BUILDING A NETWORK OF MENTORS:

A Guide for Engineering Educators

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HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

Mentoring has long been viewed as a powerful means of enhancing the professional success and personal well-being of faculty members, especially new and early career faculty. In response, a number of institutions have developed mentoring programs, often shaped by the traditional one-on-one mentoring model of a senior faculty member guiding the career development of his/her protégé. Over the past decade, however, mentoring has evolved, reflecting new models, research, approaches, and experiences. This guidebook describes an innovative, flexible, and faculty-driven model of mentoring that encourages engineering educators at all stages of the academic career to think differently about how they approach and engage in mentoring relationships. Each of the sections of this handbook will introduce you to concepts, strategies, and examples that can help build and sustain what we have come to define as a "Mutual Mentoring" network.

Section I. Overview of Mentoring in Academia lays a foundation for understanding mentoring in academia and explores the definition and nature of traditional mentoring.

Section II. Introduction to Network-Based Mentoring defines a new model and approach to mentoring that is based on Mutual Mentoring relationships.

Section III. Guidelines for "Protégés" offers practical suggestions and concrete recommendations for establishing and maintaining effective relationships with individuals who can support your academic career.

Section IV. Guidelines for "Mentors" offers advice about how to effectively create mentoring partnerships, especially with new and early career faculty.

Section V. Guidelines for Mentoring Program Administrators provides suggestions for designing, structuring, and evaluating a mentoring program.

Section VI. Mentoring Resources is a bibliography of articles about new developments and approaches to faculty mentoring.

Please note that throughout this guidebook, we try to avoid the use of the hierarchal terms "protégé" and "mentor," preferring instead to refer to the participants in a Mutual Mentoring relationship as "mentoring partners." However, we sometimes revert to the traditional terms when we believe that doing so will help promote clarity and also further amplify the differences between traditional mentoring and Mutual Mentoring.

I. OVERVIEW OF MENTORING IN ACADEMIA

There are a number of theories about how we came to use the word "mentor" as we do today. Perhaps the most common dates back to Homer's *The Odyssey*, in which Odysseus entrusted the care of his son, Telemachus, to his friend, Mentor, during the Trojan War. The goddess of wisdom, Athena, frequently assumed Mentor's human form to care for Telemachus and the kingdom of Ithaca until the war ended. Another theory claims that the French writer, François Fénelon, was the first to explicitly describe Mentor/Athena as a "sage counselor" to

Telemachus, who matured to manhood during his long search for Odysseus after the war. Other theories derive from the villages of Africa and the caves of Europe (Peer Systems, 2007), and while none of them definitively explains the origins of the word "mentor" as we know it today, almost all point to the image of a trusted adviser, counselor, or teacher who uses his/her knowledge to guide and support others.

It should come as no surprise then that mentoring has been widely adopted and practiced within the academic community between faculty members and their students, as well as within the faculty ranks. In fact, within the latter population, mentoring is often cited in the literature of higher education as one of the few common characteristics of a successful faculty career, particularly for women and faculty of color. Demonstrated benefits to "protégés" include development of skills and intellectual abilities, engagement in meaningful, substantive tasks, entrée into career advancement opportunities, and access to advice, encouragement and feedback. Protégés, however, are not the only beneficiaries of mentoring relationships. Advantages such as the development of new networks, satisfaction in helping another person develop professionally, and ideas and feedback on one's own work accrue to "mentors." Finally, institutions also can benefit from mentoring through better retention, an improved working environment for faculty, and a stronger sense of campus community (Girves, Zepeda & Gwathmey, 2005).

It can be argued that the need for mentoring and its benefits is greater today than ever before, not only due to the unprecedented rate of retirements demanding replenishment of the faculty ranks, but also to a change in the nature of the faculty career. Gappa, Austin, and Trice (2007) define the complex changes in the academic workplace that are directly affecting today's faculty. These include new pressures for faculty to produce revenue, a rise in requirements for

quantifiable outcomes from teaching, an increase in the number of students from diverse backgrounds, and the rise of the information age and the demands of new technology. The resulting effects on faculty careers include an escalating pace of work, expanding workloads, and increasingly high-pressure environments that can hinder collegiality and community.

These challenges and effects are particularly salient for early career faculty, commonly defined in the literature as faculty in their pre-tenure years. Research indicates that the early years of a faculty appointment are a period of intense socialization – a time of high satisfaction and stress – as new faculty enter, navigate, and integrate into the fabric of a department and institution (Menges, 1999; Solem & Foote, 2004; Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000). Thus, for example, newcomers report high levels of satisfaction with the nature of academic work and the relative autonomy with which it is pursued. They value the opportunity to pursue issues that they believe are important and to frame their own research agendas. At the same time, many early career faculty members experience a number of significant stressors that can act as "roadblocks," negatively affecting productivity and career advancement. These include: getting oriented to an institution; excelling in research and teaching; managing expectations for performance, particularly the tenure process; finding collegiality and community; and creating balance between professional roles and also between work and family life (Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007).

