Mentoring Leadership

Developing a program for your department

Faculty, especially new (and new-to-SU) faculty, see their department/unit as their most direct source of information about what constitutes success. When the culture and practices of the home department do not support open discussion of what constitutes professional success, faculty will struggle, not understanding the proper steps to becoming an effective member. This section of the toolkit is designed to help chairs, deans and other leaders take an active role in supporting the career resilience and continued success of junior *and* senior faculty through exploring and implementing a ***developmental network model*** of mentoring. Throughout, we propose that academic leaders ***encourage*** a culture of continued professional development (through public statements of support, for example), ***support***

Mentoring

Mentoring is the provision of career and technical guidance and psycho-social support for professional development.

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efforts by faculty members to continue their professional development (through providing resources for the same), and reward, or "***prize***" those who support others in the process of their development.

Background/Summary

• Syracuse University does not have a campus-wide policy or practice on mentoring; yet a "common language" or model can help provide guidance for mentoring activity.

• Providing advice and guidance on achieving a specific career goal (such as tenure and/or promotion) may not be the only function of mentoring.

• There is a lack of uniformity in the understanding of what mentoring is for and in concrete arrangements to ensure the provision of developmental assistance.

• Some faculty are unsure what exists to help them succeed.

Benefits of Mentoring Programs for Faculty

⇒ Increased productivity and commitment

⇒ Higher job satisfaction and positive attitude toward work environment

⇒ Better career outcomes

⇒ Reduced turnover intentions/increased retention

⇒ Better work-life balance

⇒ Increased collaboration among colleagues

⇒ Increased understanding and respect among faculty: better department climate

⇒ The encouragement of a university environment that promotes collegiality

⇒ Improved social integration and acculturation of junior faculty

⇒ Increased institutional and department competitiveness

(De Janasz and Sullivan, 2004; Parise and Forret, 2007)

Key Principles

Mentoring, development, and performance

Distinct from Performance Assessment

Assisting faculty in preparing for significant reviews of their work (third year review, tenure, or promotion) provides an opportunity for mentoring. Departments, especially during the pre-tenure period, frequently equate the three-year review committee or tenure committees as *the* faculty development structure, even calling these committees "mentoring committees." These individuals are able to define outcome expectations and clarify standards detailed in the faculty appointment letter, the faculty manual, annual and three-year review reports, and other promotion and tenure documents.

That said, "mentoring committees", as currently constituted, may in fact be ill-equipped to help a faculty member identify the strategies and activities a faculty member should rely on based on her or his own strengths, and faculty members may hesitate to reveal potential weaknesses or gaps in their development, out of concern that such information will later be used as evidence in a negative evaluation. Rather than avoid this potential for a conflict of interest (Zellers et al, 2008), however, faculty leaders can encourage development in preparation for key career transition points by translating standards and assisting in setti ng goals; the faculty member identifies and pursues strategies for goal achievement. Developmental Networks provide a structure of support for faculty as they develop the strategies that enable them to meet or exceed the stated outcome expectations.

Additionally, there are a wide variety of information and advice needs across the career timeline that are not addressed when "mentoring" is tied solely to performance assessment opportunities. Mentoring and performance assessment are two different (though related) activities and should carefully remain distinct to reduce conflicts of interest and to provide support for faculty who are seeking career transitions (e.g. promotion to full professor) or other career opportunities (e.g., leadership opportunities).

Voluntary

Programs where giving and receiving mentoring are voluntary have better results. Do not assume, however, that faculty will ask for what they need. (Allen et.al., 2006; Wanberg et. Al., 2003). For this reason, we encourage departments or units to explore the advantage of identifying developmental network coaches who can help get the process started.

