

Accepted at Faculty Council May 5, 2017

## **Faculty Mentoring System for Assistant Professors**

### College of Education

The UW COE is committed to supporting the growth and success of our junior faculty. This document outlines a system for mentoring junior faculty members on their progress toward becoming tenured members of the COE community. It is meant to serve as one of several sources of support for assistant professors, which include, but are not limited to, orientation activities scheduled by FDS, the annual review with the Dean, reappointment review, meetings with Area chair and colleagues, and the formal tenure and promotion process. The mentoring committee (as detailed below) does not serve in a formal evaluative role; rather, the intent of the system is to provide timely advice and support to junior faculty members' professional advancement. It is, however, the responsibility of each junior faculty member to take all necessary steps toward promotion and tenure.

The faculty mentoring system will benefit both beginning faculty members and the community as a whole. Assistant professors will gain a better sense of what is expected of them as citizens of the COE and the university, enabling them to set appropriate goals and monitor their own progress. The COE community will gain by helping their colleagues become successful and long-term productive members. The COE will also benefit by the increased knowledge of our faculty's expertise and activities, and by increasing the college-wide discussion of what it means to be a successful contributor to the COE community. Therefore, it is the best interests of both assistant professors and their mentoring committees to actively reach out to each other to foster a productive mentoring experience.

#### ***Purposes of the Mentoring Committee***

The goal of the mentoring committee is to provide confidential feedback to the assistant professor on his/her scholarship, teaching, and service, and on progress toward reappointment at the third year of employment, promotion, and tenure. The mentoring may include support for teaching, advising, obtaining resources (e.g., seeking grants, or personal support) for professional success, long-term career planning, manuscript preparation and publishing, merit review, program administration, networking professionally, and so forth. In the second year, the mentoring committee should provide advice to the faculty member as he or she puts together his/her reappointment file (which typically takes place during the second year of employment). The committee will not report to the dean or other members of the college on the junior faculty member's progress. The intent of this system is to help assistant professors assess their progress and make wise decisions concerning their scholarship, teaching, and service. Mentors can find helpful information on mentoring at <http://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/handbook/retention/> and on the attachments included in this document.

#### ***Committee Structure and Process***

*Initial Mentor.* The Area chair will support each new faculty member to select an initial mentor

at the beginning of the first academic year. This is likely to be someone from the new faculty member's field of study who can provide initial advice and information about getting started successfully. Then, the new faculty is expected to work with the Area chair (and/or the initial advisor) to establish a mentoring committee by the end of second quarter of employment (e.g., for official starting date in the fall quarter, the second quarter will be the end of winter quarter of his/her first year).

*Mentoring Committee* (3 members). With guidance from the Area chair, the new faculty member should select three faculty members from associate and full professor ranks to serve on his/her mentoring committee (the initial mentor may serve on this committee as one of the faculty member's choices). It is recommended that one or two members should have expertise related to the new faculty member's area of study, and the remaining members should be from the broader COE community.

The committee should meet as a group twice during each of the first two years. In the first year, the meetings should be scheduled in the second and third quarter of employment. Thereafter, the meetings should be scheduled twice a year toward the beginning and end of each academic year.

On-going evaluation of the mentoring process is important. Accordingly, the Area chair should invite feedback from the assistant professor and his/her mentoring committee. The reappointment review and merit review provide other opportunities to collect feedback. Because faculty benefit from having different kinds of mentors at different stages of their careers and lives, the Area chair should support the assistant professor in evaluating the effectiveness of his/her mentoring committee and adjusting membership as needed.

In addition to COE mentoring resources, the University of Washington has an institutional membership with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD). This membership allows all UW faculty, post-docs, and graduate students to use NCFDD resources that are designed to offer online mentoring and to promote professional development and work-life balance through a variety of online resources. [Information about NCFDD is available in the Toolkit. \(see Part 6 Retention\)](#)

Enclosure (1): Summary of Responses from Assistant Professors to the 2017 Winter Mentoring Survey

Enclosure (2): NCFDD Mentoring Map

### Assistant Professors (n = 11)

10 of the 11 respondents had mentoring committees. These 10 respondents were strongly encouraged to set up the committee by their ADs or various other people in the college. Groups met rarely. All but two reported meeting once a year or less. For the two that met more frequently, it was not as a whole group. Three people indicated they never met as a whole group. While people intended to meet more often, scheduling conflicts often got in the way.

**Table 1. Summary of Responses from Assistant Professors to the 2017 Winter Mentoring Survey**

	How useful has your mentoring experience (was your mentoring committee) been on each of the following aspects?	To support your professional advancement, how much would you like assistance from a mentoring committee on each of the following aspects in the future?
Teaching	20.00%	9.09%
Advising students	10.00%	45.45%
Obtaining resources (e.g., seeking grants, or personnel support) for professional success	10.00%	81.82%
Manuscript preparation and publishing	10.00%	45.45%
Research design	0.00%	27.27%
Long-term career planning	30.00%	90.91%
Contract renewal	10.00%	27.27%
Understanding the promotion and tenure process	40.00%	81.82%
Merit review	20.00%	63.64%
Program administration/management	0.00%	9.09%
Navigating college and university systems	20.00%	36.36%
Disseminating my work to a broader audience	10.00%	27.27%
Time management	0.00%	9.09%
Networking on campus	10.00%	27.27%
Networking in the Puget Sound community	0.00%	36.36%
Networking nationally	0.00%	45.45%
Networking internationally	0.00%	9.09%
Concerning service to the college	30.00%	27.27%
Concerning service to the university	10.00%	18.18%
Balancing personal/professional demands	0.00%	18.18%
Other aspect	0.00%	25.00%

Note. The results are summary of responses from 11 assistant professors. The second column

only includes percentages of “very useful” category, while the third column only includes percentages of “a great deal” category. The green indicates top items rated as “a great deal” for future mentoring support.

Table 2. Summary of Open-ended comments

1. While some felt lucky to have “wonderful mentors” at the CoE, others wished they could get more guidance on a variety of topics. Some people didn’t know what they didn’t know and doing this survey helped them see the possibilities for mentoring.
2. Wondering about who should be on one’s mentoring committee to provide the best support, especially when other faculty members’ scholarship is not well aligned. Without scholarly alignment, the focus falls to teaching and service.
3. Guidance on how often to meet. While they appreciated yearly meetings, increased frequency would be appreciated. For example, one respondent commented that “I have tried to meet as a full group, but people’s schedules don’t align. I also find it challenging to meet with folks one-on-one (to get on their schedules).” Some assistants worry about being “an annoyance” when requesting meetings.
4. Guidance on the kinds of support a mentoring committee can support. For example, “I think clearer guidelines as to what the expectations are for mentoring committees would be helpful. For example, how often they should meet, what type of activities they should engage in, what is appropriate to ask a mentor, what topics they should focus on, etc., would be helpful.”
5. Clarification about the different responsibilities of mentoring vs. promotion/tenure committees.
6. Helping all faculty see themselves as mentors.

**Enclosure (2): NCFDD Mentoring Map**

# NCFDD MENTORING MAP