Given the wide range of areas in which early career faculty seek support, how has mentoring evolved to better address the realities of academia as experienced by this new generation of scholars? And how can mentoring help institutions not only recruit and retain their faculty, but also promote their long-term professional development and well-being?

II. INTRODUCTION TO NETWORK-BASED MENTORING

Traditionally, mentoring in academia has been defined by a top-down, one-on-one relationship in which an experienced or senior faculty member (the "mentor") guides and supports the career development of a new or early-career faculty member (the "protégé") by taking him/her "under his/her wing." See figure 1.1.

Insert Figure 1.1. here

Faculty members who have experienced a traditional, hierarchical mentor-protégé relationship report more career success and socio-emotional support than faculty members without such support. But because of the broader range of career competencies needed to survive and thrive in a changing academic workplace, the traditional model of the new or early career faculty member being supported throughout his or her career by one primary mentor may no longer be realistic or desirable (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004).

In recent years, the literature has indicated the emergence of new, more flexible approaches to mentoring in which no single person is expected to possess the expertise of many. New and early career faculty are now encouraged to seek out "multiple mentors" (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004), "constellations" of mentors (van Emmerik, 2004), "networks" of mentors (Girves, Lepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005), or a "portfolio" of mentors who can address a variety of career competencies (Baugh & Scandura, 1999; Higgins & Kram, 2001). The network-based model that we espouse and encourage is called "Mutual Mentoring," which we have optimized in the following five ways (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007; Yun & Sorcinelli, 2007):

- Mentoring partnerships with a wide variety of individuals - peers, near peers, tenured faculty, chairs, administrators, librarians, students, etc.;

- Mentoring approaches that accommodate the partners' personal, cultural, and professional preferences for contact (e.g., one-on-one, small group, group, and/or online);

- Partnerships that focus on specific areas(s) of experience and expertise, rather than generalized, "one-size-fits-all" knowledge;

- Reciprocity of benefits to not only the person traditionally known as the "protégé," but also the person traditionally known as the "mentor" (as the bi-directional arrows in Figure 1.2 illustrate); and

- Perhaps most importantly, a sense of empowerment in which new and underrepresented faculty are not seen or treated solely as the recipients of mentoring, but as the primary agents of their own career development.

A typical Mutual Mentoring network may include any or all of the mentoring partners listed below (see Figure 1.2):

Insert Figure 1.2. here

Sections III – V of this guidebook address the ways in which engineering educators across career stages – and the people who support them – can work toward building and participating in strong, productive, and substantive Mutual Mentoring networks.

III. GUIDELINES FOR "PROTÉGÉS"

A. The Role of the "Protégé"

Establishing a Mutual Mentoring network requires early career faculty to be highly pro-active and intentional, two key attributes of successful professional development (Haring, 2005). While some mentoring relationships can and do happen "organically," it is not advisable for early career faculty to wait for a mentor to choose them or be assigned to them, and then hope that the relationship will prove valuable over time. Today, the pressures to publish often, teach well, earn tenure, and juggle the demands of work/life are simply too great to go it alone. A Mutual Mentoring network functions as a net – a safety net of concerned and interested individuals committed to helping an early career faculty member achieve success over the short- and long-term.

This section describes some of the ways in which early career faculty can determine what their mentoring needs are, find mentoring partners who "fit" those needs on a wide variety of levels, and make the most of their mentoring partners' knowledge, experience, and skills.

B. Characteristics of a Good "Protégé"

A good "protégé"…

- Pro-actively identifies what types of knowledge, relationships, and support could be potentially helpful and career-enhancing.

- Recognizes and accommodates the time constraints of his/her mentoring partners.

- Follows up promptly when a mentoring partner offers to make helpful introductions

or referrals.

- Asks for – and also provides – feedback on how the mentoring relationship is working, or not.

- Offers his/her expertise or support whenever appropriate; understands that the benefits of the mentoring relationship can be reciprocal.

- Suggests specific options and alternatives to improve a mentoring relationship, as needed.

- Treats all information exchanged with his/her mentoring partners ethically and confidentially.

C. "To Do List" for "Protégés"

- Your department may have a formal mentoring program in place. If so, take advantage of this important resource, but keep in mind that the mentor chosen for you (or by you) as part of this program should not be your only source of professional support.

- Clarify your needs before you begin to identify or approach potential mentoring partners. "Drill down" to the specifics whenever possible. I.e., asking someone for "help with time management" is different from asking for "help understanding which types of departmental service commitments will be most manageable while you're preparing for mini-tenure." Knowing what you need helps others determine if they have relevant or useful knowledge to share with you.

- For newcomers to an institution (or academia at large), it is often difficult to know what questions to ask a mentoring partner, and/or what information is necessary to

succeed. Near peers can be particularly invaluable in such situations because their experiences as newcomers are still reasonably fresh. Helpful "global" questions to ask include: what do you wish you would have known when you first arrived? What were the most unexpected surprises or obstacles that you encountered along the way? What is the most valuable thing you've done in support of your teaching/research/service, etc.?

