CEU Thesis Buddy Program

GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Welcome & Introduction

Welcome and thank you for participating in the CEU Thesis Buddy Program! This program offers you the opportunity to form relationships with CEU alumni, and exchange valuable academic and career advice.

Who is a Thesis Buddy?

A "thesis buddy" is a CEU alum who helps graduating students through their thesis writing process. Thesis Buddies do not substitute students' official thesis supervisors, nor are they expected to provide significant feedback on the actual thesis topic. A Buddy's role is that of a support person, to check in with the student regularly, occasionally proofread, and help the student reach milestones and overcome writer's block if necessary. More substantial feedback and proofing, by an alum with expertise on the subject, is welcome but not obligatory.

There are many benefits to working with a Thesis Buddy:

- Receiving help through a difficult period in your academic journey
- Enhancing your own listening, communications, and reflection skills
- Connecting with CEU alumni from all over the world and all walks of life

Program Details

The Thesis Buddy program begins with matching you to a Thesis Buddy and allows you to connect until your thesis is submitted. While the program has a specific end date (June 1) you are welcome to continue the relationship for however long a time you pre-determine with your buddy (e.g. if you get an extension on thesis submission). At the end of the program, you will be asked to provide feedback on the program overall and your experience with it.

Communication Methods

Communication between buddies is flexible and can span a variety of methods including direct messages on social media, email, phone call or text, video call etc. You can set up the communication channels and frequency with your Thesis Buddy.

STUDENT ROLES & EXPECTATIONS

Student Roles & Responsibilities:

For the duration of the relationship, we expect that students will do the following:

- Be communicative and trustworthy.
- Remain punctual with regards to "meetings" and notify your buddy in a timely manner of any changes or cancellations to any communications previously agreed upon.
- Commit to the relationship for the duration agreed on by both parties (typically this is for the length of the program).
- Engage with your buddy regularly throughout the program and sustain the frequency of contact agreed between you and your buddy.
- Ensure you thank your buddy for their time, stories, and experiences they're willing to share with you.
- Inform Alumni Volunteer Programs Coordinator of any conflict or intention to withdraw from the program.

Students do not:

- Pass on confidential information shared by the Thesis Buddy.
- Demand information, advice, help, or badger their buddy.
- Expect their buddy to replace their thesis supervisor.
- Expect their buddy to read extensive drafts of their thesis, unless explicitly agreed upon.
- Undermine the availability of their buddy, or persistently over communicate with them unless given express and explicit permission.
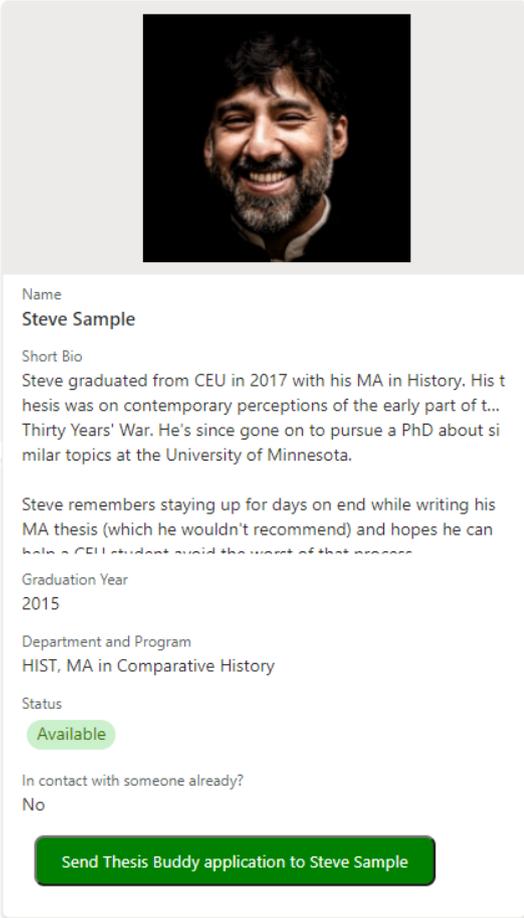- Use the buddy's position to take personal advantage.

GETTING STARTED

To be paired with a Thesis Buddy, you need to use the matching platform set up on SharePoint.

