



WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

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FACULTY MENTORING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended for use by departments in developing, implementing, and monitoring their Mentoring Plans. Assistance from a tenured Mentor has proven to be an invaluable complement to the guidance provided by the Department Chair during a faculty member's initial years at WSU. However, successful mentoring will depend on the Mentees, their Mentors, and their Department Chairs taking an active role in the adjustment process.

MENTORING ADVISORY GROUP (MAG)

The CFPCA Mentoring Advisory Group is composed of tenured faculty representatives from each department (Mentoring Liaisons). This group is responsible for developing, coordinating, and maintaining mentoring guidelines for the College and keeping abreast of mentoring issues in the College, University and higher education community at large. Ongoing members are Margi Weir (Art and Art History), Fred Vultee (Communication), Frances Brockington (Music), and Mary Anderson (Theatre and Dance).

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

The initial mentoring plan accompanying the Letter of Offer should be provided by the department, including (1) how mentor/s will be selected, (2) how goals will be set (optimally for the first year tenure-track and, longer range, for the first three years and the duration of the probation period), (3) how the tenure-track faculty member will be helped by his/her mentor to reach these goals. The goals should fall under the three areas of research/obtaining funding, teaching, and service, all as appropriate to the department, discipline, and individual assignment. The Dean's Office only keeps a copy of the original plan on file.

"MENTEE" (New Tenure-Track Faculty Member)

Mentoring is a voluntary process, nevertheless it is strongly recommended.

1. As faculty members new to the job, Mentees are encouraged to seek insight, knowledge, and support for teaching, research, creative activities, and service decisions.
2. Mentees are encouraged to keep their Mentor informed of any questions, problems, or concerns as they may arise.
3. When special advice is necessary, Mentees are encouraged to allow sufficient time for their Mentor to review and respond to the question with suitable understanding.

MENTOR

Mentors should be tenured faculty members from the same or related field as that of the Mentee. Mentors may be chosen across departments if the home department does not have a tenured faculty member who shares the Mentee's field of interest. Note: Besides approval of the Mentee and Mentor, the use of Mentors from another department also requires knowledge and approval of both Chairs.

NOTE: "Lecturers should not, under any circumstances, be assigned as formal mentors for tenure-track faculty. One of the objects of mentoring, of course, is advice and assistance in both the annual evaluation process and the promotion and tenure process, and Lecturers lack the background and experience with those processes to be effective mentors. There may be limited circumstances, of course, where an experienced Lecturer/Senior Lecturer who is an especially good classroom instructor might assist a relatively inexperienced Assistant Professor with things like developing effective syllabi, class management, etc., but the Office of Teaching and Learning also has experienced professionals who do that type of coaching, too" (Provost's Statement).

"Lecturers may not be named officially as Mentors or Co-Mentors but may be consulted informally with the acknowledgement and cooperation of the official Mentor and Mentee" (Dean's Statement).

The most important role of a Mentor is to help Mentees achieve excellence and adjust successfully to the Department, College, and University. Although the role of Mentor is informal, it can also be challenging and require time and personal commitment. A good relationship with a supportive, active Mentor can contribute significantly to the Mentees' career development and overall job satisfaction.

Mentors must avoid any specific evaluation or assessment of Mentees and offer only supportive guidance and constructive feedback. According to the WSU/AAUP/AFT contract, faculty evaluations and assessments are carried out annually only by the department's Selective Salary Committee, Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the Chair.

Best Practices

1. Meet with Mentees each semester, at least during the first three years and ideally up to and including the 6th and 7th years.
 - a. Best practice is for the second-semester meeting to occur in April, close after the Selective Salary process to help Mentees who are weak in any area.
2. Be accessible.
3. Maintain the Mentee's independence.
4. Strive for objectivity.
5. Talk about short-term and long-term goals as well as accomplishments.
6. Familiarize the Mentee with:
 - a. Promotion and tenure requirements, both officially and unofficially.
 - b. Promotion and tenure process.
 - c. Obligations to the Instructional Process for Teachers and Students as explained in the WSU Bulletins.
 - d. Peer Evaluation of Teaching (PET) policy.
 - e. WSU Professional Record.
 - f. WSU Consulting Report.
 - g. Applicable timetables and deadlines.
 - h. Teaching at Wayne State on the OTL website.
 - i. Persons to contact for different needs.
 - j. The other faculty members in the department.
 - k. Senior faculty members in the Department, College and University who might offer specialized help, i.e., grants, online teaching, syllabi, library, professional organizations, outside creative work, etc.
 - l. Applicable distribution lists.
 - m. Faculty grants and awards.
 - n. Department, college, and university committees.
7. Built-in Obstacles
 - a. Safeguard women and minority faculty members from the demands of "tokenism," i.e., giving an imposed appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce.
 - b. Safeguard new faculty members safe from "Catch-22" situations, i.e., senior faculty asking them to do something for them.
 - c. Be aware of possible dual-career complications.
8. Changing Mentors or Mentees
 - a. In case of changes in work obligations, incompatibility, or in situations where the working relationship is not mutually satisfying, the Mentee and/or Mentor are encouraged to seek advice from the Chair. It is important to understand that changes should be made without prejudice or fault.