- Ask some key colleagues who they think you should approach about your specific subjects of interest. Keep in mind that there are many different ways that you can "click" with a mentoring partner. Whose research methods are closest to your own? Who teaches classes similar in size to yours? Who uses a particular classroom technology that you're interested in adopting? Who seems like the best overall personality match?

- Do not limit your mentoring partners to faculty only. A talented, tech-savvy student may be invaluable helping you navigate the learning curve of a new class management system, while a librarian specializing in your discipline may be helpful in suggesting hard-to-find resources for a research project.

- After engaging with your new mentoring partners, clarify expectations as early as possible – yours *and* theirs. "Failed" mentoring relationships are often the result of unmet and/or unrealistic expectations. Try to decide (or get a clear sense of) how often the two of you would like to or are able to meet, whether your interaction will be mostly in person or online, if your mentoring partnership will cover more general topics or more specific ones, if there will be a product or outcome to signal the end of the mentoring relationship, etc.

- Thank and acknowledge your mentoring partner(s) whenever possible and appropriate.

- Remember that information shared by your mentoring partners is *confidential*.

D. Suggested Questions to Ask Your Mentoring Partners

Getting Started

- How is the department, school/college or university organized? How are decisions made? Are there interpersonal or departmental dynamics that would be helpful to know about?

- What resources are available to me (e.g., travel funds, typing and duplicating, phone, computer equipment, supplies)? Is there support staff? What should be expected from support staff?

- How does the department fit into the college (or university) in terms of culture and personnel standards? Do I need to take two sets of standards into account when planning my professional development?

- How much time do I need to spend in my office and/or lab being visible in the department? Is it considered acceptable/appropriate to work from home?

- Are there department or university events that I should be sure to attend?

Research

- Is there help available for writing grant proposals, preparing budgets, etc.? How much time should I spend seeking funds?

- What kind of publication record is considered excellent in my department and college? How many refereed articles do I need? In what journals? How are online journals viewed? Do I need a book?

- How are journal articles or chapters in edited collections viewed? May material published in one place (conference, workshop) be submitted to another journal? How much work is necessary to make it a "new publication"?

- How is collaborative work viewed within the department/college? Do co-authored articles count in my discipline? Is being first co-author considered important? Should I put my graduate students' names on my papers? How is alphabetical listing of authors viewed?

- Do conference and workshop papers/presentations count as research in my discipline?

- Should I give talks within my department? How are colloquia organized in my department? How do I publicize my work within the department?

- What conferences should I go to? Is it better to go to national conferences or smaller ones? How much travel is allowed/expected/demanded? What support is available for travel expenses? From where? How else can I gain the type of exposure I need for good tenure letters?

- Would it be advisable to further develop my dissertation or branch out into a new area of research?

- What is the process of selecting graduate and/or undergraduate students for my lab?

Teaching

- What is the normal teaching profile for early career faculty in my department/college?

- How many independent studies should I agree to sponsor? How do I choose them?

- How do I find out what the content of a course should be? Does the department share syllabi, assignments, etc?

- If I teach undergraduate courses, are resources available for grading, section leadership, etc.? Does the department/college take the nature of the course into consideration when analyzing student evaluations of teaching?

- Does the department use student evaluations? Does the department use any other methods beyond student ratings to assess teaching effectiveness?

- How is advising handled in the department? How many undergraduate advisees should I have? How much time should I spend in advising them? What campus resources are available if I have questions about departmental and institutional degree requirements?

- How many graduate student advisees should I have? How much time and effort should I invest in working with graduate students? How do I identify "good" graduate students? How aggressive should I be in recruiting them? Do I need to find resources for them? What should I expect from them? How do I promote my graduate students to the rest of the community?

- What is considered an appropriate response to a student who is struggling with course work or is clearly troubled in some way? What resources are available for students? What can/should I suggest?

- What kinds of files should I keep on my students?

- What am I expected to teach? Should I ask to teach service courses? Should I teach the same course, stay within a single area, or teach around? Should I develop a new course? An undergraduate course? A specialized course in my research area?

- How do I establish an excellent teaching record? What resources are available at the department/college/university level to help me do so?

- Are there department guidelines for grading? What is the usual frequency of midterms, exams, or graded assignments?

- What documentation on teaching and advising should I retain for my personnel file?

Service

- What kind of service to the department, college, and university is expected of me?

- What kind of outreach is expected of me?

- When should I begin service and outreach? How much should I take on?

- Are there committees I should seek out as a new faculty member? Any I should turn down if I am asked to serve?

- How much service to the profession or communities outside of the university is recommended or expected?

- How do I develop and document an excellent record of service and outreach?

Tenure and/or Evaluation Processes

- What is the approximate balance between research, teaching, and service that I should aim for?