Apply for a Thesis Buddy:

1. **Visit this link to see the Thesis Buddy profiles.** Make sure you are logged in with your CEU account to the Office 365 service (use your CEU email address and password to login if you are prompted for credentials).

2. **Check out 'Available' Thesis Buddy profiles** and identify the buddy that you would like to connect with. While it helps to connect to alumni from your own department, please also read their bios carefully – you may wish to connect with someone outside of your department as well.

   NOTE: If their 'Short bio' text is not fully visible, you can either hover your mouse over the bio text, or double click on the profile to see all details in a pop-up.

3. Once you've identified the Buddy you want to connect with, **click on the "Send Thesis Buddy application to …" button** at the bottom of the profile card.

   NOTE: You may contact multiple buddies but please do not contact more than two initially. **Every profile has additional information regarding a Thesis Buddy's availability under the 'In contact with someone already' field.** If this field has the 'Yes' value, it means the alum has already been approached by another student, though not officially in a buddy relationship with them yet. You can still contact these alumni, but just know that there's already an ongoing application process.

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GETTING STARTED

4. Once you have clicked on the "Send Thesis Buddy application to …" button, **a window should roll out shortly from the right side of the screen**:

Fill in the required fields, attach a picture of yourself (preferably in JPG or PNG format, not larger than 5MBs) **by clicking on 'Import'**, then **click on 'Run flow'** when ready**. The more additional information you can provide on your thesis topic, the better your chances for a successful match.

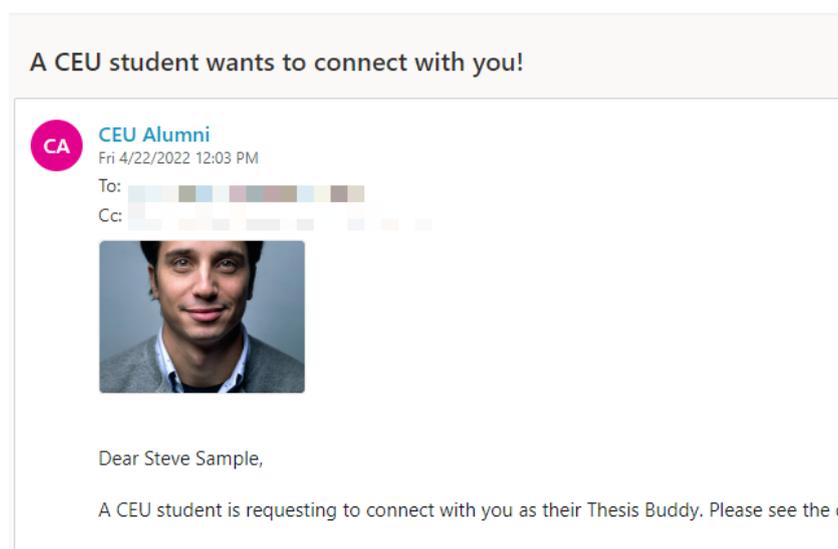NOTE: If you don't see the window rolling out, and reloading the page did not help, please contact helprequest@ceu.edu with the subject "Thesis Buddy application button issue".

5. Once the "Run Flow" button is pressed, there is a **status pop-up in the top right corner noting that the automation has started successfully.**

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GETTING STARTED
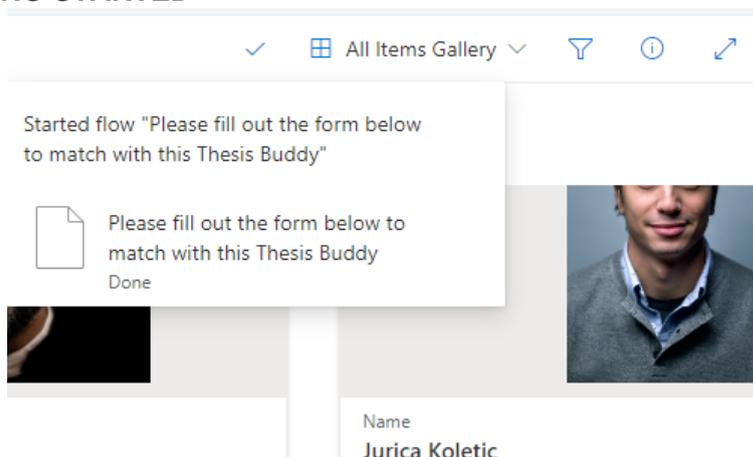
6. **Within 15 minutes**, you, the Thesis Buddy, and the program coordinator will all **receive an email confirming your request**. (Please also check your spam folder, some email providers tend to mark these messages as spam).

