



Mentor guidelines and suggestions for supporting early-career faculty

- Initiate regular meetings and get to know mentee, his/ her circumstances, concerns, etc. Make contact with your mentee as soon as possible. Also, you may want to consider that it may be difficult for a new faculty member to approach you with problems or questions, so suggesting topics for discussion or asking questions may be helpful.
- Provide friendly professional support and help with any questions or problems that might arise relating to professional 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 mentee to the appropriate office or person who can help.
- Offer your mentee "insider's advice" about the campus, department, or profession. What do you know now that you wish you had known earlier in your career?
- Introduce your mentee to colleagues whenever possible and appropriate.
- Remember that information shared by mentees is *confidential*.
- Provide constructive feedback. Help your mentee solve her own problem rather than giving directions.
- Remember you are not evaluating the new faculty, you are assisting, coaching, and supporting.
- Focus on the mentee's development; you should be responding to their needs. This might mean helping the mentee to sort out priorities, budget time, balance activities.

A good mentor is able to

- listen actively and non-judgmentally—not only to what is being said, but also to how it is said.
- ask open and supportive questions.
- make suggestions without being prescriptive.
- give constructive *and* positive feedback.
- be accessible—through regular meetings, email, calls, etc.
- act as an advocate for the new faculty.

Suggested Mentoring Activities

Introduce the new faculty member to colleagues and “useful” people in the school, so he/ she can benefit from a range and variety of colleagues.

Show the new faculty member the physical layout and resources of the campus as well as to explain any local rules, customs, and practices.

Help the mentee locate basic written information on teaching and research activities and administrative issues at the University, including materials by the Center for Teaching, Office of Academic Computing, W. E. B. DuBois Library, Office of Research Affairs, etc.

Discuss the preparation of lectures and teaching materials. You might offer to have your mentee observe your classes.

Observe the mentee’s teaching and provide constructive feedback.

Discuss, and if relevant, share your teaching materials with the mentee.

Discuss the construction of assignments and exam questions as well as how to fairly assess students’ work. (Departmental colleagues may be particularly helpful here).

Offer feedback on the writing of research articles and conference papers; suggest appropriate journals for publication. Advise on potential sources of funding for research, teaching, and travel within or outside the University.

Advise on relevant administrative duties and committee work.

Explain the various support systems within the university (for example, the Ombudsperson, Psychological Services, LDSS.)

Initiate a discussion about steps in preparing for tenure and promotion and career advancement.

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

Discuss student issues, such as advising, working with and supervising grad students, academic dishonesty, etc.

Help the mentee to set up a plan of short and long-term goals.

Establish a regular meeting time, perhaps for coffee or lunch.