- How important is the annual faculty report in merit, reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions in my department? What sort of documentation of my achievements will help me succeed in these decisions?

- What kind of record-keeping strategies can I adopt to make compiling my annual faculty report and/or tenure package both accurate and manageable?

- Do I need to "read between the lines" in my annual evaluation? I.e., will I be explicitly told if there are specific concerns about my performance?

Balancing Professional and Personal Life

- What are the resources for meeting and socializing with other new faculty?

- Where can I get help with dual career issues, childcare, and other personal concerns?

- What sort of support is available to me through the campus and surrounding communities?

- Where can I find advice on balancing a professional life (e.g., teaching, research, service) with a personal life (e.g., time for significant others, children, leisure, civic responsibilities)?

- Who is the ombudsperson and what matters does she/he deal with?

- How should I record any controversial matters?

IV. GUIDELINES FOR "MENTORS"

A. The Role of the "Mentor"

Results of numerous studies suggest that intellectual, social, and resource support from senior colleagues, chairs, deans, and campus administrators may be critical to attracting, developing, and retaining new and underrepresented faculty (Bensimon, Ward & Sanders, 2000; Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). In particular, findings point to the essential "mentoring" role played by individuals within an early career faculty member's department, including other early career faculty, more senior colleagues, and the department chair.

What issues and opportunities should colleagues be aware of in supporting early career faculty? The guidelines and suggestions in this section can be used to reflect on how to create an effective and supportive mentoring partnership, to prepare for mentoring sessions, and/or to identify areas for learning that might contribute to further development as a mentoring partner or to effective institutional practices.

B. Characteristics of a Good "Mentor"

A good "mentor"…

- Is willing to share his or her knowledge and academic career experience.

- Listens actively and non-judgmentally – not only to what is being said, but also to how it is said.

- Asks open and supportive questions that stimulate reflection *and* makes suggestions without being prescriptive.

- Gives thoughtful, candid, and constructive feedback on performance, and asks for the same.

- Provides emotional and moral encouragement, remaining accessible through regular

meetings, emails, calls, etc.

- Acts as an advocate for his/her mentoring partner, brokering relationships and aiding in obtaining opportunities.

C. "To Do List" for "Mentors"

- Consider your own motivation for being a mentor. There are many reasons for wanting to participate in a mentoring relationship. How will your experience and expertise contribute to the relationship, what concrete things can you do to help your mentoring partner, and what skills are your strengths as a mentor (e.g., coaching, goal setting, guiding, promoting, problem solving, navigating political shoals, etc.)?

- Make contact with your mentoring partner as soon as possible and establish a regular meeting time, perhaps for coffee or lunch.

- Get to know your mentoring partner, his/her circumstances and concerns, and be willing to share information and perspectives as well. Also, you may want to consider that it may be difficult for a new or early career faculty member to approach you with problems or questions, so suggesting topics for discussion or asking questions may be helpful.

- Remember that information shared by your mentoring partner is *confidential*. A breach of confidentiality can irreparably damage even the best mentoring relationships. To avoid this, make clear decisions about confidentiality early on (e.g., "what we say to each other needs to be held in confidence, unless we give each other permission to talk about it with others").

- Offer your mentoring partner "insider's advice" about the campus, department, or

profession. What do you know now that you wish you had known earlier in your career? What were the roadblocks that you encountered along the way? What have you learned? How do your experiences compare with those of your mentoring partner?

- Provide support and help with any questions or problems that might arise relating to professional and/or personal matters. You don't need to have the answer for every question. Rather, you can act as a resource or a guide and direct your mentoring partner to the appropriate office or person who can help.

- Focus on your mentoring partner's development; you should be responding to his/her needs and to what he/or she is looking for in the relationship. This might mean helping your mentoring partner to sort out expectations and priorities for the relationship and for learning.

- Provide constructive feedback. Help your mentoring partner solve his/her own problem rather than giving him/her directions. Remember you are not directing or evaluating your mentoring partner – you are assisting, coaching, and supporting.

- Introduce your mentoring partner to colleagues whenever possible and appropriate. These colleagues might be in the same field or specialization, use similar research methods, have parallel teaching interests, or be at a similar or different career stage. Connections with different faculty will encourage your mentoring partner to build a network of mentors who can offer specific knowledge, skills, and new perspectives that can energize the mentoring relationship.

- Look for opportunities to connect face-to-face, but also explore other options for connecting (e.g., telephone, email, videoconferencing, etc.).

- Mentoring is one of many other personal and professional commitments that you and your mentoring partner are juggling. Be open to rescheduling meetings, calling a "time-out" during a particularly busy month, or acknowledging that the relationship may be moving toward closure.

