



UTSA Faculty Mentoring Program Resource Manual

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Goal of the UTSA Faculty Mentoring Program

The goal of the Faculty Mentoring Program is to support and retain assistant professors as they progress toward tenure and provide guidance to associate professors to enhance their probability for success in becoming full professors.

More broadly, it helps junior faculty members get to know the institution, excel in teaching and research, understand tenure and evaluation, create work-life balance and develop professional networks.

What is Mentoring?

There are many definitions of mentoring. Most have a common theme of providing support to a colleague, which can be either emotional or content based.

Mentoring is often most successful when it happens naturally and informally. Faculty may not realize that mentoring includes informal ways of checking in with colleagues, reviewing papers and proposals, and providing introductions to key people in the field. When these relationships do not exist, pre-tenure faculty can be at a disadvantage unless the department or college provides a more formal mentoring structure.

Mentoring is both a formal and informal activity, and can address all aspects of academic life, from balancing professional and family obligations to advice about professional milestones that must be reached in order to advance through the ranks. In addition to one-to-one pairing of pre-tenure faculty with more senior faculty, faculty mentoring may include departmental social events, invitations to professional conferences, teaching and research collaborations, and assistance with developing individualized career plans. Ideally, pre-tenure faculty will have a network of peers and more senior colleagues as mentors and advisors to get a complete overview of the requirements for academic success.

Why is mentoring important to new UTSA faculty?

Junior and senior faculty participate in the program as mentors and mentees, respectively. Every department will develop their own mentoring program. Thus, there is no one size fits all. Interested faculty will consult with their department chair to learn about the elements of their department's mentoring program. Mentors are available to assistant professors seeking to acquire skills and to begin preparing for the tenure process. Additionally, associate professors may be assigned mentors to prepare for promotion to full professor.

The program should address entry-level skills for new faculty, a supportive academic environment, career advancement, balance between work, family, and personal lives, and competencies as educators. An article from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "The Difference Mentoring Makes" articulates the importance of mentoring in higher education (see page 8 under "Mentoring Resources").

The faculty mentoring program should provide information on a variety of topics of interest to mentees and mentors, such as tenure and promotion, publication strategies, grant writing skills, assessment of student learning and strategies for effective teaching. General guidelines for mentors and mentees are available on the following pages to help you get started. In fact, "Guidelines for Mentors" on page 5 and "Guidelines for Mentees" on page 7 of this manual can be shared with those respective individuals.

Selection and identification of mentors

The selection of mentors is critical. Do not assume any senior faculty member can serve as an effective mentor. An effective mentor has both a particular set of skills and a desire to help his or her colleagues. One without the other is likely to result in an unproductive relationship for the

mentee. The selection of mentors should be a very thoughtful and well-designed process. We encourage each department to think carefully about how this is done.

Matching mentors to mentees

Each department should match new faculty at their request with senior faculty mentors from the same department or college. If a new faculty member has been assigned a mentor from within his or her department or college, he or she can request additional mentors from outside his or her department or college. Mentors are usually identified through personal contacts or recommendations of the deans, chairs and colleagues.

As the research on successful mentoring suggests, mentors are generally of the same gender as the new faculty. However, mentors of particular gender, race, ethnicity, or background can be requested for multicultural development or other professional development reasons.

Training of mentors and mentees

Mentor training is available through the Faculty Center upon request. This is still under development, but as the need arises, formal training of mentors and mentees is expected to be developed and implemented.

Expectations of mentors and mentees

Once a mentor and mentee have been matched together, it is critical to gain a shared understanding of expectations of one another. Otherwise, if expectations are not explicitly agreed upon, the likelihood for misunderstanding and miscommunication heightens. We recommend that each department create a template for a mentor/mentee contract to lay out minimal expectations and have the parties agree and sign the document to indicate their commitment to the process. Two sample contracts are included on pages 10-13 for your reference.

