



PHASE 3 — PRACTICUM

Week 36 of 36

Certification

Sessions 106–108

Tuesday • Wednesday • Thursday

FORGE — Facilitating Opportunities for Reentry, Growth & Empowerment

Dooly State Prison

FORGE Curriculum

Phase 3: Practicum — "Lead and Serve"

Week 36: Certification — THE FINAL WEEK

Week 36 Overview

Purpose: This is it. The culmination of 9 months, 108 sessions, and more growth than most of these men thought possible. Week 36 is the final assessment and certification of FORGE Mentors. Every session this week carries weight. Tuesday tests competence under pressure. Wednesday tests depth of learning and readiness. Thursday honors the journey and commissions these men into active service. This week must be run with the seriousness, rigor, and dignity it deserves.

Sessions This Week: - Session 106 (Tuesday): Final Simulation Assessment — Panel evaluation - Session 107 (Wednesday): Portfolio Defense — Panel review and Q&A - Session 108 (Thursday): Graduation and Commissioning — Full ceremony

Materials Needed:

Session 106: - Final Simulation Scoring Rubric sheets (2 per participant, 1 copy per panelist) - Selected simulation scenarios from Category B and C (2 per participant) - Timer - Panel table and chairs - Role players (senior mentors or trained volunteers)

Session 107: - Portfolio Defense Evaluation Forms (1 per participant per panelist) - Review Board Decision Forms (1 per participant) - Complete FORGE Mentor Portfolios (submitted by each participant)

Session 108: - FORGE Mentor Certificates (1 per graduate) - Ceremony script (see below) - Talking piece - Post-Certification Expectations handout (1 per graduate) - Commitment to Service forms (1 per graduate) - Room arranged for ceremony — chairs in a circle or semicircle facing front

SESSION 106: Final Simulation Assessment

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2+ hours (may extend based on cohort size) **Panel:** 3-person panel — experienced FORGE mentor, facilitator, staff member (if available)

Purpose

This is the final skills assessment. Two complex simulations per participant, drawn from the hardest scenario categories. The bar is higher than Phase 2: minimum 16/24 per simulation. This is not a learning exercise — it is a competency verification. The panel is answering one question: **Is this person ready to represent FORGE independently?**

Assessment Structure

Format (per participant — approximately 25 minutes each)

Time	Activity
0:00-0:02	Scenario setup — facilitator reads the scenario, assigns roles
0:02-0:09	Simulation 1 — participant responds in real time (7 minutes)
0:09-0:14	Panel questions on Simulation 1 (5 minutes)
0:14-0:16	Scoring break — panel scores independently (2 minutes)
0:16-0:18	Scenario 2 setup
0:18-0:25	Simulation 2 — participant responds in real time (7 minutes)
0:25-0:30	Panel questions on Simulation 2 (5 minutes)
0:30-0:32	Scoring break (2 minutes)
0:32-0:35	Transition to next participant (3 minutes)

Simulation Rules

Facilitator (to the full group before assessments begin):

"Today is your final simulation assessment. Here's how it works.

You will face two scenarios. You won't know what they are until the moment they begin. Each scenario is drawn from the most complex situations a FORGE mentor can encounter — Category B and C. Mentor challenges. Safety situations. The real ones.

You have 7 minutes per scenario. There is no freeze-and-coach. There is no replay. This is your final performance. Show us what you've learned.

After each scenario, the panel will ask you questions for 5 minutes. These questions are not trick questions — they're designed to understand your thinking. Why did you do what you did? What were you considering? What would you do differently? Answer honestly.

The minimum passing score is 16 out of 24 per simulation. That's an average of 2.67 per category — above 'Competent' on most criteria. This is a higher bar than Phase 2. We raised the bar because the work you're about to do is real, and the people you serve deserve mentors who are ready.

A few ground rules: - You may not consult notes, your portfolio, or other participants during the simulation - You respond as you would in a real situation — no narrating what you would do, actually do it - If the scenario involves a safety situation requiring referral, treat it as if you are in the dorm — who would you contact and how? - Observers remain silent during simulations

Questions before we begin?"