D. Suggested Activities to Do with your Mentoring Partner

Getting Started

- Introduce your mentoring partner to colleagues and "useful" people in the department/school, so he/she can benefit from a range and variety of colleagues.
- Show a new faculty member the physical layout and resources of the department and campus, as well as to explain any local rules, customs, and practices.
- Help your mentoring partner locate basic written information on teaching, research, and administrative requirements and responsibilities in your department, college and/or university (e.g., course management system, forms for annual faculty review, office of grants and contracts).
- Create a welcome committee for each new faculty member (e.g., multiple mentors of limited term).
- Explain the various support systems within your college or university (for example, the ombudsperson, psychological services, learning and other student support services).

Research

- Help earmark basic resources (adequate office, lab, studio space, a computer) and staff support (e.g., research assistants, clerical personnel, technicians) to ensure that your mentoring partner receives timely assistance.

- Advise on the kind of publications that are considered "first-tier" in your department. Estimate a realistic "benchmark" in terms of the kinds and numbers of articles, monographs, or books expected.

- Suggest appropriate journals for publication – both traditional and on-line, if appropriate – and offer feedback on the writing of research articles and conference papers.

- Explore options in the department for supporting your mentoring partner's research such as informal discussions about writing projects, colloquia for "ideas in progress," mechanisms for sharing papers, and co-authored/collaborative grant-writing or research projects (if viewed positively in your department).

- Help your mentoring partner identify wider university and external resources for research such as sessions on "professors as writers," grant proposal writing workshops, summer research grants, and funds for travel to professional meetings.

Teaching

- Provide information to your mentoring partner about teaching, such as a profile of students, sample syllabi, teaching exercises, technology resources, and office hours.

- Discuss teaching norms such as course structures, assignments, and exam questions as well as departmental standards for fairly assessing and grading students' work.

- Visit your mentoring partner's classroom and provide constructive feedback – and

invite your mentoring partner to visit your classes.

- Encourage your mentoring partner to connect with the teaching and learning center on your campus, in particular to access processes that provide early, formative feedback on teaching (e.g., confidential midterm feedback from students), but also for teaching and learning workshops, communities, and grants.

- Discuss student issues, such as advising, sponsoring independent study, working with and supervising graduate students.

- Discuss how to deal with student problems, such as issues of motivation, class management, emotional difficulties, students who are underprepared for your course, what to do about cheating and academic dishonesty, etc.

- Recommend a guidebook for your mentoring partner such as *Teaching Tips* (McKeachie, 2006).

- Discuss how colleagues in the department get, interpret, and use feedback on teaching from students, peers, teaching improvement consultants, etc., to improve and evaluate teaching and student learning

- Encourage discussions about teaching and learning among the early career and senior colleagues in your department and/or college. Topics of particular interest to new faculty include: active learning strategies (e.g., discussion, group work), making lectures more effective, testing and assigning grades, engaging students in their own learning, integrating technology into teaching.

Service

- Advise your mentoring partner on what kinds and amount of service and/or outreach

are expected in the department.

- Advise your mentoring partner on how to select administrative duties and committee work that will support his/her research and teaching agenda (e.g., graduate student admissions, departmental speaker series).

- Be alert to evidence that the extent of service to the department, school, university or external organizations is hindering the accumulation of evidence for tenure of excellence in research and/or teaching, and share your concerns with your mentoring partner.

Tenure and/or Evaluation Processes

- Help your mentoring partner set challenging but realistic goals that match the particular mission and resources of your department and align with the central missions of your college or university.

- Encourage your mentoring partner to keep an ongoing log or record of their scholarly activities in teaching and learning, research, and service or outreach.

- Regularly solicit feedback from your mentoring partner about his/her perceptions of and experiences with the tenure process.

- Encourage your mentoring partner to attend department, college or campus-level seminars on preparing for tenure.

Balancing Professional and Personal Life

- Help your mentoring partner to set up a plan of short- and long-term goals, and how he/she will measure progress and success on the goals identified.

- Share your experiences of setting priorities, managing time, handling stress, and balancing workload effectively.

- Connect your mentoring partner to special resources or networks on campus that might be of relevance and support (e.g., networks for women or faculty of color).

- Link your mentoring partner to information and services for dual-career couples and for flexible employee benefits such as parental leaves, flexible time limit for tenure, part-time status for childrearing, and childcare.

- Provide information and facilitate access to non-academic resources in the area such as housing, schools, child care options, cultural, entertainment, and sporting events both on and off campus.

E. Additional Suggestions for Department Chairs

If you are a department chair, you play a particularly important role in setting the tone and agenda for mentoring early career faculty. In your position, you are pivotal to mentoring your faculty members not only for professional development but also for personnel decision-making. These suggestions specifically focus on some of the ways in which department chairs can mentor faculty so as to demystify the promotion and tenure process, as well as promote mentoring at the departmental level.

Annual Review and Tenure

- Include in the letter of appointment, and update yearly, a statement of expectations that is clear and detailed enough so that new faculty have a realistic idea of what is expected for tenure.

- Review the specific steps of the tenure process with early career faculty, including who evaluates and on what timetables and deadlines, the kinds of information needed for tenure files, and what pieces they are responsible for collecting and submitting (e.g., record of professional activities, names of outside reviewers).