Self-Managed

The developmental network, as a subset of an individual's overall social network, consists of multiple mentors acting as advisors for specific needs or resources rather than one wise guru. In interviews, SU ADVANCE found that women STEM faculty value an informal mentor's ability to give advice, facilitate career progress, assist in making key relationships, exchange information, and provide support during difficulties. Women reported relying upon trusted individuals within their professional social networks for career support and guidance. In fact, research on mentoring indicates that informal mentoring is more effective primarily because the relationships are genuine. (Wanberg, et. al, 2003). The developmental network model rightfully puts faculty in control.

Encourage, Support and Prize (E. S. P.)

Leading mentoring - ENCOURAGE

As an academic leader, you can Encourage, Support and Prize (E.S.P.) faculty development practices such as mentoring. By doing so, mentoring will become part of the culture and everyday activities of the department/unit. This section will offer ideas on how to encourage mentoring.

Facilitate Development

- Be aware of the subtleties of bias and how it contributes to inequity in how faculty are supported in their development. For example, people tend to gravitate towards individuals who remind them of themselves (Johnson, 2002) and this inclination can unintentionally create unequal access to important developmental supports. For that reason, "mentoring" needs to be encouraged for all faculty.

- Conduct a self-assessment of how well faculty are supported in their development. If you decide that some structured mentoring-type assistance is needed, at what level do you and other faculty wish to launch such a program?

- Conduct consensus building activities that help define what successful mentoring looks like in the context of applying university, college and department performance standards, as well as how faculty can support each other.

- Provide opportunities for department– school– or college-wide discussions about what mentoring should be, how it should be assessed, and how it can be supported.

- Identify existing high performing mentors and bring them on board at the beginning.

- Enable the development of policies, procedures, and rewards for mentoring.

Note: If any kind of mentoring will be a formal aspect of faculty development, clear and accessible policies will be essential.

Set the Tone

Define the message you wish to convey about mentoring. This could include:

→ Mentoring is important.
→ Mentoring benefits everyone.
→ A network of mentors is superior to a single mentor in meeting multiple needs.
→ Faculty willing to learn and adapt are valued.
→ Goal is to attract and retain faculty.

A Developmental Culture

Read this Toolkit and familiarize yourself with literature on mentoring.

Learn about developmental networks. Discuss with faculty.

Facilitate connections with mentoring role models.

Make social activities purposeful and inclusive.

Consider partnering with other departments to broaden opportunities for developmental assistance especially in small departments.

There should be no departmental-critical or social activities that obviously exclude a major group of faculty. For example, holding a meeting at 5:00 pm is likely to burden faculty who are parents.

Capitalize on the synergy developed between faculty when they are working collaboratively on shared projects and other activities.

Encourage, Support and Prize (E. S. P.)

Leading mentoring in your department - SUPPORT

Structure for Support

Planning

Department strategic plans should reflect the decision to foster faculty development through mentoring. Each department will be different and will start at different points. This plan should have goals, activities and measurable outcomes that can be evaluated periodically.

Training

Successful mentoring is a learned skill built out of both study and experience. Encourage and/or provide training for mentors and mentees on developmental networks, goal setting, the different roles that mentors fulfill, and skills needed to contribute positively to another's development.

Developmental Network Coach

Do not to assume that faculty will ask for what they need. Cultural, institutional and individual circumstances may interfere with help seeking behavior which can lead to different outcomes for different faculty. With this model the individual faculty member will drive her/his mentoring process after initial support. Incoming faculty may need support to begin. By assigning an established faculty member to be a Developmental Network Coach to a new faculty member, the department/ unit can coach them on what a developmental network is and how it supports mentoring, start them on the road to establishing effective and strategic career plans, provide information about what constitutes success in the department, and help build their network by introducing them to potential mentors. More information can be found in Section 1.

Financial Resources

Travel support can be an effective tool to help the mentor and mentee in developing highly successful relationships via shared conferences and other experiences. Facilitate continued professional development by helping faculty seek off-campus opportunities to build their network of mentors.

Campus Resources

SU ADVANCE, WiSE, Office of Research, Faculty Development, Office of Sponsored Programs, and other offices on campus can support networking, build community, share knowledge, and/or provide an opportunity for interpersonal support. Faculty should be encouraged to take advantage of these assets.

