

Faculty Mentoring for Department Chairs: A Review and Resource Guide

Executive Summary

As FIU continues to grow, it attracts increasing numbers of highly qualified and motivated faculty members. The department chair is in a critical position to impact the success and ultimate retention of these individuals. Likewise, new faculty members consider mentoring to be an important component of workplace satisfaction and future success and rely upon their department chairs for continual advice and consultation. Evidence from several of the sources referenced below, however, indicates that junior faculty members generally desire mentors who are not in positions to evaluate them for annual review and tenure. It is highly recommended that department chairs work with each of their new faculty colleagues to identify a specific mentor or group of mentors, and that each new faculty hire be encouraged to establish a network of mentors that includes senior colleagues in the department, peers, senior colleagues in other departments, and colleagues in other colleges and in other universities. Successful mentoring is always a collective endeavor. Its success depends upon commitment and communication from the provost, deans, and chairs, upon the support of mentoring efforts by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and by the Division of Research, and most importantly upon the active involvement of the mentees themselves.

Each department chair should plan to work with his or her dean to implement a process whereby every faculty member who desires to be mentored (including senior tenured faculty members and instructors) has access to timely and valuable advice from his or her mentor(s) to support research, teaching, and service, and to address life/work issues. Ultimately, flexible and accessible mentoring policies at FIU will raise faculty retention rates; arguably they will increase student retention and graduation rates, and enhance the quality of the experience for our students and all of us at the university.

Mentoring Practices at FIU

Anecdotal evidence and reports from various academic deans confirms that the current state of mentoring at FIU is inconsistent. The most advanced college in this area is the College of Education, which just approved the first college-wide mentoring guidelines at FIU. These guidelines suppose that a volunteer senior faculty member and an interested junior are paired up to assist with the transition to FIU. They recommend areas of service to be covered by faculty mentors, state the duties of the mentor, and establish a college-wide new faculty orientation required of all faculty mentors. Mentoring is a time-consuming activity. The College of Education guidelines notably state that volunteer services as a mentor “is considered equivalent to service on a university committee.”

In the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work, a new department chair is developing a mentoring manual. This again involves pairing a junior faculty member with a productive senior colleague who shares similar interests. The mentoring team will start when the faculty member arrives, and the dyad will meet regularly, on a monthly basis, to work on such collaborative efforts as “writing scholarly manuscripts, preparing presentations to scholarly societies, and writing grant applications.” The mentor will also work serve as a reviewer of the faculty member’s work, a referral resource, and advise the faculty member on the multiple demands required of third year review and ultimately tenure.

Other colleges and schools at FIU reported less formalized structures. In the School of Journalism, for example, new faculty members meet regularly with the dean both in group/seminar situations and one-on-one for advice. Chairs and directors are expected to be the mentors in the College of Engineering and Computing. While the College of

Business Administration does not have a college-wide mentoring program, the Department of Finance and Real Estate has an informal mentoring process by which the chair establishes a “go-to” person for junior faculty. In the Decision Sciences and Information Systems Department senior faculty members are encouraged to share syllabi and volunteer critiques for junior colleagues. Finally, the Director of the School of Accounting has become the teaching mentor and assigns research mentors in the department to junior faculty.

Best American College and University Mentoring Practices

There are many exemplary mentoring practices established at institutions across the country. Most of these practices have been included in reports from The Harvard University Graduate School of Education’s Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) and in articles from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

A 2010 COACHE study recently conducted extensive faculty surveys and identified the following universities as being models for retaining junior faculty members and superior in terms of the global satisfaction of their faculty members: Duke, Brown, University of Iowa and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Some current innovations in mentoring include the following:

