Faculty Mentoring

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“Successful mentors view the act of mentoring as an opportunity for thoughtful reflection and personal growth.”

- Enz, 1992

Agenda

Group Discussion: Mentoring Experiences

Mentoring Models, Mechanics, and Best Practices

Your Mentor Profile

Considerations in Initiating a Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring Dilemmas

What Does Mentoring Mean to You?

- What topics do you discuss with your mentee? What ones don’t you discuss?
- What expectations do you have of your mentee?
- How has mentoring changed since you were a new faculty member?
- What is the most important lesson you have learned as a mentor?
- What are your strongest/weakest offerings as a mentor?

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Facts about Faculty Mentoring

Compared to non-mentored faculty, formally mentored faculty experience:

- Higher levels of job satisfaction
- Better student evaluations
- Greater academic productivity
- More promotions
- Greater commitment to their institution and greater commitment to their profession
- Stronger likelihood of remaining at the institution
- Greater likelihood to mentor others in the future

(Johnson, 2007; Cartwright, 2008)
And yet, how does mentoring often happen?

- Sporadically – *haphazard communication*
- Informally – *little accountability or expectations*
- Inconsistently – *great mentoring → no mentoring*
- Partially – *meeting only some needs*
- Transitory – *relationships fizzle and end*
- Fuzzy expectations – *lack of ground rules*
- Unrecognized – *little formal or informal recognition*
Why is it Important?

- **The Academy Today**
  - Working longer hours
  - Increasingly competitive scholarly climate
  - Increasing expectations about teaching & service
  - Changing expectations about balancing life and work
  - Faculty diversity is increasing
  - Focus on multi- and interdisciplinary scholarship

- **Recruitment & Retention Tool**
  - Important perk, especially in this economic climate
  - Informal networks wield great power
  - Isolation is a key contributor to attrition
Models and Types of Mentors

- One-to-one
- Multiple Mentors
- Group or Peer Mentors
- Mentor Networks
- Expert Mentor Teams
- “Synergistic” Mentoring
- E-mentors or paper mentors
Qualities to Strive For

- **What Makes a Good Mentor?**
  - Availability (proactive communication, approachability, TIME)
  - Knowledge Sharing (across many areas, informal and formal)
  - Support/Guidance (interest, acceptance, respect, advocacy, advice)
  - Networking (ongoing - social, professional)

- **What Makes a Good Mentee?**
  - Initiating behaviors (motivation to engage/disengage)
  - “Coachability” (willingness to learn and use advice)
  - Competencies (clarity of goals, communication style)
Be Available, Share Knowledge, Be Supportive, Provide Networks, Listen

- **Career guidance and advocacy**
  - Research, teaching, service → workload balance, priorities
  - Tenure and promotion process
  - Grants, publications
  - Access to resources
  - Establish professional networks and collaborations
  - Advocate and protect

- **Organizational**
  - Navigating university systems
  - Share “local knowledge”
  - Help settling in
  - Promote mentoring within department
  - Instill a sense of citizenship

- **Psychosocial**
  - Offer support, advice, sympathetic ear, sounding board
  - Work-life integration
  - Establish social and community networks
  - Be a role model
  - Develop trust

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Your Mentor Profile

... Or, if you prefer these categories:

- I am really skilled and comfortable with this and I can do it just fine
- I am really skilled and comfortable with this, but I have to admit I don’t think to do it enough
- I know something about this, but I could learn a little more
- This is an area I’m not really knowledgeable about
- This is an area I’m not comfortable talking about
- What other people can I suggest to help address this?
Some things to consider . . .

- Sociocultural assumptions
- Underrepresented or “solo” faculty
- Tokenism/generalization
- Care giving responsibilities
- Harassment and discrimination
- Status/power differences
- Diversity in scholarship, talents, styles, and career paths

Gender
Race, ethnicity
Age
Sexual orientation
Disability
Stages of Mentoring Relationship

1. Initiation $\rightarrow$ mutual screening

2. Cultivation $\rightarrow$ confidence builds, professional identity, career optimism

3. Separation $\rightarrow$ less dependent

4. Redefinition $\rightarrow$ may evolve into collaboration, less contact

Sample Mentor Expectation Worksheet
Adapted from A Curriculum for Training Mentors and Mentees. Brainard, Harkus and St. George, University of Washington, 1998

The reasons I want to be a mentor are to:
- Encourage and support less senior faculty
- Establish close professional relationships
- Challenge myself to achieve new goals and explore alternatives
- Pass on knowledge
- Create a network of talented junior faculty
- Other reasons I want a mentor: ______________

I want my mentee and me to:
- Tour my labs/facilities learn about my projects/activities
- Go to formal mentoring events
- Meet over coffee, lunch, or dinner
- Go to educational events such as lectures, talks, documentaries
- Go to local professional meetings
- Other activities I want to do with my mentor: ______________

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I hope my mentee and I will discuss:

- Academic activities that will most benefit my mentee’s future career
- Promotion and tenure preparation
- The realities of the academic work place
- My work
- Collaboration with my research group and potential contributions to my funded grants
- How to network
- How to manage work and family life
- Other topics I hope to discuss with my mentee: ______________
Relationship Mechanics at Initiation

- Assess your strengths and the needs of your mentee
  - why have you been matched together?
- Assess your own stereotypes and implicit biases
  - Race, gender, age, ability, discipline, power status, neediness
- Define your roles and establish rules of engagement
  - what is the imagined length, depth, and breadth of your relationship?
- Establish a specific plan for regular communication
- Agree on an assessment strategy for your relationship
  - Take the temperature regularly
  - Agree on a no-fault plan for changing or adding mentors

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Mentoring Dilemmas

- Sarah
- Brian, Joe & Sarah
- David
- Geraldine
- Jeff and Cathy/Cathy and Jeff
- Jaime
Thank you.
Questions?

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