

Ensuring Effective Faculty Mentoring: Tips for Chairs



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Agenda

Group Discussion: Mentoring in Your Department

Mentoring: Benefits, Models, Mechanics, and Best Practices

Your Mentor Profile

Developing a Mentor Program

Mentoring Dilemmas

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

- Enz, 1992

Enz, B. J. (1992) Guidelines for selecting mentors and creating an environment for mentoring. In T. Bey and C. Holmes (Eds.) *Mentoring: Contemporary Principles and Issues*. Reston, VA: Association of Teachers Educators.

What Role Does Mentoring Play in Your Department ?

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- **What does mentoring look like in your department? What would you like it to look like?**
- **As a faculty member-turned-chair, how (if at all) has your thinking about faculty mentoring changed?**
- **How has mentoring changed since you were a new faculty member?**
- **What is the most important lesson you have learned as a mentor that you would like to pass on?**

Facts about Faculty Mentoring

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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?

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- 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?

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- **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

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

Mentors Should: Be Available, Share Knowledge, Be Supportive, Provide Networks, Listen

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- **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

Some things to consider . . .

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- 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

Your Mentor Profile

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... *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?

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Components of a Great Mentor Program

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- 1. Visible, overt, regular communication from leadership that good mentoring is a department priority**
- 2. Formal program management**
- 3. Thoughtful mentor matching at hire, and prior to arrival on campus**
- 4. Multiple mentors, one outside department, until T&P decision**
- 5. Provision for training of mentors**
- 6. Provision for training of junior faculty (mentees)**
- 7. Opportunities for junior faculty to network/meet as a group**
- 8. Opportunities to check on success of mentoring relationships for every junior faculty, and re-assign/augment, etc., as needed**
- 9. Evaluation of program as a whole on a regular basis**
- 10. Provision of formal recognition, acknowledgment, awards, etc., for mentoring**

1.

Communication from leadership that mentoring is a priority.

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- Be diligent about mentor assignments
- Establish a formal policy and guidelines
- Provide resources and incentives!!
- Acknowledge work of mentors
- Host social gatherings
- Encourage departmental mentoring as a way to increase social capital
- Foster a culture of mentoring - normalize mentoring in the department – resist the deficit model
- Be a role model - have a mentor (peer?) yourself

2.

Formal program management

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- **Mentoring is the intangible benefit**
- **Otherwise slippage is inevitable**
- **Designated person or committee to:**
 - Manage
 - assign,
 - check-in and re-assign
 - ensure training occurs
 - Plan gatherings
 - acknowledge efforts of mentors

3.

Thoughtful mentor matching at hire, prior to arrival.

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- Automatic process – not voluntary
- Who assigns? Search committee? Chair?
- Assessing individual faculty needs – ask!
- Contact prior to arrival on campus, and immediately upon arrival

4.

Multiple mentors until T&P decision

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- Few people are a “one-man-band”
- Less is not more
- Cross disciplinary/department exposure is helpful
- One year is NOT ENOUGH ! Remember going through the tenure process?

5.

Provision of Training for Mentors

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- Few people are natural mentors
- See Slide 5! (how mentoring often happens)
- Annual workshop, tutorial and/or handbook
- Occasional informal gatherings to compare notes
- Occasional informal gatherings with mentees

6.

Provision for training for junior faculty

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Learning to be a good mentees:

- Initiating behaviors (motivation to engage/disengage)
- “Coachability” (willingness to learn and use advice)
- Competencies (clarity of goals, communication style)

People don't know what they don't know, and may be hesitant to ask

Expectations of a mentoring relationship

7.

Opportunities for junior faculty to network as a group

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- Informal networks are extremely valuable
- Junior faculty are very busy and may tend to isolate themselves
- Shared local knowledge
- Shared challenges
- Opportunities for collaboration

8.

Checking in and make changes, as needed

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- Mentoring relationships should not be left on their own (see Slide 5 again!)
- After first semester, and one year
- Be wary of silence or quick answers
- Informal, face-to-face conversations – “chats” - very important as subtle issues rise to the surface
- Suggest additional mentors rather than ditching ineffective one
- Stress no-fault policy – be *ready* to mediate or finesse

9.

Regular program evaluation

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- **Accountability, Accountability, Accountability,**
- **Be careful of self-perception bias (differences in satisfaction in relationship between mentors and mentees)**
- **Formal evaluation campus-wide is best**
- **Short survey or topic at department meeting annually**

10.

Formal recognition, acknowledgments, awards, etc..

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- Mentoring should not be a thankless job
- Formal service contribution
- Partial course release, stipend, etc.
- Verbal acknowledgement, pat on the back
- Elevate mentoring to a high status activity



Mentoring Dilemmas

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- Sarah
- Brian, Joe & Sarah
- David
- Geraldine
- Jeff and Cathy/Cathy and Jeff
- Jaime

URI ADVANCE Program Faculty Mentor Online Tutorial:
http://www.uri.edu/advance/MentorTutorial/mentoring_introduction.html

Thank You. Questions?

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