Compass Accelerated Summer Faculty Track Syllabus

Welcome to Compass! We are glad you are here.

Compass Philosophy

- We focus on providing exceptional leadership and management training and mentoring in a collaborative and engaging learning environment where all early-career researchers are welcome.
- We support the careers of Compass Scholars by developing skills that researchers need to create positive and supportive research environments where team members thrive and achieve.
- We challenge the sink-or-swim culture that tends to dominate academic research by openly sharing best practices, providing practical resources, and offering experienced guidance.
- We are committed to continuous program improvement to achieve this mission.

Program Overview

1. **7-week Foundational Training and Mentoring**
   The goals of the program are to provide essential knowledge and hands-on, practical skill development so you can apply what you learn. We provide both asynchronous learning materials and activities as well as synchronous, live events.

   Scholars will be able to complete the weekly asynchronous learning at a semi-structured pace, allowing for flexibility. However, we ask Scholars to complete learning activities for each unit by the end of the second week of each unit, so everyone can progress together to the next learning unit. It is essential that you break your learning into smaller chunks and set aside the time to focus on Compass. Begin to figure out NOW where you make the time in your weekly schedule.

   Peer mentoring teams will meet synchronously each week at a mutually convenient time identified by Scholars. You will determine this time a few weeks before the program launches, when you are introduced to your PMT. We will hold one live, 90-minute synchronous fireside chat with a panel of experienced mentors during the first week of Unit 2 as well as a 1-hour group coaching session with Compass leadership during the final week of the program. Both sessions are held via Zoom on Wednesdays at noon Central Time.

   This is an accelerated program, so a commitment of at least **4-6 hours per week** is recommended to allow Scholars to fully engage with the material and grow as leaders.

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

2. **Ongoing Application and Support**
   After the program, Scholars remain members of the Compass community! To support Scholars' ongoing application of their learning, we invite them to participate in Fireside Chats with our experienced Compass mentors, join a LinkedIn group to connect with the Compass community, and access new and updated materials through a Canvas course.

   We strongly recommend that peer mentoring teams continue meeting beyond the 7-week program to receive ongoing support from their peers.

Expectations of Scholars

As a Compass Scholar, you are expected to uphold the following commitments.

1. **Be a good colleague**: Be kind and considerate in both written and verbal communication in all aspects of Compass.
2. **Share your perspective and welcome others**: Contribute your experiences, stories, and views to foster everyone's learning. Welcome the input and views of others, while recognizing and respecting they may differ from your own.
3. **Take the time**: Dedicate the time to complete all components of Compass.
4. **Reflect and apply your learning**: Be intentional about reflecting on what you are learning and applying what you learn to your work.
5. **Be an engaged peer mentor**: Be a prepared, active, and supportive peer mentor.
6. **Help us continuously improve**: Complete Compass surveys and follow-up questionnaires.
7. **Maintain confidentiality:** Collaborative learning only works when members can trust each other. Maintain that trust by not sharing other Scholars' personal comments and experiences with people outside the program.
8. **Use artificial intelligence (AI) tools responsibly:** Respect confidentiality, intellectual property rights, and the privacy of all participants by using AI tools for educational purposes only. Do not share AI generated materials derived from Compass (including virtual events) with others.

Requirements of Scholars

Adult learners come to professional development opportunities with their own unique learning goals. This is your program, and we want you to get what you hope to from it! We also want you to engage with learning materials that you might not have originally thought you wanted or needed, and to be a good community member by engaging with peers so you can learn from each other. While Scholars do not earn an academic grade or traditional course credit, we provide those who meet the **required activities** with a Certificate of Completion and digital Credly badge. What you get from Compass depends on what you put into it, so we recommend completing everything that you can even if you choose not to pursue the Certificate of Completion.

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

Former Scholars asked us to help them prioritize the completion of learning content, activities, and deliverables. Below is our list of "requirements of Scholars" organized by what we consider the highest priority at the top. Note that we do not refer to anything as "low priority" because everything is valuable.

- **Lab Manual:** Develop and submit your personalized Manual (Due Week 7).
- **Peer Mentoring:** Consistently participate in Peer Mentoring Team Meetups and peer review of Lab Manuals.
- **Learning Activities:** Complete learning activities and discussion boards to practice and apply your learning. Required activities will be denoted on the learning platform.
- **Fireside Chats:** Regularly attend chats with experienced mentors or review the session recordings if you are unable to attend.
- **Time Capsule Journal:** Draft and submit your Time Capsule Journal (Due in Week 7). (Note: If you wish to redact any insights you feel are too personal before turning it in, you are welcome to do so.)

