point Foundation's Mentoring & Leadership Program Director of the intent to host the scholar. In turn, Point's Mentoring & Leadership Program Director will ensure the mentor and the scholar have reviewed and signed the Code of Conduct.
- During the stay, the mentor and scholar will treat each other with respect.

### **Meeting locations**

Mentors should not meet scholars in places where alcohol consumption is the primary purpose (i.e. bars, dance clubs), even if they are of legal age, unless it is an establishment that also serves food and dinner is part of the plan. The appearance of "dating" is to be avoided. Mentors should avoid taking scholars to events where there is excessive drinking or promiscuity. Mentors should never take scholars to events where illegal drug use is, or may be likely to be, taking place. Mentors are always expected to respect a scholar's wishes about not attending an event, leaving early or other requests that may indicate discomfort — regardless of the reason — on the scholar's part.

### **Communications**

Mentors and scholars should always be responsive to each other's e-mails, phone calls, and other attempts at contact. Consistent communication and follow-through with your respective protégé is expected of each mentor and scholar. The Foundation expects Point Scholars to respond within three (3) business days to all written and verbal requests and other communications from staff, regents, directors, mentors, and other Point Scholars. Failure to do so will be seen as uncooperative and unprofessional and could result in the loss of funding as determined by the Foundation.

### **Mentor-Scholar Pairs**

Any mentor-scholar pair can be discontinued at any time at the request of either the mentor or the scholar, in order to preserve the voluntary nature of the relationship. Point Foundation's Mentoring & Leadership Program Director and Scholar & Alumni Program Director will conduct periodic separate check-ins with each scholar and mentor on the development of the pairing. During the check-in calls, scholars and mentors will be asked whether they wish to continue their respective mentor pairing.

### **Training**

Point Foundation will provide mentors and scholars with an annual mandatory training program that includes harassment prevention training, as well as training on the rules applicable to the mentor-scholar relationship.

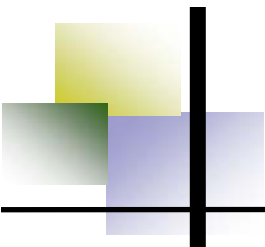
### **Grievance Process**

It is the general policy of the Foundation to provide an open door and receptive/positive attitude for discussion of any Point Scholar or Point Mentor concerns.

If you wish to use Point's grievance process, you should raise your complaint or concern within a reasonable time (within 1-5 days) after the incident or issue has occurred. Complaints or concerns must be issued in writing, with the nature of the grievance clearly outlined in detail and providing all relevant facts. An open discussion between you and the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director is the first step of the process. If you are uncomfortable contacting the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director, other individuals may include Point Foundation's Scholar & Alumni Program Director, Chief of Staff or Executive Director. With input from the Chief of Staff and Executive Director, the person receiving the grievance will investigate the complaint or concern and notify you, in writing, of the decision within three business days.

If the complaint or concern is not resolved by the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director within a reasonable time frame, or if you are dissatisfied with the Mentoring & Leadership Program Director's solution, you may appeal the issue directly to Point's Chief of Staff for consideration and resolution. If you continue to be dissatisfied after appeal to the Chief of Staff, you may make a request for review to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may, in his or her sole discretion, forward the request for review to the Board of Director Chair for discussion and resolution. The decision of the Executive Director and/or Board of Director Chair, as applicable, is final. Should the complaint require additional documentation and investigation, the time frame for resolving the complaint should not exceed forty-five days. Documentation from the complaint and investigation may become part of the Point Scholar's file.

Professional and respectful communications must take place between all involved parties at all times. Under no circumstances will you circumvent the above process and attempt to communicate directly with the Board of Directors, Regents, Point Scholars, or staff members not directly involved with the complaint or concern.



**I HEREBY REPRESENT AND WARRANT THAT I HAVE CAREFULLY READ POINT FOUNDATION'S MENTORING PROGRAM CODE OF CONDUCT, AND UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS.**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Mentor/Scholar \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Mentor/Scholar \_\_\_\_\_

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Point Foundation's headquarter office at  
(323) 933-3232**