Performance Clarity

Performance expectations and parameters can be a mystery. Performance expectations related to research, teaching and service in the context of performance assessment (tenure and promotion) should be easily discerned in clear, uniform and accessible documents, and should be easily translated into goals and objectives for faculty.

Evaluation

Periodic department wide discussions fostering a common understanding of local resources for faculty development, the relationship between mentoring and performance management, and shared responsibilities would be helpful for everyone. Evaluate the program periodically.

Encourage, Support and Prize (E. S. P.)

Developing a program for your department - PRIZE

Recognition of faculty and staff who take that extra step to help colleagues develop their talents and skills and to understand the department culture is critical. Incentives, both formal and informal, recognize faculty contributions toward excellence. Best practice suggests that, at minimum, mentoring excellence should be considered in the faculty annual review and the department's annual report. Wherever possible, intra- and inter-departmental mentoring should be rewarded. The following information has been adapted from the Michigan State University Faculty Mentoring Toolkit.

Incentives

1. Improve performance and productivity
2. Improve morale and motivation
3. Increase retention
4. Enhance relationships
5. Open channels of communication
6. Reinforce university/department values, policies and culture

Incentive Principles

If-Then: If a performance meets or exceeds expectations, then reward it.

Timely: Give the reward as soon as possible after the performance has occurred.

Surprise: Unexpected rewards convey that good work is continuously noticed and valued.

Selecting Rewards

Watch - Pay attention to what faculty members are excited about and align rewards to their interests.

Listen - By listening, you learn about faculty member's interests or workplace concerns.

Ask - If you're unsure, ask.

Low Cost Ideas

- Public praise, "thank you" in person (or by email)
- Letter of appreciation with copies to the faculty member's file and top administrators
- Letter of appreciation from Provost or Dean
- Publicity - mention in newsletter, website, etc.
- "Behind the scenes" Award - for those not normally in the limelight
- Recognize anniversary of start-date or other milestones
- Renegotiate service responsibilities
- More autonomy in assigned project
- Staff time for project development
- Upgrade of computer
- Certificate of accomplishment
- A plaque at awards banquet

Engage and reward faculty who are effective mentors with genuine conversations about what they want and need. By doing so, they get the message that they are important to the department and that their mentoring service is valued. Asking questions like "what do we need to do to keep you engaged?" make a difference.

Important Department Policies

Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest can arise. When a mentor is serving in both a mentoring role and in a performance review role, conflicts of interest (real or perceived) come into play. There is a debate on whether or not people in a leadership or review position (chair, review committee members, Dean, etc.) can also be primary mentors. (Zeller, 2008) Undoubtedly, many leaders/reviewers offer great advice and may be great advocates. However, their primary role is relaying performance criteria and providing performance feedback as a representative of the organization/department. In this relationship the mentee needs to carefully consider the boundaries and what, when and how they share information about themselves and their work. While department colleagues in these roles are a good source of information and advice, they should be considered *as only a part* of the mentoring network.

Ideally, a department mentor should not serve in a review capacity for their mentee. In small departments this may be difficult to achieve. In this case the department may want to consider asking someone from a closely related department to serve on the review committee, decreasing the size of the review committee or developing another strategy for reducing the conflict of interest generated when a mentor must also fulfill a review function. If there is no way to remediate the role conflict, the mentee should be clearly informed of the mentor's dual role and the potential implications. In addition, a mentee should not hear, for the first time, criticism from their mentor in a review situation.

There are other areas of potential conflict that should be considered. These include (Johnson, 2002):

- Compromises to the professorial role of mentor and mentee
- Is the mentor interfering with the professional roles of other faculty? Or the Department's best interest?
- Unethical behavior such as harassment
- Personal relationships
- Inappropriate or harmful termination of the mentoring relationship
- Balancing advocacy with professional responsibility

Confidentiality

By necessity, the relationship between a mentor and mentee needs to be well grounded in trust in order for the mentee to share concerns honestly.