- Establish mentoring networks with multiple mentors. In light of the increase in interdisciplinarity across all research fields, this has most notably been tried at University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Invert paired mentors and mentees so that junior mentor could be considered a “tech mentor” for a senior colleague. This idea has been explored at California Polytechnic University.
- Initiate e-portfolio that allows an institution to gather information more easily—also tried at Cal Poly. This may be done at FIU through the online faculty assignments.
- Create a Teaching and Learning Committee with mentors outside of the discipline, which was something tried at Montana State.
- Provide “micro-grants” to help pre-tenure faculty members create their own mentoring networks. This is particularly important for faculty in departments that consider mentoring to be less necessary and was done effectively at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Offer small grants to departments to explore innovations in mentoring practices, as successfully implemented at U. Mass. Amherst.
- Encourage senior faculty members to invite junior colleagues to sit in on their classes for observation, which was something successfully achieved at Mt. Holyoke.
- Develop and institutionalize an Individual Professional Development Plan (IDP) like those required by the Office for Women’s Affairs at Indiana University—Bloomington and at Cal Poly.
- Offer mentoring seminars where faculty members learn how to read and evaluate student evaluations, discuss issues with the department chair, and understand the process of promotion. While this was done successfully at Mt. Holyoke, it could also be something taken on by individual departments at FIU.
- Establish a Junior Faculty Learning Committee, like those at Cal Poly, which provide a forum for faculty members to talk about their mentoring experiences.
- Respect Stop-the-Clock policies on tenure for parental or other family reasons.
- Create paid pre-tenure research leaves. The 2008 COACHE report found that this was considered particularly important for Hispanic faculty members (COACH “Highlights” p. 12). Many universities currently do this including: MIT (Junior Faculty Research Leave), other schools include Brown (one semester at full-pay, second semester at half-pay after six semesters), Virginia, Chapel Hill, and Duke give every

- pre-tenure faculty member a leave in the fourth year, and Harvard offers every assistant professor a year leave.
- As the department chair, be careful to establish upper limits on committee assignments and teaching obligations for junior faculty.
 - Create a department-wide voluntary peer review system of teaching and/or creative work that is rewarded through the faculty assignment and evaluation process.
 - Be aware of spousal/partner hiring situations and establish ways to manage faculty needs.

Fifteen Ways Department Chairs May Improve Mentoring

Mentoring for department chairs will never be a one-size fits all proposition. Our tremendously diverse and growing faculty population demands diverse mentoring needs. Efforts to increase retention through mentoring require effective communications and multiple opportunities for junior faculty members. The following recommendations have been organized by area of responsibility for implementation.

1. Work with the deans to establish a set of basic college-wide mentoring guidelines that are flexible enough to accommodate individual departmental needs.
2. In consultation with the junior faculty mentees and senior faculty mentors, establish one or more "official" mentor/mentee partnerships. This is the beginning of broader networked faculty mentoring relationships.
3. Assist in managing mentor relationships so that the delicate balance of interpersonal relationships is maintained.
4. Discuss with faculty members how the college-wide policies established by the deans are to going to be implemented in the department or school.
5. Urge individual faculty members to take advantage of mentoring opportunities being offered by the Office of the Provost and the dean's office.
6. Recognize the inclusion of mentoring activities in faculty evaluations and service assignments.
7. Encourage your senior faculty members to volunteer to be a mentor for a junior colleague.
8. Inform your senior faculty members of mentoring opportunities offered by the university, college, and department.
9. Maintain an open door policy for informal office visits.
10. Encourage junior faculty members to make arrangements to visit classes and review the syllabi of their senior colleagues.
11. Create environments in which junior colleagues help their senior colleagues enhance their understanding of new areas of research and technological innovations in teaching.
12. Be sure that your junior faculty members take control of their mentoring processes and are not afraid to ask questions.
13. Encourage junior faculty members to engage in "mentoring up," which is a process by which they ask to meet with senior colleagues in whom they have an interest.
14. Motivate your junior faculty members to create their own networks of mentors.
15. Persuade junior colleagues to identify an array of individuals who will provide advice on a variety of issues ranging from research and grant writing, to teaching, service, and live/work concerns.

