



HERDWORK HUMANITIES

HERDWORK HUMANITIES MENTORSHIP WORKSHOP

September 2026 Mentorship Workshop

Curated Quote Bank

Selected language for reports, educational materials, mentor resources, intern resources, presentations, and program storytelling.

September 2026

College of Liberal Arts, Marshall University

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Editorial and Permissions Note

The quotations in this document are drawn from the September 2026 workshop transcript and Teams chat. Obvious transcription errors, repeated words, and verbal fillers have been removed where needed, while preserving the speaker's meaning and voice.

Core Set

"Asking is better than wondering."

Caitlyn White, student intern

RECOMMENDED USE

Intern orientation; communication; pull quote

"When I see them start connecting the dots in the questions they are asking, that is a sign of professional judgment growing."

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Impact reports; career readiness; mentor education

"Personalization is one of the most important things you can do in a mentoring relationship."

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Mentor guide; training; program model

"Open, direct, and transparent language makes you feel less isolated as an intern and more like part of a team."

Caitlyn White, student intern

RECOMMENDED USE

Belonging; feedback; student support

"It is mutual learning. When I learn something from one of my students, that is what I like the most."

Dr. Rich Jones, faculty mentor and faculty program director

RECOMMENDED USE

Reciprocal learning; mentor recruitment

"Students cannot be expected to do what someone with ten years of experience can do. Sometimes the measure of success is simply improving their skills."

Kate Long, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Developmental assessment; expectations

"I want the intern to have something they can put on a résumé or talk about in a job interview, fellowship application, or graduate-school application."

Michael Tierney, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Project design; portfolio; reports

"Is this actually what happened, or is this what I am taking away from it?"

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Observation vs. interpretation; conflict prevention

"We want to make sure the student does not disappear from the conversation."

Kelli Crabtree, Internship Experience Director

RECOMMENDED USE

Mentor alignment; student voice; confidentiality

"Quality mentorship does not remove every challenge. It helps the student navigate the next one with greater judgment."

HerdWork Humanities workshop framing

RECOMMENDED USE

Guide conclusion; impact storytelling

Quotes for Reports and External Storytelling

"Mentorship is the developmental piece—helping students understand the work, practice professional judgment, learn from feedback, and take greater ownership."

Kelli Crabtree, Internship Experience Director

RECOMMENDED USE

Program descriptions; reports; funding narratives

"Growing in confidence and comfort with your site mentor means being able to say, 'I have a question,' 'I am struggling with this,' or 'I would like more responsibility.'"

Caitlyn White, student intern

RECOMMENDED USE

Student growth; belonging; career readiness

"It helps when the work the organization is doing is aligned with the student's values and they are given freedom to be creative."

Workshop participant, Teams chat

RECOMMENDED USE

Mutual fit; engagement; internship design

"What do you want to do? How does this fit into your own professional development?"

Michael Tierney, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Career exploration; goal-setting; reports

"They should never have to guess who is there to support them—who they can go to with questions."

Workshop participant, Teams chat

RECOMMENDED USE

Wraparound support; role clarity

"A mentoring relationship is helping a student grow when they begin connecting the dots in the questions they ask."

Erin Susman, site mentor; lightly condensed

RECOMMENDED USE

Growth indicators; impact reports

Quotes for Mentor Education

"Clarity means defining what the assignment is and what it is for."

John Yeager, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Assignment design; onboarding

"Make explicit what you may not think you need to make explicit."

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Workplace norms; mentor orientation

"Business casual means different things to different people."

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Dress expectations; first-day guidance

"Impact and intention can be two different things."

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Feedback; communication; reflective practice

"The assignment was late—that is an objective statement. Deciding that the intern is not interested in the work is an interpretation."

Erin Susman, site mentor; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Observation vs. interpretation

"Can you tell me what you think overstepping looks like?"

Erin Susman, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Initiative; difficult conversations

"Be aware of the little things. If an issue appears, think about the little things first."

Cody Lumpkin, faculty mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Remote work; technology; troubleshooting

"The mentor has to make it okay for the student to say that something is going on or that they are having difficulty. You have to be aware of the student as a person."

Site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Wellness; check-ins; communication

"It is your responsibility to draw that person in. Ask: 'What makes participation easy? What makes it hard?'"

Kate Long, site mentor; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Engagement; inclusive mentoring

"Before any meeting, identify three things you want to remember, and then take notes so you can remember what was said."

