

FACILITATOR GUIDELINES

embrace

≡ Empowering young women on their path to purpose ≡

WMU
of Texas

AUTHOR TERI USSERY

Thank you for your willingness to facilitate an Embrace cohort. You will certainly be blessed as you walk alongside the Mentors and Mentees as they journey together. Here, you will find everything you need to know to provide a meaningful and successful Embrace experience.

How Do I Get Started?

Begin now to pray for the Mentors and Mentees who will be a part of the experience.

Secure mentors first. This will determine the number of mentees you can accommodate. The cohort is most effective if the group of Mentees is no larger than 12.

Secure a location. Keep in mind that you may need to use technology, so make sure the room is equipped or can be adapted. Featured speakers may wish to use PowerPoint or video in their presentation.

Determine a time. Consider your audience when you choose a time and day for your experience. Early evening may be the best choice. Remember most of the mentees are either students, are working, or both. You are asking the group to commit a 2-hour time block one evening a month for Embrace. It is important that you keep to the time you have asked from the participants.

In addition, they will spend personal time with the written material, and time each month one-on-one with mentors.

Secure featured speakers. Look for people in your church, school, or community with expertise in the session topic. Often local counselors or ministers are a good starting place. Business professionals in your church are also a good source for speakers. It is a good idea to secure all the featured speakers before the first group session. Provide the date, time, and topic. You might also want to send them a copy of the single session written material the Mentees will be working through following their session. Contact the featured speaker a week prior to their scheduled session to confirm. Invite them to join you for the prayer session 30 minutes prior to the group session.

Determine their technology needs.

A word about featured speakers. Embrace is a faith-based mentoring experience, so all featured speakers should approach their topic from a Biblically based, spiritually sound perspective. Additionally, we recommend the speakers be women, since Embrace is designed for young women.

Let the speaker know that their presentation will be followed by Q&A. This discussion often provides some of the most meaningful content for the Mentees.

Enlist your team.

HOSPITALITY HELP

Since most of your participants may be coming straight from work or school, providing a simple box meal or snacks would be helpful. Having someone who will take care of the meals or snacks will allow you to focus on logistics for the group session.

Responsibilities

Plan monthly meal. Make arrangements by ordering or securing help in preparing a simple meal. Box meals are easy for preparation and cleanup. You don't want something that will take a lot of time for participants to prepare.

ADMINISTRATOR

You may want to enlist someone to take care of the attendance, monthly email reminders, nametags and other administrative tasks.

Responsibilities

- Send monthly email reminders one week prior to group session. Include name and bio for featured speaker.
- Prepare nametags.
- Prepare roster and maintain attendance.
- Stay in contact with mentors to make sure things are going smoothly. Handle any facility issues that arise, including media needs.
- Register your Embrace cohort with WMU of Texas at wmutx.org.

MENTORS

Begin early securing Mentors. You can approach the Mentors in a couple of different ways. Depending on how many Mentors you have, you may have one Mentor with two Mentees. Or you can maintain the one-to-one model. Either way, the number of Mentors will determine the size of the Mentee group you can take.

Mentors will be asked to fill out an application available at wmutx.org. This will help you best determine how to assign Mentees.

Responsibilities

- Attend the group sessions.
- Read through the topic material following each session. Be prepared to lead one-on-one discussions with Mentee.
- Pray for Mentee.
- Meet one additional time between sessions with Mentee.
- Meet 30 minutes prior to the group session with other Mentors, facilitator, and featured speaker. The purpose of this time is to discuss any issues, meet featured speaker and pray together before the session begins.

MENTEES

Mentees will be asked to fill out applications available at wmutx.org. This will provide accountability for the participants and help you as you make mentoring assignments.

Mentees are making a commitment to:

- Attend monthly group sessions.
- Complete the personal reflection material following each session.
- Meet at least one additional time each month with their Mentor.

How Do I Prepare?

- Before you begin, please take a moment to register as an Embrace site on our webpage. We simply want to keep track of new Embrace groups.
- Embrace is designed to be experienced as a small group. If you have more than 12 Mentees, consider starting a second group. The peer dialogue is very meaningful and can sometimes be difficult in a larger group.
- Download applications for Mentees or provide a link for them to fill out the application.
- Download the promotional material if you would like to promote in your church or institution.

- Download and print copies of the written material. Although so much of what we do these days is online, encouraging the participants to journal their personal reflection will enhance their experience of discovery.
- Once the group is established, you can begin to pair the Mentors and Mentees. You may want to meet with your team to do this. Read the applications, pray, and trust the Holy Spirit to help you.
- Realize that this is not a traditional mentoring program. The goal of Embrace is to provide a relationship to help Mentees explore and discover God's call to ministry. This is not designed to be a long-term, ongoing relationship. However, some of the Mentor/Mentee relationships may continue.

How Do We Structure the Group Sessions?

- Provide nametags for participants. Depending on the table arrangement, you might also consider making name table tents instead. The purpose is to learn everyone's name.
- Consider an icebreaker get-to-know-you activity. Remember you have a limited time, and the participants will also be eating.
- Keep a roster and take attendance each session. Make a note if someone is out and be sure the Mentors follow up.
- The best room arrangement includes tables and chairs. Attendees will have notebooks and will likely take notes, so tables are essential. Be sensitive to the room arrangement. You will want to encourage discussion while also providing a good place for the featured speaker to share.
- If you are using a video for your featured speaker, be sure you have everything you need for clear audio and video projection.

What is the Schedule for the Group Session?

- 20 minutes: You will need some time at the beginning of your gathering for the group to fellowship. If you have a box meal, let them have that at the door, find a seat, and have a time to chat. This will also include an icebreaker if you choose.
- 5 minutes: Housekeeping, announcements, updates, prayer, introduce featured speaker.

- 20–30 minutes: Featured speaker presentation.
- 60 minutes: Q&A, discussion and debrief with featured speaker.
- 5 minutes: Closing prayer and reminders.

Are There Plans for the Group Following the Last Session?

One thing we discovered as we piloted Embrace, is that the Mentees found the peer relationships they developed to be very meaningful. We are currently looking at opportunities for continued engagement and ministry together.

Consider having a debrief a week or two after your final session to discuss any ongoing opportunities the group would like to pursue.

You might also consider having the group start a private social media group on the platform of their choice to remain connected. This allows them to stay in touch between group sessions and provides a vehicle to stay connected after their Embrace experience is completed.

Visit **wmutx.org** for information on future ideas and suggestions as we grow Embrace cohorts.

If you have ideas or suggestions, questions or need additional information, please contact **Teri Ussery at teri.wmutx@txb.org**.

