Workforce Advising Program

What is the Workforce Advising program and why is it important?

NSF FREEDM Systems Center’s education programs are vital in developing diverse, creative, innovative, global engineering leaders of the future. During graduate students’ tenure with the Center, industry interactions are important in helping develop these attributes as well as the soft skills needed in the workforce. In addition, industry members of NSF engineering research centers have reported one of the greatest values of their membership was access to highly knowledgeable, qualified graduates.

To foster this development and connection, the workforce advising program was designed to engage Center industry members with graduate students in a mentoring relationship.

Industry mentorships can provide useful experiences such as helping graduate students understand the internal dynamics of future employment with industry, academia, or government as well as assisting with research-related questions, hard and soft skills relative to the profession, and professional networking.

What is expected from an Industry member advisor?

Industry advisors are encouraged to devote one (1) to two (2) hours monthly by direct contact with their student advisee. While many students would prefer to have contact in-person, meetings can also occur by phone, email, Skype, Web-Ex, Elluminate, and other technologies. Topics during the student-led meetings may involve, but are not limited to, the students’ research projects, industry trends and problems, and professional development.

What are students interested in gaining from an industry member advisor?

Center graduate students have commented that they would like to be informed of current industry trends relative to their research field, gain advice from industry on research projects, and how the projects can be most applicable to current problems encountered by industry. Additionally, graduate students want to know how to professionally transition from the academic to industry setting.

Are you interested?

If you are a Center industry member and would like to participate in this program, please contact Dr. Penny Jeffrey, Education Program Director, at penny_jeffrey@ncsu.edu or 919-513-3435.