Dr. Rich Jones, faculty mentor and faculty program director; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Meeting preparation; coaching

"We can almost always fix anything. If you missed a deadline or did something wrong, let us talk through it. It does not mean you are a bad person."

Dr. Rich Jones, faculty mentor and faculty program director; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Mistakes; accountability; psychological safety

"Acknowledge when you make a misstep in the mentoring process. I have found that it is usually met with appreciation."

Erin Susman, site mentor; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Mentor humility; reciprocal feedback

Quotes for Intern and Mentee Education

"Ask about the little things so that you are not struggling later."

Caitlyn White, student intern

RECOMMENDED USE

Early communication; intern orientation

"Being able to say, 'I have a question' or 'I am struggling with this' is a sign that confidence and comfort are growing."

Caitlyn White, student intern; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Help-seeking; belonging

"A question such as, 'Do you feel comfortable doing this?' opens the invitation for the intern to explain what they need."

Caitlyn White, student intern; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Conversation scripts; mentor guide

"Beginning with 'You are not taking initiative' can feel dismissive because it sounds as though the conclusion has already been made."

Caitlyn White, student intern; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Feedback; observation vs. labels

"What feels really good about what we are doing, and is there anything that is not clear?"

Michael Tierney, site mentor

RECOMMENDED USE

Weekly check-ins; reflection

"Give the student a goal and clarify where they can run with it."

Workshop participant; lightly condensed

RECOMMENDED USE

Initiative; project ownership

"Do not assume understanding. Give students opportunities to express what is unclear without judgment."

Workshop participant, Teams chat

RECOMMENDED USE

Clarity; feedback; onboarding

"Just because a student says everything is 'fine' does not necessarily mean that it is."

Workshop participant, Teams chat; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Check-ins; early intervention

Quotes About Coordination, Trust, and Confidentiality

"Be transparent: 'Is it okay if I share this, and here is why it would be helpful?'"

Caitlyn White, student intern; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Mentor alignment; privacy; consent

"You may not need to give every detail. You can communicate that an adjustment may be appropriate without sharing unnecessary personal information."

Dr. Rich Jones, faculty mentor and faculty program director; lightly edited

RECOMMENDED USE

Privacy; faculty-site communication

"One assumption I want to watch is how our organization needs to show up and support the intern. The role may be defined, but we need to leave space for growth and alignment with the intern's skills and goals."

Workshop participant, Teams chat

RECOMMENDED USE

Partner preparation; organizational reflection

"Everyone owns their own story."

Michael Tierney, August 2025 workshop

RECOMMENDED USE

Ethical storytelling; confidentiality

HerdWork Workshop Framing Language

The following statements were developed as workshop framing and synthesis. Attribute them to the “HerdWork Humanities September 2026 Mentorship Workshop,” not to an individual participant.

“The question is not, “How much help?” It is, “What support now?””

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RECOMMENDED USE

Mentor decision-making framework

“Choose the least directive move that still supports safe, successful learning.”

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RECOMMENDED USE

Mentoring judgment; coaching

“Observe. Ask before assuming. Choose a move. Agree on a next step. Check back and adjust.”

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RECOMMENDED USE

One-page mentor reference

“An expectation is not clear merely because we said it once. It becomes clear when the student can describe what it looks like, act on it, and know when to ask.”

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RECOMMENDED USE

Workplace norms; communication

“Replace inference with information.”

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RECOMMENDED USE

Case studies; conflict prevention

"The goal is not complete independence. The growth is in discernment: knowing what to own, what to ask, and how to participate actively in the relationship."

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RECOMMENDED USE

Intern and mentor guides

"Is the student more able to act, reflect, communicate, and seek support than they were at the beginning?"

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RECOMMENDED USE

Final mentor self-assessment

"Mentorship does not require us to have the perfect response immediately. It asks us to observe carefully, ask before assuming, choose a useful form of support, and remain willing to adjust."

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RECOMMENDED USE

Workshop closing; guide conclusion

Source Note

This publication was prepared from the following HerdWork Humanities materials:

- September 2026 Mentorship Workshop audio transcript
- September 2026 Teams chat responses
- September 2026 workshop presentation and facilitator notes
- Selected contextual language from the August 2025 and January 2026 mentorship workshop transcripts

Quotations are lightly edited only to remove verbal fillers, repeated words, or obvious transcription artifacts. The meaning has been preserved.

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