Role Players

Senior mentors or trained volunteers play the individuals in each scenario. They should be briefed in advance on: - The scenario setup and their character's motivation - Planned escalation points (complications to introduce if the participant handles the initial situation well) - When to cooperate and when to resist - Staying in character — do not break the simulation

Scenario Selection

Each participant receives 2 scenarios. Select from Category B (Mentor Challenges) and Category C (Safety Situations) from the Simulation Scenario Library in Part III of the Program Design. Recommended combinations:

Combination 1: B1 (Resistant Mentee) + C2 (Mental Health Crisis) **Combination 2:** B3 (Manipulator) + C1 (Weapon) **Combination 3:** B5 (Two Mentees in Conflict) + C4 (Staff Conflict) **Combination 4:** B2 (Boundary Test) + C3 (Gang Situation) **Combination 5:** B4 (Over-Identifier) + C2 (Mental Health Crisis)

Assign combinations so that no two adjacent participants receive the same pair. Vary the scenarios across the cohort.

Final Simulation Scoring Rubric

Minimum passing score: 16/24 per simulation (higher bar than Phase 2's 15/24)

Criteria	1 — Needs Work	2 — Developing	3 — Competent	4 — Exemplary
De-escalation	Escalated the situation or froze entirely. Made the situation worse through action or inaction.	Attempted de-escalation but was inconsistent. Some techniques used but not sustained. Partially effective.	Effectively reduced tension. Used appropriate techniques (voice, posture, space, empathy). Maintained steady approach throughout.	Masterful. Calm, strategic, and grounding to others. Read the situation accurately and adapted approach in real time. Others in the room would feel safer because of this person's presence.
Communication	Aggressive, passive, or unclear. Used language that inflamed or confused. Failed to listen actively.	Some effective techniques visible. Attempted active listening or "I" statements but inconsistently. Message was sometimes unclear.	Clear, assertive, and respectful throughout. Used active listening, reflections, and open questions. Communicated with intention and empathy.	Exceptional. Every word was chosen with purpose. Listened deeply. Reflected with precision. Tone, pace, and content all aligned. Made the other person feel genuinely heard.
Boundaries	Overstepped role (tried to be therapist, CO, or authority) or had no boundaries (agreed to everything, took on what wasn't theirs).	Boundaries were unclear or inconsistently maintained. Wavered under pressure. Recognized the line but struggled to hold it.	Maintained appropriate role throughout. Clear about what a mentor does and doesn't do. Held the line firmly but without harshness.	Modeled boundaries so naturally that they strengthened the relationship rather than straining it. Said no in a way that preserved dignity and trust.
Resolution	No resolution attempted. Walked away, gave up, or got stuck. Left the situation worse or unresolved.	Partial resolution. Made some progress but didn't reach a workable outcome. Left loose ends or unresolved tension.	Reached a workable agreement or appropriate next step. Both parties (or the individual) had a clear path forward. Checked for agreement.	Durable solution that preserved the dignity of all involved. Resolution addressed root cause, not just the surface conflict. Follow-up plan in place.

Criteria	1 — Needs Work	2 — Developing	3 — Competent	4 — Exemplary
Composure	Lost composure. Became visibly angry, frustrated, anxious, or shutdown. Own emotions drove the interaction.	Recovered after losing composure. Recognized the slip and corrected, but the break was visible and affected the dynamic.	Maintained composure throughout. Stayed regulated even under pressure. Emotional state did not negatively affect the interaction.	Composed and grounding to others. Remained centered in a way that calmed the entire situation. Demonstrated the self-regulation expected of a leader.
Referral Judgment	Failed to recognize when the situation exceeded mentor scope. Did not refer when safety was at risk. Tried to handle everything alone.	Recognized the need for referral but delayed or was uncertain about process. Hesitated when action was needed.	Recognized the limits of the mentor role and referred appropriately and timely. Knew who to contact and how. Stayed present until transition.	Proactive safety awareness. Identified risk early. Made referral decisions with confidence and clarity. Balanced the relationship with the safety obligation seamlessly.

Scoring Process: 1. Each panelist scores independently on their own rubric sheet 2. After both simulations, panelists compare scores 3. If scores differ by more than 3 points on any simulation, panelists discuss and reach consensus 4. Final score is the average of all three panelists' scores (rounded to nearest whole number)

Panel Questions (after each simulation):

Use 2-3 of the following, tailored to what was observed: - "Walk us through your thinking in the first 30 seconds. What were you assessing?" - "At what point did you decide on your approach? What informed that decision?" - "Was there a moment where you felt yourself getting activated? How did you manage that?" - "What would you do differently if you could replay that scenario?" - "If this happened in your dorm tomorrow, what would your next steps be after this conversation?" - "Where did this situation fall on the heat scale? Did your response match the level?" - "At what point, if any, did this become a referral situation? How did you make that determination?" - "How did you maintain boundaries while still showing care?"