- Give frequent, accurate feedback. Formally evaluate early career faculty at least once a year – preferably twice. Highlight what is going well, clarify what merits attention, and offer concrete suggestions for improvement through discussion and written comments.

- Encourage your early career faculty to explore options such as "stopping the clock" or counting previous work for credit to "early tenure," based on individual circumstances.

Collegial Review Processes

- Encourage an ongoing discussion in the department of the tenure process and the values that inform it through meetings, written guidelines, seminars, etc.

- Work with your personnel committee to create a clear set of guidelines for the tenure review committee regarding expectations, criteria, etc., to ameliorate the effect of any turnover in membership.

- Sponsor a yearly meeting for all faculty on the tenure track and the department's personnel/tenure review committee, sharing information on the composition, the charge, and the review process of the committee. Allow pre-tenure faculty to attend tenure reviews to open up the process and provide them with more information.

<u>Encouraging Mentoring Partnerships</u>

- Ask a representative group of faculty in your department to explore different mentoring programs and recommend workable models (e.g., assigned mentors, a mentoring committee, mentors *outside* the department).

- Build responsibility for nurturing new colleagues into the evaluation of senior faculty and seek ways to recognize and reward senior faculty members for the time spent working with their early career colleagues.

<u>You (the Chair) as a Mentoring Partner</u>

- Help manage new faculty members' transition by providing an orientation to the department, including information on departmental expectations, policies for promotion and tenure, collegial culture, and the names and "faces" of departmental faculty and key staff. Urge new faculty to also attend college and campus-wide orientations (and accompany them if invited).

- Facilitate the acquisition of resources to meet your department's expectations for tenure. Ensure that adequate resources such as office space and equipment are in place.

- Assign new faculty courses that fit their interests and priorities and offer fewer courses or, at the very least, fewer preparations during the first year or two of appointment.

- Support a flexible leave programs to allow pre-tenure faculty to complete scholarly projects before tenure review.

- Encourage new faculty to seek out research and teaching development activities beyond the department (e.g., teaching and learning center, office of research support, library, office of academic computing).

- Be especially mindful of underrepresented faculty to ensure that they are protected from excessive committee assignments and student advising prior to tenure.

- Bring pre-tenure faculty together in focus groups once each year to get information for improving life on the tenure track.

V. GUIDELINES FOR MENTORING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

A. The Role of the Mentoring Program Administrator

In a recent study of faculty development, faculty developers and other academic leaders identified "new faculty development" as a critically important issue for faculty and their institutions to address (Sorcinelli, et. al., 2006). Academic administrators – from faculty developers to provosts – play a crucial role in recruiting, mentoring, and retaining the new faculty who are critical to the long-term future of their institutions (Yun and Sorcinelli, 2007).

The guidelines presented in this section are geared toward helping administrators develop mentoring programs that will thrive and endure. Whether you are initiating or improving a mentoring effort at your institution, the program administrator's "to do list," programmatic recommendations, and examples of Mutual Mentoring programs can inform your mentoring practices. These guidelines also can support your university or college's efforts to attract the best and brightest faculty and make your campus a more attractive and equitable place to work

B. Characteristics of a Good Mentoring Program Administrator:

A good mentoring program administrator:

- Seeks to identify the challenges facing faculty at every career stage, but particularly those of early career faculty.

- Invites multiple constituencies to be involved in the mentoring program.

- Links faculty mentoring to broader agendas of the university (e.g., diversity and inclusion).

- Develops mentoring activities that recognize and accommodate constraints on faculty time and campus resources.

- Continually solicits feedback on how the program is working – both "best practices" and "pitfalls."

- Works to imbed mentoring into the culture and fabric of the institution.

C. "To Do List" for Mentoring Program Administrators

- Identify the reasons for developing a mentoring program. Your goals may include: to recruit, develop, and retain new and underrepresented faculty; to enhance the vitality and engagement of senior faculty; to formalize mentoring relationships rather than leaving them to chance; to enhance skills in particular areas such as research or teaching; to foster a collegial culture on campus.

- Undertake a needs assessment in order to better understand "the state of mentoring" on your campus to aid in program planning, development and modification. A needs assessment should solicit feedback on the challenges experienced by new and underrepresented faculty from individuals in a wide variety of departmental,

school/college, interdisciplinary, and administrative contexts; encourage faculty, administrators, and staff to imagine the "ideal" features of a campus-wide mentoring initiative designed to help address these challenges; and provide you with a "knowledge database" of the campus's existing mentoring activities and programs.

- Talk to as many constituencies as possible – under-represented faculty, new and early career faculty, mid- to senior-career faculty, department chairs, deans, campus service providers, and relevant councils and committees of your faculty senate and/or faculty union.

