



## Mentoring Guidelines and Helpful Tips

### Course Mission ...

To promote a team building approach to command by recognizing, inspiring, and educating the Commanding Officers' spouses so they realize the positive impact they can have on the morale and success of the command.

### Command Spouse Leadership Course and Naval Services FamilyLine ...

The Command Spouse Leadership Course (CSLC) made its debut in October 1997. It was designed for spouses of first time Commanding Officers by Navy spouses who had been through the command experience. Their aim was to develop a course to better prepare the Commanding Officer's spouse for the leadership role inherent in the command team.

The Command Spouse Leadership Course Steering Committee is responsible for input to the curriculum content, management, and delivery of the course. The Chief of Naval Personnel is responsible for oversight and funding of the course. The Steering Committee has been in existence since the conception of the course. Its members are spouses representing different Naval regions throughout our nation and the world. The Steering Committee members attend the course annually as mentors, recruit students and mentors to attend the course, make suggestions regarding the curriculum, and keep in touch with the students as they enter the fleet as CO spouses. By staying connected with students and mentors, the Steering Committee can stay abreast of current issues CO spouses are facing. The Steering Committee is the course's main advocate.

### Mentoring ideas ...

- Plan to meet with your fellow mentor via phone or in person before the week commences. This will give you both an opportunity to get to know each other and plan for your upcoming mentoring week in Newport. You both may want to take this opportunity to discuss how you will split up the students into "mentoring groups".
- Compile a "log" of suggestions/ideas during the course week that contains helpful information to be shared with future mentors.
- Email the group a short time after class to remind them of your role of supporting them as an ongoing resource. Recognize any Changes of Command being celebrated by spouses with a short email.

**Please contact the Mentor Liaison with your feedback and suggestions following your mentoring week at [slsc\\_europe\\_mentors@nsfamilyline.org](mailto:slsc_europe_mentors@nsfamilyline.org)**

Every human has four endowments-  
self awareness, conscience, independent will and creative  
imagination.

These give us the ultimate human freedom...  
The power to choose, to respond, to change.

**Stephen Covey**

## **Mentors are positive role models with command spouse leadership experience.**

### **The 2 main areas of responsibility mentors undertake are ...**

- 1- Responsibilities directly associated with the week in the classroom.
- 2- Long-range mentoring responsibilities that continue throughout the students' command experience.

### **Prior to your arrival ...**

- \* Become familiar with the history of the course and the role of Naval Services FamilyLine.
- \* Familiarize yourself with the suggested readings prior to your arrival in Newport.
- \* The Lead Instructor for the course will be contacting you prior to the class convening for your permission to release your personal contact information to students.
- \* Mentors are encouraged to visit the CSLC website at: <https://www.netc.navy.mil/cls/spouse.htm>

### **During your mentoring week in Newport ...**

- \* Please be punctual ... arrive at least 15 minutes prior to each class. Please help the instructors keep the classroom clean and organized.
- \* Be prepared for each day ... review each day's agenda the night before.
- \* On the first day of class, introduce yourself to each student and establish a rapport with the group. Informal conversations are encouraged during breaks and before and after class each day. This will help you build a foundation of trust so that the lines of communication will remain open. Attend all out-of-classroom group events ... such as Bowling on Monday evening.
- \* Mentors are considered the resident experts. You are encouraged to share your personal experiences as a CO's spouse during your group mentoring sessions and one on one conversations. Be an active listener and offer to provide your thoughts, opinions and experiences relevant to the students' concerns and issues of interest. Mentoring sessions are both in-class and off-site (if your students so choose).
- \* You are encouraged to contribute to class discussions. Listen to the students' ideas first and then offer words of wisdom when appropriate. It is important that mentors not monopolize the time and remain sensitive to finding the right balance of input.
- \* The dress code for the week is casual business attire. Professionalism must be maintained at all times in your language and demeanor.
- \* Mentors are volunteers and leaders. While mentoring for the course, you are a guest of the United States Navy.
- \* If you have issues during the week with course content or class management that you feel cannot wait for the critique, you should approach the instructors in private to discuss these issues. Also, if there is a problem or concern with a student, address this through the Lead Instructor.

**Mentors support the students and the instructors. Be prepared to start the mentoring sessions on time and lead the discussion.**

## **Mentoring Sessions ... topics and tips**

At the beginning of the first mentoring session, please offer information including your active-duty spouse's community, the unit he/she commanded, and any overseas or otherwise unusual assignments. Mentor session topics should come from the concerns/questions raised by the students. Students find it particularly helpful to address non-curriculum topics during these sessions. Possible mentor session topics can include but are not limited to the following ...

- \* Rank and Role
- \* Spouse group development/issues
- \* Deployment activities
- \* Transitioning as XO/CO spouse
- \* Changes of Command
- \* Community-specific issues (always recommend local and regional CO/XO Spouse Seminars for more community-specific guidance)
- \* Common geographical locations
- \* Interacting with enlisted spouses and groups
- \* Etiquette and protocol issues
- \* Budgeting for Command
- \* Entertaining ideas

### **On the Final Day of Class ...**

You are asked to complete a detailed course critique as a method of providing feedback on your week's experience and turn the critique into the lead instructor. The goal of the CSLC is to provide information that is current and relevant, and although the curriculum has proved itself over and over again, the critique is the appropriate place for you to make suggestions for changes to the course and/or the curriculum. After an invitation from the lead instructor, mentors are asked to be prepared to share "words of wisdom" before the class is dismissed.

### **Post-Course Responsibilities ...**

The CSLC staff will provide you with post-course contact information for your class as your role as mentor continues after graduation and during the command tour.

Please establish a network with the students by contacting them within the first month, and again at the six month point. This contact may be via phone or email. If you are unsuccessful in reaching a student by either method, please try to make contact by mail. Remind the students that your role as mentor is ongoing, and that you are available to assist when needed. Make certain the students have your contact information ... especially if it has or does change.

The CSLC Steering Committee needs your help with future mentor recommendations. After a student has been in the command tour at least one year, please feel free to contact any CSLC Steering Committee member with the name of someone you feel would make a positive contribution as a mentor. The CSLC Steering Committee will then follow up with that person.