Post-Assessment

After all participants have completed their simulations:

Facilitator:

*"That's the last simulation you will ever do as a FORGE practitioner. Tomorrow — portfolio defense. Come prepared to tell your story. Not just what's in the binder. The story of who you were, who you became, and who you're committed to being.
Rest tonight. You've earned it."*

Panel meets privately to finalize all simulation scores and discuss any participants whose scores are borderline. Do not share individual scores with participants today — scores will be communicated as part of the certification decision on Thursday.

Session 106 Checklist

- Panel assembled and briefed (experienced mentor, facilitator, staff if possible)
 - Simulation scenarios selected and assigned to each participant
 - Role players briefed on scenarios and escalation points
 - Room set up: panel table, performance area, observer seating
 - Timer ready
 - Scoring rubric sheets prepared (2 per participant per panelist)
 - Ground rules communicated to all participants
 - All simulations completed
 - Panel questions asked after each simulation
 - Independent scoring completed by each panelist
 - Scores compared and consensus reached where needed
 - Panel debrief completed (private)
 - No scores shared with participants today
-

SESSION 107: Portfolio Defense

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2+ hours (may extend based on cohort size) **Panel:** 3-person panel (may be same as Tuesday or different)

Purpose

The portfolio defense is the comprehensive review of each participant's entire FORGE journey. This is not a presentation about facts — it is a demonstration of growth, self-awareness, and readiness. The panel is evaluating: Does this person understand what they've learned? Can they articulate their growth authentically? Do they have the depth and humility to mentor others?

Defense Structure (per participant — approximately 25 minutes)

Time	Activity
0:00-0:15	Participant presentation
0:15-0:25	Panel Q&A

Presentation Guidelines

Facilitator (to the full group before defenses begin):

"Today you present your FORGE Mentor Portfolio. This is not a book report. I don't need you to read your documents to us. I need you to tell us your story.

You have 15 minutes. Here's what the panel wants to hear:

Phase 1 — Who were you? *What did you learn about yourself in Foundation? Which lessons hit the hardest? Where did you resist? Where did you break through? Show us the growth — don't just claim it.*

Phase 2 — What did you build? *What skills did you develop? What was your hardest simulation and what did you learn from it? How did you learn to teach, to facilitate, to give feedback?*

Phase 3 — What did you do? *Tell us about your mentees. Tell us about a moment in the field where everything you'd learned came together. Tell us about a moment where it didn't. Tell us what you'd do differently. Be honest — the panel can tell the difference between performance and truth.*

Your Mentor Philosophy Statement. *Read it. Or summarize it. But own it. This is who you're declaring yourself to be.*

Your Growth Narrative. *The thread that connects Week 1 to Week 36. Who were you then? Who are you now? What changed? Why?*

Then the panel will ask you questions for 10 minutes. These questions are designed to test your depth. Surface answers will not be sufficient. Answer from your experience, not from the textbook.

This is your moment. Treat it accordingly."

Panel Q&A Questions

Select from the following, based on each participant's presentation and portfolio:

On self-awareness: - "What is the biggest thinking error you still struggle with? How do you manage it?" - "Tell us about a time during Phase 3 when your own issues got in the way of your mentoring. What happened and what did you learn?" - "What would your mentees say is your greatest strength? Your greatest limitation?"

On mentoring competence: - "Describe a mentee who challenged you more than any other. What made them difficult? What did you do?" - "Walk us through a conflict you mediated in the field. What worked? What didn't?" - "How do you know when a situation is beyond your scope? Give us an example." - "How do you build trust with someone who doesn't want to be mentored?"

On commitment and character: - "Why should FORGE certify you? Not what you've done — why you?" - "What will you do in the first 30 days after certification?" - "If a certified FORGE mentor was behaving in a way that contradicted the Code of Conduct, how would you handle it?" - "What does 'Service Over Self' mean to you now — compared to what it meant in Week 1?"

On sustainability: - "How will you prevent burnout? Be specific." - "Who is your support network? How will you use them?" - "What happens when you have a bad week? Walk us through your plan."

On legacy: - "Who is the next mentor you're developing? What do you see in them?" - "What kind of culture are you building in your dorm? How do you know it's working?" - "If you could say one thing to the man you were on Day 1 of FORGE, what would it be?"

Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form

Participant Name: _____ Date: _ Panelist: _____

Criteria	1 — Insufficient	2 — Developing	3 — Satisfactory	4 — Exceptional
Portfolio completeness	Major items missing. Portfolio does not meet minimum requirements.	Most items present but some gaps or incomplete sections.	All required items present and complete. Meets all checklist requirements.	Complete and exceeds expectations. Organized, thorough, reflects sustained effort across all 3 phases.
Self-awareness and honesty	Superficial or performative. No evidence of genuine self-reflection. Claims growth without demonstrating it.	Some genuine reflection but inconsistent depth. Avoids certain topics or glosses over challenges.	Honest and self-aware. Acknowledges both growth and ongoing challenges. Demonstrates real insight into own patterns.	Deeply honest. Unflinchingly self-aware. Can articulate strengths and limitations with equal clarity. Reflection shows genuine transformation.
Articulation of growth	Cannot clearly describe personal journey. Disorganized or vague.	Describes growth in general terms but lacks specific examples or evidence.	Clearly describes the arc of growth across all 3 phases with specific examples, turning points, and evidence.	Compelling, authentic narrative of transformation. Specific, vivid, and moving. Demonstrates the kind of storytelling that inspires others.
Mentor philosophy	No clear philosophy or one that contradicts FORGE values.	Philosophy exists but is vague or borrowed. Doesn't feel personally owned.	Clear, personal philosophy that aligns with FORGE values and reflects the participant's authentic mentoring identity.	A philosophy statement that is deeply personal, clearly articulated, and demonstrates a mature understanding of mentoring and service.

Criteria	1 — Insufficient	2 — Developing	3 — Satisfactory	4 — Exceptional
Response to questions	Unable to answer panel questions substantively. Deflects, becomes defensive, or gives surface-level answers.	Answers some questions well but struggles with depth on others. May become flustered under pressure.	Answers questions thoughtfully and substantively. Draws on real experience. Maintains composure under questioning.	Handles questions with confidence, depth, and humility. Demonstrates thinking on feet. Answers reveal genuine understanding, not memorized responses.

Total Score: ____ / 20 Minimum passing score: 12/20

Panelist Notes / Recommendations:

Review Board Decision

After all portfolio defenses are complete, the panel convenes privately to make certification decisions. For each participant, the panel reviews:

1. **Final Simulation Assessment scores** (Session 106) — minimum 16/24 per simulation
2. **Portfolio Defense score** (Session 107) — minimum 12/20
3. **Session Delivery Assessment scores** (from Phase 3 field work) — 4 sessions observed, average 12/20+
4. **Mentoring hours** — minimum 60 hours documented
5. **Peer evaluations** from all three phases
6. **Facilitator assessment** — overall observation of character, growth, and readiness
7. **Code of Conduct record** — any violations during the program

Decision Criteria

CERTIFIED — Full FORGE Mentor Certification

All of the following: - Both final simulations scored 16/24 or above - Portfolio defense scored 12/20 or above - All 4 independently delivered sessions scored 12/20 or above (average) - 60+ hours of documented mentoring - Complete portfolio with all required items - No unresolved Code of Conduct violations - Panel consensus: "This person is ready to represent FORGE independently"

CONDITIONAL — Certification Pending Remediation

One or more of the following: - One simulation scored below 16/24 (but not below 13/24) - Portfolio defense scored 10-11/20 - One or more session delivery scores below threshold - Minor portfolio gaps that can be completed within 2 weeks - Panel has specific concerns that can be addressed with a defined plan

Conditional participants receive: - A written remediation plan identifying specific areas to address - A timeline (typically 2-4 weeks) - A reassessment opportunity on the specific areas identified - Continued access to supervision during the remediation period - No shame — this is a growth timeline, not a failure

NOT YET READY — May Re-Enter Phase 3 with Next Cohort

One or more of the following: - Both simulations scored below 16/24 - Portfolio defense scored below 10/20 - Significant portfolio gaps that cannot be completed quickly - Mentoring hours significantly below 60 - Panel consensus: safety or character concerns that require additional development - Unresolved Code of Conduct issues

Not Yet Ready participants receive: - An honest, compassionate conversation about what was observed - Specific feedback on areas needing development - An invitation to re-enter Phase 3 with the next cohort (not starting over from Phase 1) - Affirmation that this is not failure — it is a different timeline - Continued participation in FORGE community (not excluded)

Facilitator note: *The "Not Yet Ready" conversation is one of the hardest things a facilitator will do. Handle it with absolute honesty and absolute care. This person has invested 9 months. Respect that investment while being truthful about readiness. Do not certify someone who is not ready — it undermines every certified mentor and ultimately harms the people they would serve.*