- Involve faculty at every career stage and across the disciplines in the design and implementation of your mentoring program. Faculty ownership can ensure that the program remains responsive to faculty needs. It also provides a channel for the emergence of faculty who can take a leadership role in mentoring initiatives. Seek out well-respected faculty, engage them as mentoring partners, and ask them to mentor you along the way. While the administrator of the mentoring program must oversee and guide initiatives, the final product must be faculty inspired.

- Involve academic administrators at multiple levels, such as chairs, deans and the provost. Optimally, academic leaders should provide budgetary support for mentoring programs. Additionally, senior academic officers can add credibility and visibility to the program by participating in its activities (e.g., programs, award ceremonies), and by naming these activities as important values of the institution. Stated simply, everyone on campus might agree that that mentoring is important, but campus constituencies must also see and believe that mentoring is valued.

- After receiving input from the appropriate constituencies, draft a statement expressing the guiding principles or basis for mentoring activities, a list of goals, and a system to monitor the mentoring program. Such a statement need not be elaborate, but it is important that the rationale, goals, and measures of the program's impact be laid out clearly and communicated regularly to the institution (e.g., through an annual report, a program brochure, a website).

- Consider what kind of guidelines, "training," and/or resources are needed for mentoring partners and/or departments and how to develop and disseminate such resources.

- Ensure effective program leadership and management by having an individual(s) who has the vision, commitment, time and energy to take the lead in developing, maintaining, and evaluating services. Pay attention to such issues as what kind of staff support you will need, how many programs you can juggle, how you will track progress, etc.

- Recognize that mentoring is everyone's work by creating collaborative systems of support. Program initiatives will be better accomplished by joining forces with others rather than working alone. In this way, you are doing what we encourage faculty to do – creating networks of support. Enhance existing mentoring activities and create new ones through a planned strategy of collaboration – of ideas, staff, and resources – with other campus offices (e.g., the provost's office, teaching and learning center, academic computing, research affairs, academic assessment, library, etc.).

- Identify ways to recognize and reward excellence in mentoring. A mentoring program can use a range of informal and formal means to motivate participation and

involvement. Such rewards might be in the form of small grants for individual or larger grants for departmental mentoring projects. Or, appreciation and recognition of faculty contributions to mentoring can be acknowledged through a note, a plaque, a luncheon, or a designation as an exemplary mentor. Most of these ideas are low-cost, but high-yield in terms of faculty satisfaction.

D. Programmatic Recommendations for Mentoring Program Administrators

Develop Multiple Points of Entry

- Consider giving faculty a variety of structured, but self-selected ways to participate in mentoring activities that are best suited their unique personalities, schedules, departmental cultures, preferences, etc. Offering multiple entry points is an important way of "meeting faculty in the middle" and empowering them to choose which types of mentoring opportunities will work best for them based on their differing needs.
- If possible, include opportunities such as micro- or seed grants designed to encourage individual pre-tenure faculty to create their own self-selected mentoring networks; departmental initiatives designed to encourage faculty to create mentoring networks within or across departments, schools/colleges, and other institutions; and campus-wide opportunities through workshops and seminars sponsored by a faculty development/teaching and learning center, library, or office of research.
- Structure opportunities in ways that encourage faculty to teach and learn from each other across boundaries such as gender, race, career stages and disciplines. For example, such "border crossings" might be found in interdisciplinary or college-wide

mentoring partnerships. Such opportunities can increase access to the benefits of mentoring to *all* faculty.

Respect and Respond to the Voices of Your Mentoring Partners

- Usually, early career faculty will participate enthusiastically in interviews and focus groups, despite their busy schedules. In effect, they are mentoring you about the areas in which they most need support (e.g., getting started, excelling in research and teaching, preparing for tenure, balancing work/life, and building professional networks). Like good mentoring partners, you need to listen closely and respect their many experiences and insights.

- Thank early career faculty for the important role they are playing in the design and implementation of your initiative; it gives them a sense of ownership in the past, present, and future of mentoring on your campus. In addition, acknowledging your debt to early career faculty is not only polite, it's also politic. Their involvement legitimizes the goals and structure of your initiative, as well as strengthens the commitment of everyone involved.

Encourage Expansive Mentoring Networks

- While most mentoring partnerships will be primarily faculty-to-faculty, encourage and explore ways in which faculty can benefit from partnering with academic leaders, professional staff, and students, all of whom bring particular expertise and experience to the table.

- Promote both intra- and inter-campus collaborations as another entrée to mentoring across research, teaching, educational, and cultural interests.

<u>Check-in Often and in Person</u>

- In the spirit of not imposing mentoring "from above," make a conscious decision to give mentoring partners as much autonomy as possible.

- At the same time, face-to-face meetings with individual, departmental or cross-disciplinary mentoring groups need to occur regularly, to lend programmatic support and encouragement, and ensure that the mentoring projects are progressing. Although schedules are tight on every campus, during the early phase of a mentoring initiative, there is no substitute for face-to-face contact with participants.