Annotated Bibliography

1. "COACHE Highlights Report 2008: Selected Results from the COACHE Tenure-Track Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey." [36 pages]
http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic436591.files/COACHE_HighlightsReport2008.pdf

The "Highlights Report" looks at five themes: Tenure; Nature of the work; Policies and practices; Climate, culture and collegiality; and Global satisfaction. Responses to survey questions in each of these areas are broken down by gender, race/ethnicity, and by institutional type and control. The pages on gender, race and ethnicity (7–13) provide information that is particularly relevant to conditions at FIU.

2. "COACHE Workshop Notes: Lessons Learned about Mentoring, T&P Process, Leadership Development." *COACHE Update* 3 no. 2. (Spring 2010): 2, 4.
<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&pageid=icb.page412669>

Summary of results from the COACHE Tenure-Track Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey data related to innovations in mentoring practices at University of Massachusetts Amherst, Mount Holyoke, California Polytechnic State University, University of North Texas, and Western Carolina University.

3. "COACHE Tables of Benchmark Exemplars, 2006–2009." [4 pages]
http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic853043.files/COACHE_ExemplarReport_20101115.pdf

These benchmarks were pulled emerged from COACHE's Tenure-Track Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey since 2006. It provides information on benchmark ratings by university type: Doctoral/Research; Master's Institutions; and Baccalaureate Institutions.

4. "Five Approaches to Faculty Mentoring." University of Michigan Office of the Provost. [4 pages. Partially cut-off on right side but available in full online.]
http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports/faculty_mentoring_study/appendix_b.html#Informal

The five approaches include: Informal Mentoring, One-to-One Mentoring, Cluster Mentoring, Unit Oversight Mentoring, Network Mentoring. Each is described with specific benefits and issues.

5. "Guidelines from the [U. Mich] College of Literature, Science, and the Arts: Junior Faculty Mentoring: Principles and Best Practices." December 18, 2002. [4 pages]
<http://www.advance.rackham.umich.edu/mentoringlsa.pdf>

A good, brief overview of general mentoring principles and best practices separated by departments and colleges at the University of Michigan.

6. June, Audrey Williams. "A Helping Hand for Young Faculty Members." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 55, no. 3 (September 2008): A10. [4 pages]

The article examines the importance of mentoring programs and the shift from ad hoc mentoring to more formal, mentee-driven, networked models at Yale, Skidmore, and elsewhere. The article argues that mentoring is a game changer for new faculty members and important to recruitment.

7. Olmstead, Marjorie. "Mentoring New Faculty: Advice to Department Chairs." *CSWP Gazette* 13, no. 1 (August 1993). [11 pages]
<http://faculty.washington.edu/olmstd/research/Mentoring.html>

Written by a physics professor, this article offers a series of common sense pieces of advice for department chairs who are starting out on mentoring relationships with new hires. The article does not advocate for department chairs being "official" mentors, but suggests the creation of ad hoc teams and specific live/work strategies.

8. Partnering for Advancement: Faculty Mentoring Program. The Office for Women's Affairs. Indiana University—Bloomington. "Individual Professional Development Plan (IDP): A Tool for Developing, Planning and Empowering Your Academic Career." n.d. [8 pages. **No URL.**]

*This document contains the instructions and IDP form provided by Indiana University. It is designed to help all faculty members who have not yet achieved full professorial status articulate a their academic goals and aid departments in recognizing the strengths and ambitions of their faculty members. Viable IDPs are considered SMART: **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, Time-limited.***

9. Smock, Pamela J. and Robin Stephenson. "Giving and Getting Career Advice: A Guide for Junior and Senior Faculty." The Advance Program. University of Michigan. Academic Year 2009–2010. [17 pages]
<http://www.advance.rackham.umich.edu/career%20advising.pdf>

*This is one of the best guides to mentoring practices to be found online. It has a very helpful tips for junior faculty members and a list of questions for mentors and mentees to keep in mind. **Good resource list and bibliography on last two pages.***