Decision Documentation

For each participant, the panel completes:

Review Board Decision Form

Participant Name: ____ **Date:** ____

Simulation 1 Score: ____ / 24 **Simulation 2 Score:** ____ / 24 **Portfolio Defense Score:** ____ / 20 **Session Delivery Average:** ____ / 20 **Mentoring Hours Documented:** ____ hours **Portfolio Complete:** Yes / No (if no, list missing items) **Code of Conduct Violations:** None / Described below

Panel Decision: CERTIFIED / CONDITIONAL / NOT YET READY

If Conditional — Remediation Plan:

Remediation Deadline: ____ **Reassessment Date:** _____

If Not Yet Ready — Specific Feedback:

Recommended Plan: _____

Panel Signatures: 1. ____ (*Experienced Mentor*) 2. ____ (Facilitator) 3. ____ (Staff Member / Third Panelist)

Session 107 Checklist

- Panel assembled and briefed
 - All participants' portfolios reviewed by panel (at least briefly) in advance
 - Presentation guidelines communicated to all participants
 - All portfolio defenses completed
 - Portfolio Defense Evaluation Forms completed for each participant
 - Panel Q&A completed for each participant
 - Panel convened privately after all defenses
 - Review Board Decision Forms completed for each participant
 - Certification decisions reached for all participants
 - Conditional participants identified with remediation plans drafted
 - Not Yet Ready participants identified (if any) with feedback prepared
 - Decisions documented and signed by all panelists
 - Graduation preparation confirmed for Thursday
 - Certificates prepared for all certified participants
-

SESSION 108: Graduation and Commissioning

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Setting:** The most dignified room available. Chairs arranged in a circle or semicircle. Clean, intentional, respectful. **Attendees:** All cohort members, panel members, senior mentors, any staff supporters, chaplain (if available), facility administration (if willing)

Purpose

This is the culmination of 9 months. 108 sessions. 216 hours. More thinking reports, journal entries, simulations, and honest conversations than most of these men have had in their entire lives. This ceremony must be worthy of what they endured to get here. It is not a formality. It is a commissioning — a sending forth. Do not rush it. Do not diminish it. These men earned every moment of this day.

Graduation Ceremony Script

Room Setup (30 minutes before)

- Chairs in a circle or semicircle
- Talking piece placed in the center
- Certificates arranged in order (face down or in folders)
- Any institutional flags or FORGE banners displayed
- If possible, a small table at the front for certificate presentation
- Water available for participants and guests
- Room clean, orderly, intentional — the space should communicate respect

Pre-Ceremony (5 minutes)

As participants and guests arrive, facilitator greets each person individually. No rushing. This day starts with presence.

When everyone is seated:

I. Opening (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Welcome. To our graduates. To our panel members. To the senior mentors who walked this road before you. To any staff and administrators who chose to be here today — thank you. Your presence means something. Today we are here to do something that does not happen often enough in this facility — or in this system. We are here to recognize men who chose to change. Not because they were forced. Not because they were rewarded. Because they decided — 9 months ago — that they wanted to be different. And they did the work to make it real. Nine months. Thirty-six weeks. One hundred and eight sessions. Hundreds of hours of learning, practicing, failing, trying again, journaling, sitting in circles, having hard conversations, looking in the mirror and not looking away. That's what it took. And every man sitting in this circle today did it."

Pause.

"Thirty-five weeks ago, in the very first session of FORGE, I asked each of you a question. I said:

'Name one thing you want to be different about yourself in 9 months.'

Some of you said patience. Some said being a better father. Some said controlling your temper. Some said being someone worth respecting. I asked you to write it down and keep it.

Today I want you to hold that answer in your mind. Because in a few minutes, we're going to come back to it. And the distance between what you said then and who you are now — that distance is called transformation. And you didn't just hope for it. You built it. Session by session. Choice by choice. Day by day."

II. The FORGE Journey — Reflection (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Before we present certificates, I want to take a moment to honor the journey.

Let me walk you back through what you endured — because 'endured' is the right word. This program was designed to be hard. And it was."

Phase 1 — Foundation: "Know Yourself" (Weeks 1-12)

"In Phase 1, we asked you to look at yourself honestly. For many of you, that was the hardest thing you've ever done.

You learned about thinking errors — and had to admit you had them. All of them. You learned about emotions — and had to feel ones you'd been burying for years. You wrote impact awareness letters and faced what your choices had cost other people. You sat in circles and heard men share things they'd never said out loud.