> Information that may place the individual or someone else in danger should not be held confidential.

It is highly recommended that confidentiality be discussed and written into any formal agreement for mentoring. It should not be assumed that all communications are private and confidential therefore clarity about what is to be held in confidence and what is not should be reached before the relationship advances and revisited as topics require it. Information that may place the individual or someone else in danger or illegal activities, for example, should not be held confidential. These types of boundaries should be discussed at the beginning of a mentoring relationship.

Taking It to the Next Level

Key considerations for developing mentoring programs

Question	Think About
We have a mentoring program in place. What should I be thinking about?	Assess the existing practice: • Has the mentoring program been evaluated recently? What were the results? • Are policy/procedures or common practices outlined? Is it transparent and clearly communicated to all? Does policy address confidentiality and conflicts of interest? • What is the model being used? Given what you now know about developmental networks, do you want to continue with the original program or adopt a developmental networks model? • Are all faculty in the department on board? Is there a consensus about offering mentoring? Is it offered equitably? Do faculty see mentoring as busy work? • Does every new or pre-tenured faculty member have access to information and support? How do new faculty get connected? • Is it adaptive to faculty at different career stages and to those who are part of an underrepresented population? • Does the annual review include information on being a mentor? Is there a reward structure?
We want to offer mentoring in our department, where do we start?	There are 4 important initial actions: • Assess the mentoring needs of faculty members and availability of resources. • Assess willingness of faculty to be trained and to serve as mentors and/or developmental coaches. • Learn more about developmental networks. • Find allies who would commit time to helping develop a top-notch program.
Mentoring is important but we want to start slow.	Consider these options for starting slow: • Consider starting a program for just one segment of your faculty such as new faculty or faculty in their first 3 years. • Change (or advocate for change) the annual review form to include mentoring. Collect and analyze this information. What is happening already that can be supported? • Establish policy for what is happening now (at minimum these should address confidentiality and conflicts of interest). • Make social activities purposeful and inclusive to provide faculty with opportunities to build their overall network and developmental networks. Think about cross-discipline events especially if the department is small. • Strategically build teams for office projects to help foster potential for future mentor/mentee relationships.

Questions	Think About
What are the elements to designing a mentoring program?	Design elements include: • Determine policy and program goals at both the departmental level and the mentor/mentee level. What guidance do you provide? • Determine specific measurable outcomes for goals. • Determine desired program strategies and methods that will meet the needs and address the goals. Strongly consider the developmental networks model. • Determine budget and resources. • Determine reward and recognition program. • Determine evaluation plan and data gathering protocols.
What should we think about when implementing developmental network model of mentoring?	Program implementation considerations should include: • Informing administrators and faculty about program. • Creating a Developmental Network Coach role. • Identifying mentors and provide training. • Inviting potential mentees to participate. • Plan for providing an orientation program for mentors and mentees or, if smaller numbers exist, developing a talking points document for the chair to discuss with individual faculty. • Create strategies for mentor-mentee relationships to develop naturally. • Providing ongoing support and communication. • Create strategies for rewarding and recognizing the contributions everyone makes to the mentoring process. • Plan for evaluating and reporting outcomes. • Plans for modifying program as appropriate.
If I add an evaluation component, what should I measure?	In larger programs or at college level, evaluation measures could include: • Success rates of Junior faculty tenure/promotion • Success rates of Senior faculty advancement Evaluation at the department level or smaller scale should be monitored for implementation, quality and impact. • Formative evaluation assists in framing the best possible program for the department. It looks at the structure, individual components and processes. • The summative evaluation assesses impact of the program on the goals originally established. • Measurable indicators of success could include: ✓ Faculty satisfaction ratings ✓ Perceived progress toward tenure based on pre-defined benchmarks from annual review ✓ Do faculty create and monitor their developmental plans? ✓ Comparative network analysis of their developmental network.