10. Tansey, Jay and Christine Enyeart. "Models of Faculty Mentoring: Approaches of Six Institutions." *The Advisory Board Company*. Washington, D.C. May 15, 2009. [17 pages. **No URL.**]

*This study compares the mentoring practices at six large four-year public institutions in Texas, Iowa, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Indiana. It looks at how mentoring programs are structured, what is the nature of participation in these structures, how mentors are trained and paired with mentees, the nature of mentoring sessions, the institutional support, and how mentoring programs are assessed. **Very good executive overview on page 4.***

11. UCLA Council of Advisors. "A Career Advising Resource for Assistant Professors." [1 page] n.d. <http://www.faculty.diversity.ucla.edu/mentor/docs/CoABrochure.pdf>

This one page document concisely summarizes advising at UCLA.

12. UCLA Council of Advisors. "Faculty Advising Handbook." [19 pages]
<http://www.faculty.diversity.ucla.edu/mentor/docs/CareerAdvHndbook.pdf>

This handbook was devised to help new members of UCLA's Council of Advisors, which comprise former members of the Academic Senate Council and Full Professors, understand the scope and needs of mentoring. It contains information forms for advisees and advisors as well as articles on "Effective Mentoring" and advice on mentoring from a College of Medicine point of view in

Detsky, Allan S. and Mark Otto Baerlocher. "Academic Mentoring—How to Give It and How to Get It," JAMA 297, no. 19 [reprinted] (May 16, 2007): 2134–2136. This resource includes "Tips for Advisors" and "Some Suggested Questions to Discuss" for advising relationships. **Good annotated bibliography on pages 18 and 19.**

13. UCLA Department Chair Forums. "Faculty Mentoring and Advancement." n.d. [6 pages]
<http://www.faculty.diversity.ucla.edu/deptchair/chairforums/docs/09%20MentoringAndAdvancement.pdf>

Written specifically for department chairs, this article looks across the spectrum of mentoring possibilities, from traditional senior/junior mentoring relationships to "group mentoring" and "e-mentoring," which rely upon expanded networks of mentors in professional societies and organizations. Good tips for chairs and directors on the last page.

14. University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. "The Mentor Role: Six Behavioral Functions." n.d. [4 pages] <http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/faculty/six.html>

The six behavioral functions are: Relationship Emphasis; Informative Emphasis; Facilitative Focus; Confrontive Focus; Mentor Model; and Mentee Vision.

15. University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. "Tips for New Faculty." n.d. [5 pages]
<http://www.uwosh.edu/mentoring/faculty/tips.html>

This is a series of bullet points outlining advice to new faculty members that includes issues of mentoring but really presents the kind of advice that a mentor might offer a mentee.

16. Waugh, Jessica L. "Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine: Faculty Mentoring Guide." 2002. [40 pages]
http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/facultyaffairs/career_dev/facultymentoringguide/fmguide.pdf

*Although this guide is geared toward faculty members in medicine, it is one of the most comprehensive guides to be found anywhere. It provides information on everything from this history of mentoring to current best practices, including the recommended introduction of the "Distinguished Mentoring Award" for senior faculty members. It addresses non-traditional mentoring relationships and encourages the "layering" of mentors so that the multiple needs of junior faculty members will be met. **Good print and online reference list on pages 21–27.***

17. Zerzan, Judy T., Rachel Hess, Ellen Schur, Russell S. Phillips, and Nancy Rigotti. "Making the Most of Mentors: A Guide for Mentees." *Academic Medicine* 84 no. 1 (January 2009): 140–144.
<http://dgsomdiversity.ucla.edu/workfiles/lectures/Making%20the%20Most%20of%20Mentors.pdf>

This article introduces the "manage up" theory of mentoring, which is characterized by the mentee taking nearly all of the responsibility for finding and maintaining a relationship with his or her mentors. This method had not yet been empirically tested at the time of writing, but suggests some interesting innovations in mentoring relationships.