Possible topics for discussion in a mentoring session

In addition to simply learning the ropes of academia, there are many additional sources of stress that junior faculty face. A few examples include:

1. Navigating an increasingly demanding career

- Job preparation – Managing your time and commitments
- Developing and preparing courses
- Managing student issues
- Navigating relationships with co-workers and colleagues.
- Securing funding or other support for research
- Writing and publishing papers Participating on committees
- Engaging in campus or off-campus service work
- Balancing personal/professional life

2. Unrealistic expectations

- Set unreasonable self-expectations
- Expect high levels of initial success
- Expect close collegial ties
- Expect high intellectual stimulation

3. Feelings of isolation

- Colleague indifference
- Lack of support from chair or supervisor
- Unfamiliarity with institutional process and culture
- Lack of access to information

4. Inadequate feedback and recognition

- Poor student feedback or evaluations
- Lack of clear expectations about performance
- Little participation in department/unit decisions
- Salary

Assessing the mentoring process

We encourage all departments to develop some type of assessment process to determine the effectiveness of their mentoring program and how it can be continually improved to meet the needs of mentees and mentors. Do not assume your mentoring program is going well unless you have data to support such a finding. You may refer to “Example #1 Mentor/Mentee Agreement” on page 10 for an example of a basic evaluation model.

GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

A good mentor seeks to understand what junior faculty members want to accomplish and helps illuminate the path that will take them there. Topics for discussion can range from the technical, such as which conferences to attend, to the philosophical, such as how to survive the pre-tenure grind without burning out.

Because mentoring relationships come in all shapes and sizes, the following guidelines should be taken only as suggestions. The role of etiquette in our society is to make other people feel at ease and valued. You may want to review these suggested rules with your mentee to decide which are most important in your mentee-mentor relationship.

1. Suggested etiquette for mentors

- You are not expected to evaluate your mentee's work. While your professional areas may overlap enough that you feel competent to evaluate his/her work, this is NOT expected of you. Rather, your role is helping your mentee find resources to evaluate his/her work and give him/her emotional support.
- Take the initiative in the relationship. Invite your mentee to meet with you and suggest topics to discuss. Ask if you can offer assistance.
- Respect your mentee's time as much as you respect your own.
- Always ask if you can make a suggestion or offer support before you proceed to do so.
- Be explicit with your mentee that you are only offering suggestions and that s/he should weigh your advice along with that received from other mentors.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentee to others.
- Your mentee must trust that anything s/he says to you will be held in the strictest confidence.
- If you don't believe that either you or your mentee are able to keep to the terms of your mentoring agreement, don't be afraid to end the relationship. It may be helpful for you to annually review your mentoring relationship.
- Keep the door open for your mentee to return in the future.

2. Here are a few ideas for items to discuss with your mentee:

- Ask about how they are doing and encourage them in their pursuits
- Provide honest and constructive criticism and informal feedback
- Review teaching, research and service
- Discuss specific "difficult" situations faced by one's mentee and suggest follow-up actions s/he might take to turn an unfortunate circumstance into an opportunity for opening a dialogue
- Help the mentee understand the current culture of UTSA. Review expectations as they pertain to becoming involved in activities at UTSA, earning tenure or indefinite status, and developing one's line of research
- Discuss career and service
- Utilize mentoring to help the new hire become part of the UTSA family.
- Review important dates that the mentee should be aware of and discuss how s/he can be prepared for them. Such dates might include interviews for Graduate School research proposals, submission of materials for annual peer reviews, and preparation of materials to the department for annual written progress evaluations and tenure
- Utilize mentoring to break down any feelings of isolation by including the mentee in campus activities you are aware of so that the mentee gets to know more people
- Discuss balancing work and personal life

Probably the greatest challenge faced by pairs is finding enough time and energy to meet together. Even finding half an hour can be difficult. Use phone calls, e-mail, etc., as ways of staying in touch when your schedules are the busiest.

*Adapted from *Guidelines for Mentors*, UW – Madison Women Faculty Mentoring Program

GUIDELINES FOR MENTEES

Here are some guidelines for mentees as they consider the type of mentoring relationship they want with their mentor(s).