Phase 1 wasn't about learning skills. It was about demolition. Tearing down the walls you built to protect yourself — walls that also kept you trapped. Some of you nearly quit during Phase 1. The fact that you didn't is the first proof of who you're becoming."

Phase 2 — Development: "Build Others" (Weeks 13-24)

"In Phase 2, we turned you outward. You learned to teach, facilitate, and listen. You practiced motivational interviewing. You ran community circles. You wrote lesson plans. You stood in front of this group and facilitated sessions — and received honest feedback.

And then the simulations. You walked into scenarios that would make most people freeze or explode. Weapons. Mental health crises. Manipulation. Conflicts with no clean answer. And you didn't just survive them — you learned from them. Every freeze, every stumble, every replay made you sharper.

Phase 2 asked you to become something you'd never been: a builder of other people."

Phase 3 — Practicum: "Lead and Serve" (Weeks 25-36)

"In Phase 3, we let go of the safety net. You mentored real people with real problems. You facilitated real sessions. You ran community circles in dorms where nobody asked for them. You worked with mentees who tested your patience, your boundaries, and your commitment.

You learned about sustainability — because this work takes a toll. You learned about developing other leaders — because FORGE cannot depend on any one person. You wrote your mentor philosophy statements — and declared who you are, not who you're trying to be.

Phase 3 proved that you can do this. Not in a classroom. In the real world."

III. Individual Recognition and Certificate Presentation (30-40 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Now I'm going to do something I've been looking forward to for a long time. I'm going to call each of you forward, one at a time. And I'm going to say something about who you are — not what's on your record, not what label this system gave you. Who you are."

For each graduate:

1. Facilitator calls the person by name
2. Graduate stands and comes to the front (or center of the circle)
3. Facilitator delivers a personal recognition — 3-5 sentences specific to that individual
4. Certificate is presented
5. Handshake or appropriate acknowledgment
6. The group acknowledges (applause, words of affirmation — whatever is natural)

Personal recognition examples (facilitator must prepare these in advance for each graduate — these are the most important words of the ceremony):

"[Name], when you walked in here 9 months ago, you told me you didn't think you had anything worth offering. Today you have three mentees who would tell you you're wrong. You showed up every single week. You never missed a session. You never cut corners. And that simulation in Week 23 — when you talked a man through a crisis that reminded you of your own — I watched you choose someone else's pain over your own comfort. That's not something you learned in a textbook. That's who you are. Congratulations."

"[Name], you were the biggest skeptic in this cohort. Week 2, you looked me in the eye and said, 'This is never going to work.' I'm glad you stayed long enough to prove yourself wrong. Your honesty — the same honesty that made you a skeptic — is what makes you a great mentor. You don't perform. You don't pretend. What people get from you is real. And in here, real is the most valuable thing there is. Congratulations."

"[Name], I watched you go from a man who couldn't sit in a circle without shutting down to a man who facilitates them. Your circles in [dorm/unit] became the place where men felt safe enough to be honest. You built that. Not me. Not the program. You. And the fact that you still get nervous before every session — don't lose that. That nervousness means you care. Congratulations."

Facilitator must write personalized recognitions for every graduate. These cannot be generic. Each person needs to hear something specific that proves they were truly seen.

IV. Public Commitment to Service (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Certification comes with a commitment. Not a requirement imposed on you — a commitment you make freely, in front of these witnesses.

FORGE asks every certified mentor to commit to 6 months of active service after certification. That means:

- *Maintaining a mentoring caseload of 3-5 mentees*
- *Facilitating at least 2 sessions per month*
- *Running at least 1 community circle per month*
- *Participating in monthly supervision*
- *Continuing your own growth — journaling, self-assessment, learning*
- *Upholding the Code of Conduct at all times*
- *Developing the next generation of mentors*

This is not a formality. This is a covenant with the men who will come after you. They need what you have. They need what you've become. And they're counting on you to still be standing when they need you.

If you are willing to make this commitment, I'm going to ask you to stand, state your name, and say the words."

Distribute Commitment to Service forms.

One at a time, each graduate stands:

Graduate:

"My name is [full name]. I commit to 6 months of active service as a FORGE Mentor. I will serve with integrity, maintain my own growth, and develop others to do the same. I make this commitment freely, because this work matters — and because the men who come after me deserve a mentor who shows up."

After each commitment: witnesses (panel, senior mentors, staff) acknowledge with a nod or word of affirmation.

