

Guidelines for the Mentoring of Tenure-line Faculty

Department of English Language and Literature

University of Maryland

Selecting a Mentoring Team

All tenure-track assistant professors will work with the department chair to compose a mentoring team of three tenured faculty colleagues. Associate professors who wish to also have the option of working with the department chair on composing a mentoring team, in this case made up of three colleagues who are at the rank of full professor. Two mentors will serve in an evaluative role, and one mentor will serve in a developmental role. While maintaining confidentiality and with permission of the mentee, the consulting mentor may communicate with other members of the mentor team and the department chair. Those who wish to work with faculty outside of the English Department, have the option of having of choosing one member of their mentor team from another department.

If at any point the mentee wishes to change the composition of his or her mentoring team, the department chair will work with the mentee to make the necessary changes, without reprisal. The reason(s) for the change will remain confidential, and the change will not impinge upon the mentees' APT process.

The Role of the Mentoring Team

All members of the mentoring team will take an active role in helping to plan and achieve the mentee's research and professional goals; they will facilitate opportunities for the mentee at local and national levels; and they will establish a visible presence for the mentee in the department and the profession-at-large, including connecting the mentee with other key members of the profession. This team will work with the mentee in addressing a range of needs that may include: 1) professional development, 2) emotional support, 3) intellectual community, 4) work-life balance, 5) sponsorship, 6) access to opportunities within and beyond the department, 7) substantive feedback, and 8) other goals as defined by the mentee and mentoring team. All mentors shall be available for consultation on departmental, college, and campus guidelines and expectations about matters of tenure and promotion, and be prepared to offer guidance in leadership opportunities and professional development. The current Best Practices for Mentors document, issued by the Office of Faculty Affairs, will guide the work of the mentoring team.

One member of the three-person mentoring team, the developmental mentor, will not officially evaluate the mentee. This mentor will primarily serve as a resource for issues beyond the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) process. Mentees may look to this mentor for advice on work-life balance and time management; fielding service requests at the department, college, and campus levels; pursuing optimal avenues for conflict resolution; navigating department, college, and campus, and professional cultures; and expanding his or her mentor map. All direct communication between the mentee and this mentor will be remain confidential and will not factor into the mentee's APT process.

The Role of the Mentee

Each mentee will work with his or her mentoring team to establish a schedule for regularly discussing the mentee's progress toward stated goals. The schedule should allocate time to seek guidance in pedagogy,

research, and service matters; for reviewing scholarly and/or creative works-in-progress; and for discussing methods for fostering of collegial relationships within and beyond the department.

Because it is important to develop an ongoing record of observations of teaching, all assistant and associate professors will work with their mentoring team in arranging class visits, by the two evaluative mentors and other faculty colleagues, on a regular basis. When colleagues do observe your teaching, please request that they write brief reports and share them both with you and with the Director of Administration, so that they can be kept on file.

The Role of the Department Chair

In addition to overseeing the mentoring team, the department chair plays a significant role as an evaluative mentor and the faculty member's supervisor. Each fall the department chair will meet with each mentee to gain an overview of the mentee's current research, teaching, and service activities. The chair will summarize this meeting in writing, which the mentee will review for accuracy before receiving a signed copy for their records. Each spring semester the department chair will request from the two evaluative mentors a written report of the mentee's progress toward their stated goals, which will also be shared with the mentee.

Approvals/Revisions

Adopted by the Coordinating Committee
Adopted by the Departmental Assembly

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