1. Ways to ensure a positive relationship develops:

- Ask for advice and welcome constructive suggestions. Do NOT assume that advice will be offered if it is not solicited. Be as specific as possible when asking for advice. A good mentor will offer both criticism and suggestions for your work. Be open to both.
- Be considerate of your mentor's time. Return phone calls promptly and be on time. On every occasion, ask your mentor how much time s/he has to spend with you and stay within that time. Let your mentor suggest taking extra time if need be.
- Listen to what your mentor has to say. Although sometimes advice may seem irrelevant to you, often the information will become useful at some point in the future.
- Seriously consider the advice given to you by your mentor, even if your immediate reaction is not positive. Beginning a response to advice or criticism with the words, "Yes, but..." is a bad start. Instead, begin with "Thank you for your advice. I'll take it into consideration."
- At your next meeting with your mentor, share how you used your last conversation as a means of solving a problem, even if the mentor's suggestion was not the one you used.
- Show appreciation for the time and assistance given to you by your mentor.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you believe you have a fundamental difference with your mentor, let him/her know. Work it out or suggest that the relationship be mutually ended.
- Keep the door open with your mentor. You never know when you may need his/her advice or consent at some point. Once you are tenured, stay in touch to provide "progress" reports.

2. Thus, mentors have the right to expect that you will:

- Meet as often as originally agreed upon
- Ask for advice
- Listen thoughtfully and advise mentor about results
- Maintain confidentiality
- Re-evaluate the mentoring agreement annually

3. You should NOT expect your mentor to:

- Spend unlimited amounts of time with you
- Deal extensively with personal problems. The mentor's job is to refer you to resources.

Probably the greatest challenge faced by pairs is finding enough time and energy to meet together. Even finding half an hour can be difficult. Use phone calls, e-mail, etc., as ways of staying in touch when your schedules are the busiest.

Mentoring Resources

- SUNY Albany
<http://www.albany.edu/academics/mentoring.best.practices.chapter2.shtml>
- University of Michigan (while this one pertains to graduate students, I believe a lot of the information is applicable to junior faculty)
<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/Fmentoring.pdf>,
<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/faculty/facment>
- Cornell University (This is a compilation of 5 exemplary mentoring programs)
<http://www.advance.cornell.edu/documents/Exemplary-Junior-Faculty-Mentoring-Programs.pdf>
- Harvard University
<http://www.faculty.harvard.edu/development-and-mentoring/faculty-mentoring-resources>
- Michigan State University
<http://fod.msu.edu/resources-faculty-mentoring>
- Northern Illinois University
<http://www.niu.edu/facdev/services/newfacmentoring.shtml>
- The Center for Teaching and Faculty Development at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst – Mutual Mentoring, Mentoring Circles
<http://www.umass.edu/ctfd/mentoring/index.shtml>
- University of New Mexico Mentoring Institute
<http://mentor.unm.edu/home/>
- *Chronicle of Higher Education* articles:
 - The Difference Mentoring Makes: <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Difference-Mentoring/147765/?key=SmNxIqZrZS9EZHhhMWpBMT4EPCZsNUI1aiMZan1zbI9QFg==>
 - Seeing the Mentors You Need: <http://chronicle.com/article/Seeking-the-Mentors-You-Need/131747/>
 - Why We Need 'Reverse Mentoring':
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/conversation/2012/09/06/why-we-need-reverse-mentoring/>
 - The Contributions of Mentees to Mentors:
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/innovations/the-contributions-of-mentees-to-mentors/30022>
 - Midcareer Mentoring: <http://chronicle.com/article/Midcareer-Mentoring-Part-3/132157/>
 - How to Treat Your New Faculty Colleagues:
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/innovations/how-to-treat-your-new-faculty-colleagues/32789>
 - Why Not to Set Up a Formal New Faculty Mentoring Program:
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/why-not-to-set-up-a-formal-new-faculty-mentoring-program/22766>

Contact Information

For support about the UTSA Faculty Mentoring Program, contact:

Dr. Jesse Zapata, Senior Vice Provost for UTSA Downtown and Academic and Faculty Support
at jesse.zapata@utsa.edu or 458-2700.

EXAMPLE #1 MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT

A successful mentee/mentor relationship requires a commitment on the part of both participants. The following agreement is intended to provide a starting framework for the partnership. Either party should understand that they may withdraw from the relationship at any time by contacting _____ at _____. Each party should keep a copy of this agreement and make every effort to fulfill the terms of the agreement.

Mentor _____ **Contact Number** _____
Employed by: _____ **Job Title** _____
Mentee _____ **Contact Number** _____

Mentor and mentee are encouraged to share additional contact information as needed.

