

ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF JUNIOR FACULTY THROUGH FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAMS

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REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING JUNIOR FACULTY MENTORING PROGRAM

INSTITUTIONAL

- Protect university investment;
- Retain faculty and reduce turnover;
- Promote culture change across departments and colleges;
- Save costs associated with recruitment and faculty and staff time during searches;
- Assist with faculty orientations;

- Inform new faculty of tenure and promotion expectations and procedures, annual evaluation process and administrative policies;
- Reduce litigation;
- Introduce new faculty beyond their department and encourage interdisciplinary contacts;
- Enable research and creative activity, grants and contracts, publications and foster entrepreneurial efforts; and
- Support teaching and best management skills and pedagogy within the classroom.

FACULTY

- Assist faculty with their pedagogical skills and assessing their effectiveness in teaching and learning;
- Help faculty set realistic goals for their professional, scholarly, and creative development, and balancing their time and energy between teaching, research and service;
- Support research and scholarly activities;
- Facilitate the preparation of proposals to secure funding in support of scholarly and creative activities;

- Familiarize faculty with department / college /university expectations, criteria, documents and processes regarding tenure and promotion;
- Inform faculty of campus-wide resources to support their efforts and to facilitate the development of their professional networks;
- Provide clear, honest, constructive, and diagnostic feedback on the progress of junior faculty toward tenure and promotion;
- Create opportunities for faculty to feel welcome within the department, college, university, and community;

- Encourage a collegial atmosphere where faculty feel comfortable engaging in debate on a variety of academic issues while respecting the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of being a member of the community of scholars;
- Create mechanisms for the informal support of faculty ranging from social events to peer group discussions;
- Focus on faculty achievements through one-on-one and group relationships that are non-judgmental and non-threatening; and
- Transfer experience, knowledge, history and leadership skills throughout the organization.

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Junior Faculty Mentoring—Best Practices

- “One-on-one” mentoring
VERSUS
- Group mentoring (College or university level)
 1. Both are important and complementary.
 2. One type can cover if the other fails.



“One on one” mentoring

- Usually organized at department level (College may be involved)

Considerations:

1. “Pick your own” or assigned by department head or personnel committee or outside entity?
2. Mentors chosen from within the department? Or from outside?
3. Separate mentors for teaching and research?
4. Gently overseen by DH? (mentoring not done exclusively by him/her)



“Group mentoring”

- College and/or university and/or system level.
- Before semester begins? Orientation day(s):
 1. A session with seasoned faculty.
 2. An opportunity to meet leadership.
 3. A campus tour/discussion of resources.
 4. A policies and procedures workshop (legal).
 5. A “meet and greet” reception (president?)



On-line New Faculty Manual (for review)

“Group mentoring” cont’d

- A grant preparation workshop (ranging from “nuts and bolts” to actual grant reviewing).
- “New Faculty Forum” or “NF Development Seminars” (monthly meetings):
 1. Provides valuable information on selected topics (tips, insights).
 2. Distributes information on P & T guidelines.
 3. Provides a social connection (“we’re in this together”).
- A teaching workshop (one day) or series of seminars and events focused on instruction.



Important issues for group mentoring

- Who spearheads it?
 1. A separate office and individual for a campus-wide program.
 2. OR run directly out of College dean's office or Academic Affairs.
 3. Senior leadership (dean, provost) needs to be involved and **VISIBLE**.
- What time of day?
 1. Luncheons (free food?)
 2. End of day (convenience?)
- Mandatory or not? (A contract?)
- Invest a bit of money in it—it's worth it.



Missouri University of Science and Technology

New Faculty Programs

<http://newfaculty.mst.edu/>

Director: Ronald Bieniek

Purpose/Philosophy:

1. Rapidly acclimate new faculty to MST's culture, goals, and operation for their success.
2. Enhance faculty balance and success through two major programs

- a. Freshman Faculty Program

<http://newfaculty.mst.edu/freshfac>

- b. New Faculty Teaching Scholars

<http://newfaculty.mst.edu/nfts>



Montana State University

College of Letters and Science Faculty Development Seminar Series

1. How to Get Things Done
2. Teaching Tips
3. Securing Funding for Research
4. P&T Process
5. Balancing Teaching and Research
6. Native American Students
7. Faculty Governance
8. International Students
9. P&T Process: Action Items
10. Balancing Work and Home Life



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CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF FACULTY MENTORING PROGRAM

- Difference in needs of mentees
 - ◆ Faculty have different needs at different stages in their careers
- Limited resources
 - ◆ Both personnel and financial
- Availability of good mentors
 - ◆ Absence of enough senior faculty in a department
 - ◆ Finding enough women mentors may be a challenge
 - ◆ Finding enough faculty of color to serve as mentors may be a challenge
 - ◆ Not every senior faculty is a good mentor

- Pairing mentors and mentees

- ◆ Despite best efforts, sometime a “poor match” of mentor and mentee occurs

- ◆ Many issues need to be considered

- Time constraints

- ◆ This limits provision of structured activities such as rigorous mentor training, participation in cohort-wide mentoring events, and extensive reporting for evaluation purposes

- Evaluation

- ◆ Confidentiality of faculty records (useful for program evaluation)

- ◆ Lack of control group

REFERENCES

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- 2. M. D. Cox. 1997. Long-term patterns in a mentoring for Junior Faculty: Recommendations for Practice. In D. DeZure (Edd.) To Improve the Academy, Vol. 16 (pp. 225-268). Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press and the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education.
- 3. College of Arts & Sciences' Junior Faculty Mentoring Program and Eastern Kentucky University
http://www.cas.eku.edu/Research_CreateActiv/default.php