After all commitments are made:

Facilitator:

"These commitments are witnessed and recorded. They are not words on paper. They are promises to real people — some of whom haven't arrived yet. Honor them."

Collect signed Commitment to Service forms.

V. The Charge (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Stand up. All of you. Graduates, mentors, guests — everyone.

I want to give you the FORGE charge. These are the words that every certified FORGE mentor carries with them."

Pause. Wait until everyone is standing and the room is completely silent.

Facilitator (slowly, with weight):

"You are FORGE Mentors.

You were not selected for this because you were perfect. You were selected because you were willing. Willing to look at yourself honestly. Willing to change. Willing to serve.

The world you came from — and the system you're in — told you that you were disposable. That you were your worst moment. That you had nothing to offer.

You proved that wrong. Not with words. With work.

From this day forward, you carry a responsibility. Not to a program. To the men around you who are still where you were 9 months ago — scared, angry, lost, pretending to be fine. They need someone to show them that change is possible. That need is now yours to fill.

You will have hard days. Days when a mentee relapses. Days when the system is unjust. Days when you question everything. On those days, remember this room. Remember this circle. Remember the men standing next to you.

Remember what you built.

And remember this:

Leadership is not granted. It is forged.

You were forged. Now go build others."

VI. Welcome into the FORGE Mentor Community (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Senior mentors — the men who walked this road before this cohort — please step forward."

Senior mentors (certified FORGE mentors from previous cohorts, if any) step forward and face the new graduates.

Facilitator:

"These men are your brothers in service. They've been where you are today. They've done this work. They know what's coming. And they are here to welcome you into a community that doesn't end when the ceremony does. To our new mentors: you are no longer alone. You are part of something. Something bigger than any one of us. Something that will outlast all of us — if we build it right."

Senior mentors greet each new graduate individually — handshake, word of encouragement, whatever is natural and authentic. If this is the first cohort and there are no senior mentors yet:

Facilitator:

"You are the first. There are no senior mentors ahead of you — because you are the foundation. Every mentor who comes after you will stand on what you build. Every dorm that changes will trace back to this day, this group, this decision. You are the beginning. Make it count."

VII. Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"One last circle. Sit down. Talking piece in the center.

We started this program 35 weeks ago with a question. The very last exercise of Session 1 — I asked you:

'Name one thing you want to be different about yourself in 9 months.'

Now we're here. Nine months later. So here's the final question — the last question of this program:

'What is different?'

Not what you learned. Not what you did. What is different about who you are? Take the talking piece and tell this circle."

Send the talking piece around. Let every person speak. Do not rush. Do not interrupt. This is the most important circle of the entire program.

Facilitator (receiving the talking piece last):

"What I see in this circle — right now — is proof that people change. Not a theory about it. Proof. Living, breathing, standing proof.

The world doesn't believe that. Most people don't believe that. But I've watched it happen in this room for 9 months.

You are the evidence.

Go be the evidence for someone else.

FORGE — Session 108. The last session. Dismissed."

VIII. Post-Ceremony

Informal fellowship time — allow graduates, mentors, panel members, and guests to interact informally. This is a celebration. Let it be one.

Administrative tasks (facilitator handles privately): - Secure all signed Commitment to Service forms - File all Review Board Decision Forms - Schedule remediation plan follow-ups for any conditional certifications - Conduct individual conversations with any "Not Yet Ready" participants (with care and privacy) - Update program records - Distribute Post-Certification Expectations handout to all graduates

Post-Certification Expectations

Distribute to all certified graduates at the end of the ceremony.

FORGE Certified Mentor — Ongoing Requirements

Your 6-Month Active Service Commitment:

Requirement	Frequency	Minimum
Mentoring caseload	Ongoing	3-5 mentees
Session facilitation	Monthly	2 sessions per month
Community circles	Monthly	1 circle per month
Supervision attendance	Monthly	1 session per month
Mentoring log updates	Monthly	Submitted by last day of month

Requirement	Frequency	Minimum
Self-assessment	Quarterly	Written reflection on strengths and growth areas
Self-care plan compliance	Ongoing	Follow your Personal Sustainability Plan

Ongoing Development: - Attend monthly mentor meetings (fellowship, planning, continued learning) - Read at least 1 book from the recommended reading list per quarter - Identify and begin developing at least 1 potential future mentor - Participate in training the next FORGE cohort when Phase 1 begins - Seek feedback regularly — from mentees, fellow mentors, and facilitators

Annual Recertification: - Refresher training session (4 hours) - Performance review with facilitator - Updated self-assessment - Mentoring hours log review - Peer evaluation - Continued compliance with Code of Conduct

Decertification: Certification may be revoked for: - Code of Conduct violations (per existing policy) - Sustained inactivity (3+ months without fulfilling service commitment) - Failure to maintain standards of conduct expected of a FORGE mentor - Refusal to participate in supervision or ongoing development

Important: Decertification is not punishment. It is protection — for you and for the people you serve. If you're struggling, ask for help before it reaches that point. That's what the community is for.

