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Faculty Mentoring Best Practices

Joya Misra

University of Massachusetts Amherst, misra@soc.umass.edu

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FACULTY MENTORING BEST PRACTICES

WHICH FACULTY MEMBERS NEED MENTORING?

All faculty members need mentoring. Ideally, your unit will offer mentoring across rank.

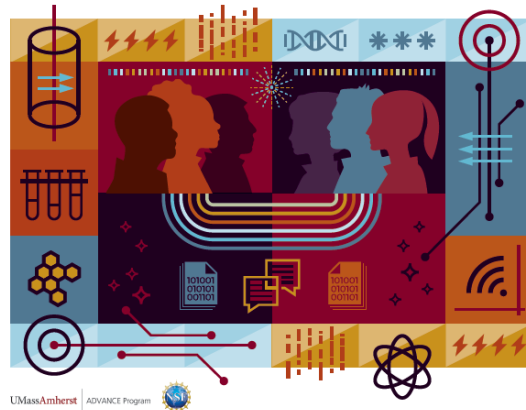
- Assistant Professors (*most commonly targeted for tenure*)
- Clinical/NTT Faculty (*professional development*)
- Associate Professors (*key to ensuring smooth progression to Full*)
- Associate/Full Professors (*progressing into leadership positions*)

Members of groups that are underrepresented in your field – by gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, first-generation status, religion, ability status, etc. – are *least likely* to receive mentoring and career advice. Mentoring programs ensure that all faculty members are able to access mentoring support.

WHAT DO MENTORING PROGRAMS LOOK LIKE?

There are many different approaches to mentoring. But some particularly successful models include:

- Bi-weekly or monthly professionalization seminars, open to new or all faculty in a department or college.
- Identification of specific mentors for new faculty members, and support for faculty mentoring activities, such as gift cards to pay for mentoring lunches.
- Funding for mutual mentoring programs, allowing groups of faculty members to form around particular career needs.
- Workshops aimed at grant writing, writing accountability, syllabus development.
- Meetings once or twice a year with a team of mentors or DPC members providing career advice.



WHO DOES THE MENTORING?

One central finding from the literature is that **team mentoring** or **mutual mentoring** models are more successful than one-on-one hierarchical models.

- **Assigned or Chosen mentors** (sometimes, junior and senior) may help ensure mentoring support. Ideally, faculty members will have more than one mentor.
 - **Chairs & Heads or Associate Deans for Research** play a critical role in mentoring faculty and providing honest assessments; regular meetings with faculty members at different ranks also help leaders understand faculty concerns.
 - **Mutual mentoring models** allow faculty at similar career stages to work together on career development, and help retain faculty.
 - **Team mentoring models** ensure faculty receive feedback from an array of colleagues, who may have different approaches, but can provide useful feedback that helps inform successful career progression.
 - **External mentor models** allow faculty to invite senior faculty in their field to campus to help them develop networks, and may provide specific feedback on articles, grant proposals, and career development.
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FACULTY MENTORING BEST PRACTICES

WHICH PROGRAMS SHOULD WE OFFER?

Most units benefit from having a variety of programs in place. Programs should be tailored to allow faculty members to thrive in different aspects of their careers. Programs should ensure all faculty understand expectations for career advancements, help develop research productivity and teaching excellence, and develop relationships. Units must also recognize the *value* of faculty mentoring.

Some best practices on campus include:

- All incoming faculty (TT & NTT) assigned two mentors based on their preferences, switching mentors as needed. Financial support for two group lunches a year.
- Regular Chair/Head meetings with untenured faculty members; e.g., 30 minutes/monthly or 60 minutes/each semester.
- Assistant/Associate professors invite a senior scholar to campus in their field to give a talk every other year, to help build networks.
- Yearly meetings with Personnel Committee for early and mid-career faculty with candid advice aimed at successful career progression.
- Workshops aimed at writing grant proposals (including feedback from colleagues), developing syllabi, running a research group, or writing accountability.
- Financial support for mutual mentoring groups or affinity group meetings; e.g., dinners for meetings for associate women of color.
- Writing and editing support provided to faculty members.
- Monthly or biweekly professionalism seminars aimed at research, teaching, or professional development issues (see next section for more ideas).

WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED IN MONTHLY/BIWEEKLY MEETINGS?

- Meeting subject librarian
- Identifying funding opportunities
- Proposal development
- Running a research group
- Research grant administration
- Building research collaborations
- Building your research plan
- Teaching and mentoring undergraduates
- Teaching support (CTL visit)

- Managing large classes
 - Strategies for student engagement
 - Teaching diverse students effectively
 - Assessing your teaching
 - Recruiting and mentoring graduate students
 - Career development support (OFD visit)
 - The Annual Faculty Review (AFR) process
 - Promotion and tenure processes
 - Developing mentoring networks
 - Maintaining work-life balance
 - Time management
 - Staff support for faculty work
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WHAT RESOURCES EXIST FOR FACULTY MENTORING?

[UMass ADVANCE-IT](#) provides support on faculty mentoring for both mentors and mentees, and for leadership through the LEAD+ program. Contact [Joya Misra](#).

The [Office of Faculty Development](#) has many resources and support for career advancement, including mutual mentoring grants. Contact: OFD@umass.edu

The [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) has a range of programming targeting support for faculty members from underrepresented groups in the academy, including social events, scholarly writing retreats, etc. Contact: [Amel Ahmed](#)

The [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) provides support through consultations, workshops, fellowships and community of practice groups for teaching development and diversity & inclusion within the instructional context. Contact: CTL@umass.edu

In addition, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences provides an excellent [array](#) of mentoring materials, including tips for mentors, mentees, and suggested topics for conversations.

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