The Compass Coursebooks support all the above activities. These books contain best practices, skills toolkits, contextual information, key knowledge, and advice. Review the Coursebook material most relevant to you for drafting your Lab Manual or to help you address specific issues you are currently encountering. Keep your Coursebooks for future reference as well. You will find a brief “Using the Compass Coursebook” guide on page 3 of each Coursebook.

To receive a Certificate of Completion and digital Credly badge, the following activities must be completed by the end of the program:

1. Submission of Lab Manual
2. Completion of all required online unit activities on the learning platform
3. Active participation in Peer Mentoring Teams

7-week Accelerated Summer Training and Mentoring

Learning Materials and Activities

Coursebook

The Compass Coursebook is provided via the online learning platform. It is comprised of 3 separate units. The content is delivered in a practical way so that you can take what you have learned and apply it in your work. Each Coursebook includes a **Skills Toolkit**.

Unit 1: Leading Others

The focus is building good relationships in the workplace, creating positive research work environments, and being a purposeful leader by bolstering your leadership knowledge, confidence, and skillset. This unit includes the *Interpersonal Skills Toolkit.*

Unit 2: Managing Scientific Work

The focus is managing people and processes so that you can trust the quality of data and research results. Managing people well requires setting expectations and effective onboarding, training, and feedback. We also discuss hiring and interviewing, interacting with Human Resources, and handing performance problems. This unit includes the *People Management Toolkit.*

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

Unit 3: Leading Self
The focus is managing a scientific career by being strategic and intentional. We discuss building relationships outside of the lab, working with your mentors, and using institutional resources. We also cover politics, how and when to say “no”, and setting and enforcing personal boundaries. We explore self-awareness and self-reflection, and emphasize prioritizing your wellness along with defining what success means to you. This unit includes the *Self-Leadership Toolkit* focusing on the SMARTER decision-making approach.

****Important Note****
Each unit spans 2 weeks. Scholars should complete each unit's readings and activities by the end of second week of each unit. During the second week of each unit, you will also focus on the review of your lab manual in your PMT.

Asynchronous Activities
Activities associated with the Coursebook topics are provided in the online learning platform. These activities include discussion boards, "missions" that are completed outside of the platform with a brief report posted afterwards, and interactive video assignments.

Ask & Share Discussion Board
The *Ask & Share* discussion board is for asking questions and sharing your experiences and insights with other Scholars in your cohort. *Ask & Share* is a way to build community organically. Scholars can post anything related to the program and receive feedback from peers and the Compass leadership team. Use the *Ask & Share* for content and program-related posts. For technical issues (e.g. password resets) or logistical questions (e.g. where do I find...) that need prompt responses, please reach out via email at compass@wustl.edu.

Live Events

Kickoff
During the first week of the program, the Compass team will host a one-hour Kickoff Meeting via Zoom to welcome all new Compass Scholars and provide an orientation to the program and learning platform. The Kickoff will be held on **Wednesday of Week 1.**

Peer Mentoring Team (PMT) Meetups
PMTs meet weekly for one hour, with each team setting their own weekly meeting schedule at a time convenient for everyone on the team. During PMT meetups, teams discuss Compass content, participate in guided activities, ask for and give advice on real-world scenarios, and provide feedback on Lab Manuals. The **PMT Guidebook** offers weekly guidance for facilitating your PMT meetups.

Fireside Chats with Experienced Mentors
The Compass team will one 90-minute Fireside Chat via Zoom with a panel of experienced mentors who will share their wisdom and answer Scholars’ questions. Fireside Chats are moderated by the Compass team and provide Scholars with an opportunity to receive invaluable career and leadership advice. This chat will be held on **Wednesday of Week 4.**

Live Group Coaching with Compass Leadership

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

The Compass team will host one 1-hour Live Cohort Coaching Session via Zoom to share their wisdom and answer Scholar questions. Cohort coaching provides Scholars with an opportunity to receive invaluable career and leadership advice. If there are particular questions or topics you wish to be covered during a coaching session, you may include a request in the *Ask & Share* discussion board or email us directly at compass@wustl.edu in advance of the session. For example, you may want additional nuance or guidance about how to most effectively apply the strategies and practices you learn about in the program to a real-life context. This session will be held on **Wednesday of Week 7.**

Deliverables

Lab Manual
Compass provides a template for Scholars to develop their own personalized Lab Manual. The Lab Manual is a tool to communicate essential information, expectations, and policies with members of their research teams. Scholars work on their Lab Manual throughout the program, drawing upon what they are learning. By the end of the program, Scholars will have developed a complete Lab Manual that they can update throughout their careers. Communicating through a written document fosters equity in access to information and requires Scholars to thoroughly consider the information they want to share with team members and the tone they wish to set in their research environment.