A CEU student wants to connect with you!

CA **CEU Alumni**
Fri 4/22/2022 12:03 PM
To:
Cc:

Dear Steve Sample,

A CEU student is requesting to connect with you as their Thesis Buddy. Please see the d

7. The Thesis Buddy that you have approached will have 10 days to reply to your request**. In case you do not hear from your Thesis Buddy within those 10 days, please let the program coordinator know.** You can then go ahead and approach another available buddy.

NOTE: Please note that while most initial contacts result in a match, a Thesis Buddy reserves the right to decline your request if they do not think you're a good match. If your chosen Thesis Buddy declines your request, you can approach another available buddy.

If you encounter any technical issues during this process, please contact Helprequest via email with the subject "Thesis Buddy application issue" with a short issue description and screenshot included.

GOAL SETTING:

Once you have been successfully paired with your Thesis Buddy, we suggest setting up a time for an introductory call. During your introductory call, we recommend defining expectations regarding the **frequency of your sessions, the duration of each session** (i.e., 45 mins; 1 hour), and a few points on **the guidance you are seeking**. This way, your buddy has some background knowledge to expand upon for the subsequent sessions.

During your introductory call, it is often helpful to identify clear goals for yourself. Here are some questions to consider leading up to goal setting:

- What areas are you hoping to get help in with your thesis?
- What challenges or uncertainties do you face?
- Can you identify areas for growth and why those areas are especially challenging for you (i.e. sticking to deadlines, writing every day, formulating research questions)?

Also make sure to respect your Thesis Buddy's boundaries. If they are not comfortable reading long drafts and providing substantial feedback on the text and/or topic, they will let you know from the onset. Rather use this as an opportunity to see your buddy as an additional layer of accountability, not an external supervisor.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How am I matched with a Thesis Buddy?

You approach the alumni that you want to connect with directly via our matching platform. The alumni buddies will have 10 days to reply to your request for matching.

May I approach more than one Thesis Buddy?

You may but please do not approach more than two at a time.

What happens if I'm paired with someone and never hear from them?

If you have reached out to your match and have not heard back from them, please contact us at khodzharovan@ceu.edu and we'd be happy to help you connect, or find a new connection altogether. You can also go ahead and approach another available buddy.

My Thesis Buddy isn't quite the right fit, even after talking for a couple sessions. What do I do?

While we recommend trying to still learn from your buddy, we understand that not every fit will be perfect. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with details on the situation and we'd be happy to assist, or match you with a new connection.

My Thesis Buddy is very busy and I'm hearing from them a little too sparsely. What do I do?

We understand that our alumni are busy, but they do commit to a certain frequency of communication when they volunteer as a Thesis Buddy. Fear not. Revisit your agreement regarding frequency of communications together, or feel free to contact us for assistance.

I'm in a connection and no longer able to commit to the program. How can I politely bow-out?

Life happens! We get it. We recommend reaching out to your Thesis Buddy explaining your new situation and letting them know you'll be stepping away. Email us and let us know your situation and we will officially end you buddy relationship.

Code of Conduct:

Participants of the CEU Thesis Buddy program are expected to abide by the code of conduct established by CEU. The code of conduct includes:

- Maintaining confidentiality of all communications with my Thesis Buddy. However, if any details are cause for concern for the safety, welfare and/or health of the Thesis Buddy, it is my responsibility to inform Alumni Relations Office immediately at khodzharovan@ceu.edu.
- Focusing communications with my Thesis Buddy on thesis writing, or potentially related topics (e.g. if I am interested in my buddy's career trajectory post-CEU).
- Not seeking counselling support from my Thesis Buddy.
- Remaining professional in all communications.
- Understanding that professionalism is to be maintained during and beyond the termination of any buddy relationship.
- If needed, I will seek advice from Alumni Relations Office staff or my department coordinator.

Program Contacts

Nurangiz Khodzharova
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khodzharovan@ceu.edu

Alumni Relations Office
General inquiries
alumni@ceu.edu

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