Session 108 Checklist

- Room set up with dignity and intention (30 min before)
- Certificates prepared and arranged
- Talking piece placed
- Guests welcomed and seated
- Opening delivered
- FORGE journey reflection completed (all 3 phases)
- Individual recognition prepared for EVERY graduate (personalized — not generic)
- Certificates presented to each graduate individually
- Commitment to Service read and signed by each graduate
- Commitment forms collected
- The Charge delivered: "Leadership is not granted. It is forged."
- Senior mentor welcome conducted (or first-cohort founding statement delivered)
- Final closing circle completed — revisited Week 1's closing question
- Post-Certification Expectations handout distributed
- Informal fellowship time allowed
- Conditional/Not Yet Ready conversations scheduled (if applicable)

- [] All administrative paperwork completed and filed



FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 36

Preparation Is Everything

This week cannot be improvised. Every element must be prepared in advance.

For Session 106 (Simulations): - The panel must be identified and confirmed no later than the previous Friday - Scenarios should be selected, role players briefed, and logistics confirmed by Monday - Have backup scenarios in case a participant has already encountered their assigned scenario during training - The room must feel formal — this is an assessment, not a practice session

For Session 107 (Portfolio Defense): - Review portfolios in advance, even briefly — knowing what's in each portfolio allows better questions - Panel questions should be tailored to the individual, not generic - Allow adequate time — rushing a defense disrespects the work

For Session 108 (Graduation): - The personal recognitions are the most important preparation. Write them in advance. Make them specific. These men may never hear anything like this again. Make every word count. - The ceremony script should be practiced — not memorized word for word, but familiar enough that you can deliver it with presence, not nervousness - Coordinate with administration early — any needed approvals, room reservations, or guest clearances take time

The "Not Yet Ready" Conversation

If any participant receives a "Not Yet Ready" decision, this conversation must happen before the ceremony — privately, with compassion, and with a clear plan.

"I want to be straight with you. The panel reviewed your assessment and your portfolio, and we don't believe you're ready for certification yet. That is not the same as saying you failed. It means your timeline is different.

Here's specifically what we observed: [provide clear, specific feedback].

Here's what we recommend: [re-enter Phase 3 with the next cohort / specific remediation].

You have invested 9 months in this program. That investment is not lost. Everything you've learned is still yours. The growth you've achieved is real. What we're saying is that there's more growth needed before you carry the FORGE Mentor title — because that title has to mean something. To you and to the people you'll serve.

You are welcome at the ceremony today. You are part of this cohort. You completed the program. You are not being excluded or punished. You are being told: not yet. And 'not yet' is not 'never.'"

After the Ceremony

The work doesn't end. In the days following graduation:

1. **File all certification documentation** — Review Board Decision Forms, simulation scores, portfolio defense evaluations, commitment forms
2. **Schedule first post-certification supervision session** — within 2 weeks of graduation
3. **Assign mentoring areas** — confirm dorm assignments and mentee matches for newly certified mentors
4. **Begin next cohort planning** — if a new Phase 1 cohort is starting, integrate new mentors into the training pipeline
5. **Follow up on conditional certifications** — ensure remediation plans are active and supported
6. **Communicate outcomes** to facility administration — number certified, program completion data, next steps
7. **Take care of yourself** — facilitators experience their own version of post-program depletion. You just gave 9 months to these men. Rest. Reflect. Prepare for the next cohort.

A Final Note to the Facilitator

You just guided a group of men through one of the most intensive personal development programs in any correctional facility in the country. Some of them came to you angry. Some came broken. Some came skeptical. All of them left different.

That happened because of the program — but it also happened because of you. The curriculum is important. The structure matters. But what makes FORGE work is a facilitator who shows up, tells the truth, holds the standard, and refuses to give up on anyone.

Whatever happens next — whether this cohort transforms a dorm, or a unit, or an entire facility — it started here. In a circle. With a talking piece. With men who chose to be honest.

Leadership is not granted. It is forged.

And so are the people who forge it.