- Check-in's handled by email or phone can often prove to be less successful at assessing the dynamics of mentoring groups than face-to-face meetings. One solution is to require a set number of face-to-face meetings per academic year. These meetings might include: an initial consultation at the beginning of the mentoring process, a mid-term assessment, and an end-of-the-year meeting to collect evaluation data. Additional consultation meetings can be available on an as-needed basis.

<u>Plan How to Evaluate the Program</u>

- Because the impact of mentoring can be difficult to measure, particularly in the short term, work with the assessment office or officer on your campus to determine key indicators of success, as well as what data will be collected, the sources of that data,

and the most appropriate methods of collecting regular, consistent, and comparable data.

- Be sure your plan includes a formative or "mid-term" assessment. Formative assessment can focus on how participants are experiencing the program while it is in process, and whether changes are needed to address any problems. Formative assessment can be conducted through focus groups, brief surveys of or reports by mentoring partners or projects, etc.

- Develop a plan for summative assessment, which can help you to provide feedback to participants about whether they are meeting their goals, identify key achievements that merit recognition and areas that need improvement, and build credibility on campus that your program is successful and deserves support. Consider using a standardized assessment of all mentoring partnerships and/or projects. This is important because the variances between projects, as well as certain disciplinary preferences for qualitative or quantitative data, can result in data that can not be compared across projects.

- Create a process to reflect on and disseminate your evaluation findings. This might include a meeting of the program administrator, staff, and/or a group of key "advisors" to honestly discuss evaluation findings and their implications. It also might include developing an annual report that is disseminated to program constituents, internal or external funders, and internal and external media.

E. Examples of Mutual Mentoring Programs

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, a generous grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation provides support for departmental, school/college, and interdisciplinary teams to develop Mutual Mentoring projects of their own design – projects that address the unique circumstances, challenges, and cultural "norms" of teams of faculty. (See http://www.umass.edu/ofd/ for more information.) Below are some examples of how recent grant recipients have put their grants into practice:

Biology Department

The Biology Department typically assigns senior faculty mentors to each incoming new professor in the traditional one-on-one mentorship model. To expand on this current program, the Department now brings together the pre-tenure faculty in regular peer and near-peer mentoring meetings/workshops that focus on improved lab management, specifically: money management, hiring lab staff, mentoring in the laboratory, and time management. They also provide funds to enable pre-tenure faculty to connect with "Off-Campus Research Mentors," as well as travel stipends to attend conferences, learn new lab techniques under supervision, and/or visit their off-campus research mentor.

College of Food and Natural Resources Mentor-net

The College of Food and Natural Resources Mentor-net works with a highly reputable "invent your career" coach who helps create Individualized Mentoring Teams for the seven participating team members (five pre-tenure faculty and two new department heads). Each of these Individualized Mentoring Teams are comprised of approximately

eight off-campus people and include a mix of peers, near-peers, and "head starters" (people with at least 20 years of experience to help accelerate the learning curve for pre-tenure faculty). The second component of the Mentor-net project is a series of regular roundtable lunches scheduled five times a year that focus on discussion topics chosen by the pre-tenure faculty.

Political Science Department

The Department of Political Science has organized their project around a Group Mentoring System (GMS) that engages mid-career and senior faculty members (both on-campus and at other institutions) and advanced graduate students as mentors of early career faculty. In addition, the department matches an external senior scholar with each new faculty member and invites the off-campus mentor to campus to give a public talk, meet one-on-one with their pre-tenure faculty member and engage with other GMS participants. New faculty also receive travel/conference stipends in order to present their research and build professional networks off-campus.

Psychology Department

The Psychology Department has also implemented a group mentoring initiative in which all new Psychology faculty are paired with two mentoring partners, one at the early/mid-career stage and one at a later career stage. The group meets formally six times over the course of the academic year in facilitated, topically-driven group meetings on issues of research, teaching, and tenure. In addition, the new faculty meet individually or in small

groups with their mentoring partners to discuss issues of specialized interest, and are

provided with modest stipends to offset the costs of getting together.

<u>School of Nursing</u>

The School of Nursing has established a Research Interest Group in order to increase the

publication of all of their participating faculty's work, promote research collaboration

among mentoring partners, and address key issues of work-life balance. The activities of

the Research Interest Group School include: a full-day retreat each semester, regular bi-

monthly mentoring partner meetings, stipends for collaborative research, travel funds for

mentoring partners to attend conferences, and the hiring of an outside writing coach and a

content-area consultant from another institution in the state.

VI. MUTUAL MENTORING RESOURCES

A. Models

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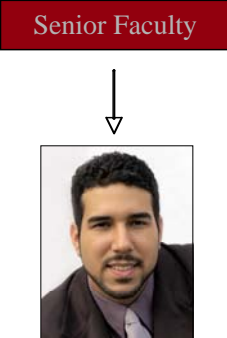
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Figure 1.1. Traditional Mentoring Model

New and underrepresented faculty

Figure 1.2. Mutual Mentoring Model