Time Capsule Journal
Compass provides a template for Scholars to reflect on their learning and record their personal insights. This reflection process serves as a way to hold yourself accountable for implementing these insights as you progress in your career. You can think of the Time Capsule as advice you want your future self to remember. The Journal provides prompts for each unit of the program (i.e. Leading Others, Managing Scientific Work, and Leading Self), as well as an "Other Advice to My Future Self" section for general insights.

Feedback Surveys

Scholars are asked to complete brief feedback surveys for each unit and event. This feedback is crucial for the Compass team to understand what is working well, what is not working so well, and gather suggestions for improvement.

Before and after the 7-week program, you will complete surveys that capture your thoughts and practices, so we can assess program effectiveness. We will follow up with you periodically after you complete Compass to track how you are doing. **This evaluation data is essential for the continuous improvement of the program.** We sincerely appreciate the time Scholars take to complete these surveys!

For any inquiries, please reach out to the Compass Team at compass@wustl.edu.
If your email pertains to peer mentoring, please add **PMT** in the subject line.

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

Compass Program Schedule

Unit	Week	PMT Meeting Activities	Live Synchronous Events
Kickoff Week	**Week 1**	Introductions + Team Charter	Wed. Kickoff Event (60min)
Unit 1: Leading Others	**Week 2**	Guided Activity (Case)	
	Week 3	Lab Manual Check-In	
Unit 2: Managing Scientific Work	**Week 4**	Guided Activity (Case)	Wed. Fireside Chat (90min)
	Week 5	Lab Manual Peer Review	
Unit 3: Leading Self	**Week 6**	Guided Activity (Wheel of Life)	
	Week 7	Revise Team Charter + Lab Manual Review	Wed. Group Coaching Session (60min)

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

Activity Checklist

Week 1: Kickoff Week

- ○ Download learning materials
- ○ How to be a Great Leader in Science (discussion board)
- ○ Introduce Yourself (mission)
- ○ Team Charter Template (document upload with your PMT)
- ○ Work on Section 1 & 2 of Lab Manual

Week 2: Leading Others

- ○ Practice Active Listening (mission)
- ○ Practice Expressing Support (video)
- ○ Obstacles to Psychological Safety in the Lab (discussion board)
- ○ Work on Section 3 of Lab Manual

Week 3: Leading Others

- ○ Work on Section 5 of Lab Manual
- ○ Lab Manual Check-In (with your PMT)
- ○ Reflect and Provide Feedback on the Peer Review Process (mission)
- ○ Unit 1 PMT + Content Feedback Survey (Qualtrics survey)
- ○ Unit 1 Knowledge Check (optional)

Week 4: Managing Scientific Work

- ○ What Characteristics are You Looking for in a Lab Member (discussion board)
- ○ Performance Problems and Separations (discussion board)
- ○ Create an Onboarding Video (mission)
- ○ Anybody but Sherry (video)
- ○ Work on Section 4 of Lab Manual

Week 5: Managing Scientific Work

- ○ Work on Section 6 of Lab Manual
- ○ Peer Review Lab Manuals (with your PMT)
- ○ Reflect and Provide Feedback on the Peer Review Process (mission)
- ○ Unit 2 PMT + Content Feedback Survey (Qualtrics survey)
- ○ Unit 2 Knowledge Check (optional)

Week 6: Leading Self

- ○ Stress Management and Self-Care Experiment (mission)
- ○ Defining Success (discussion board)
- ○ Burnout (discussion board)
- ○ Saying “No” (video)
- ○ Work on Section 7 & 8 of Lab Manual

Week 7: Leading Self

- ○ Work on Section 9 of Lab Manual
- ○ Peer Review Lab Manuals (with your PMT)
- ○ Resubmit your Team Charter

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis

- ○ Submit Your Lab Manual (document upload)
- ○ Submit Your Time Capsule (document upload)
- ○ Unit 3 PMT + Content Feedback Survey (Qualtrics survey)
- ○ Unit 3 Knowledge Check (optional)

© 2026 Compass and Washington University in St. Louis