MENTEE GOALS

The mentee should establish with the mentor at least three professional development or personal growth goals. ***Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and have a time frame.***

GOAL # 1 _____

GOAL # 2 _____

GOAL # 3 _____

CONTACT AGREEMENT

The duration of the formal mentoring program is twelve (12) months. Mentors are encouraged to continue the relationship on a voluntary basis. Contacts with mentee may be in person or by telephone; however, face to face contact is required for the first three (3) months. Mentee/mentor should allow enough time during a contact for discussion of goals, as well as questions from the mentee concerning their professional and/or personal development.

Mentee and Mentor agree to meet at least once a month for twelve (12) months.

Mentee and Mentor agree to provide the Department with written feedback after each contact.

Mentee and Mentor to provide a final evaluation of the relationship at the end of the formal program.

Mentee Signature and Date

Mentor Signature and Date

MENTEE FINAL EVALUATION

Mentee _____ **Mentor** _____

Mentor Title _____ **Phone** _____

Number of Mentee Contacts with Mentor _____ **Type of Contacts** _____

Overall, how would you rate the mentoring experience?

5 – Excellent 4- Good 3 – Satisfactory 2- Fair 1- Poor

Comments: _____

Rate the following statements on the scale of 1 - 5.

5 - Strongly agree 4 - Agree 3 - Disagree 2 - Strongly Disagree 1 - Don't Know

I feel that I have reached all or some of my goals for personal growth. _____

I feel better about my potential for career and personal growth since completing the DWIA training and mentoring program. _____

I feel more self-confident since completing the DWIA program. _____

My mentor played an important part in my growth and development. _____

I plan to continue my training and education. _____

I plan to continue to work on reaching current and future career goals. _____

I feel the training I received had a positive effect on my career success. _____

I would recommend this program to others. _____

My mentor and I plan to continue our relationship. Yes ___ No ___ Don't Know ___

I would like to serve as mentor in the future. Yes ___ No ___ Don't Know ___

Mentee Signature and Date

MENTOR FINAL EVALUATION

Mentor _____ **Contact Number** _____

Employer _____ **Job Title** _____

Number of Mentor Contacts with Mentee _____ **Type of Contacts** _____

Mentee _____ **Contact Number** _____

Overall, how would you rate the mentoring experience?

5 – Excellent 4- Good 3 – Satisfactory 2- Fair 1- Poor

Comments: _____

Rate the following statements on the scale of 1 - 5.

5 - Strongly agree 4 - Agree 3 - Disagree 2 - Strongly Disagree 1 - Don't Know

I feel that the mentee reached all or some of his/her goals for personal growth. _____

I feel better about his/her potential for professional growth since completing the DWIA training and mentoring program. _____

I see in the mentee a greater self-confidence since we began the mentoring relationship. _____

I feel I played an important part in the career and personal development of the mentee. _____

I think the mentee will become a long-term productive employee. _____

I feel that I have gained from the mentoring relationship. _____

I would encourage others to serve as mentors. _____

I would like to mentor others in the future. _____

I found the mentor role to be too demanding. _____

My mentee and I plan to continue our relationship. Yes ___ No ___ Don't Know ___

Mentor's Signature and Date

Example #2 Mentoring Agreement Form

We are both voluntarily entering into this partnership. We wish this to be a rewarding experience, spending most of our time discussing developmental activities. We agree that...

1. The mentoring relationship will last for _____ months. This period will be evaluated every three to six months and will end by amicable agreement once we have achieved as much as possible.
2. We will meet at least once every _____ weeks. Meeting times, once agreed, should not be cancelled unless this is unavoidable. At the end of each meeting we will agree a date for the next meeting.
3. Each meeting will last a minimum of _____ minutes and a maximum of - _____ minutes.
4. In between meetings we will contact each other by telephone/email no more than once every _____ weeks/days.
5. The aim of the partnership is to discuss and resolve the following issues:
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
6. We agree that the role of the mentor is to:

7. We agree that the role of the mentee is to:

8. We agree to keep the content of these meetings confidential.
9. The mentor agrees to be honest and provide constructive feedback to the mentee. The mentee agrees to be open to the feedback.

Date: _____

Mentor's signature: _____

Mentee's signature: _____

Date for Review: _____