Belk College Alumni Advisor Network Guide

How to get started:

1. Visit the Alumni Advisor Network homepage.
2. Click on “Get Advice.”
3. Click on “Register Now.”
4. Follow the steps to fill out your profile using LinkedIn or by manually entering your information. Fill out your profile as completely as possible, especially your contact information and photo. The more information you supply in your profile the better matches you will receive when searching for alumni or other business professionals.

How to search for alumni and other advisors:

1. Click on “Advisors” on the navigation menu at the top, right side of the page.
2. Use the left navigation menu to filter results by particular criteria (ex. employer, industry, languages, etc.). You can also filter so that only Belk College alumni advisors appear in the results.
3. Search results will appear in the middle of the page. Click on advisors’ names to read more about them and see their consultation availability.
How to schedule an online consultation with an advisor:

1. On the right side of an advisor’s page there is a box that says “Book a Consultation.” Select a consultation topic (ex. career conversation, resume/CV review, mock interview).

2. Look at their available consultation times and choose a date/time that works for you. Once you select a date and time you will move to another screen. The system will then ask you to choose at least two additional days and times that work for your schedule. If the advisor has a conflict and can’t make your scheduled day/time, they can utilize these two additional times to propose a different consultation time or reschedule easily.

3. After you have selected your back-up consultation times the system will automatically advance to a page where you can write a message to the advisor. There are two options on this page: Personalize the template provided or click on “Use Custom Message” to create your own message from scratch. Whichever option you select, you will need to add details about why you would like to schedule a consultation (be specific about why the advisor’s background or profile caught your attention) and the questions you would like to address. Pay attention to whether or not the advisor is a Belk College/UNC Charlotte alumnus or if they are a business professional who graduated from another university or college. This may inform your message or your conversation.
4. Once you have completed your message you have the option to attach your resume or other document. This is important if you have selected “Resume/CV review” as your consultation type.

5. Once you have typed and proofread your message click on “Send Request.” After you send the request you will automatically navigate to another screen where you can cancel the request or send additional information to the advisor, if needed. You can manage all of your consultation requests under the “Consultations” tab in the navigation menu at the top of the page.

6. Be sure to add the Consultation day/time to your calendar. Prepare for your meeting by brainstorming a list of questions to ask and being prepared to take notes. Review the advisor’s profile on the advisor network, review their employer’s website, and check to see if they have a profile on LinkedIn.

7. After your online consultation be sure to follow-up with a thank you message.
Sample messages to advisors (personalize before sending your own):

Dear Advisor,

I was excited to find your profile on the Belk College Alumni Advisor Network because of your extensive experience in [industry/field]. I am a junior at UNC Charlotte studying [major] and am considering a career in [industry/field]. I have questions about what kind of internships I should look for and any advice you might have to help me become a strong intern applicant. I would love to hear more about your path and experiences working in [industry/field]. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Norm Niner

Dear Advisor,

I am a senior and will graduate with a degree in [major] from the Belk College of Business at UNC Charlotte in May. I’m applying for [types of positions] and am wondering if you would be willing to review my resume and provide feedback. Attached is a current copy of my resume. Thank you in advance for your help!

Sincerely,
Norma Niner
Dear Advisor,

I am a sophomore at UNC Charlotte and I plan to study [major]. I am hoping to pursue a career in [industry/field]. I noticed you have a lot of experience in this area. I want to pursue an internship in the future and am starting to prepare my interviewing skills now. Would you be willing to give me feedback on my interview responses? I am also interested in any advice you might have for me about things I can be doing in while in college to prepare for a career in [industry/field]. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Norm Niner

Dear Advisor,

Thank you for serving as a volunteer advisor on the Alumni Advisor Network! I am a student at UNC Charlotte and am working on figuring out which business career path would be a good fit for me. I am currently considering [list 2-3 fields of interest]. It looks like you have a lot of experience in [industry/field] and I am interested in hearing more about your career path, the most essential skills needed to pursue a career like yours, and advice you have for a student considering that career. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Norma Niner

Tips for a Successful Consultation

There are several things you should do to make the most of your consultations:

- Prepare prior to your consultation. Create a list of questions you want to ask. Research the advisor’s current and previous employers as well as their educational and professional background. Read the news so you are up to date on current business issues and industry trends that might come up in conversation.
- Test your technology before the meeting. Make sure you are in a quiet place and have strong phone or internet connection.
- Be ready on time. “On time” is five minutes before your consultation is scheduled to begin.
- If you’re unsure how to pronounce the advisor’s name ask them at the start of your conversation.
- Listen carefully to the advisors’ responses and ask appropriate follow-up questions, when needed. It is okay to veer from your prepared questions and let the conversation flow naturally if it is relevant, professional, and helps you gain additional insight.
- If you are scheduling a resume review have a copy of your resume in front of you during your meeting.
- If you are scheduling a mock interview, do some research into commonly asked interview questions in your field. Think about the type of questions you might want to practice, in case your advisor asks. Practice your answers before the consultation so you have a sense of where you are struggling the most.
- Respect advisors’ time. Be sure to conclude at or before the scheduled end time. If conversation is going long, it is okay to check-in with your advisor by saying something like, “I notice we only have five minutes remaining of our scheduled time. Should we wrap up or do you have time to continue?”
- Ask for advice. Do not ask for an internship or job. Advisors are not able to provide shortcuts around hiring processes and procedures.
- Avoid bringing up potentially sensitive or controversial topics, such as religion, politics, etc.
• Send a thank you message after your consultation. The best thank you notes will reference topics you discussed together and include specifics about how the conversation helped you or answered your questions.