

## College of Arts & Sciences - Washington State University Guidelines & Better Practices for Faculty Mentoring

### Requirement from current CAS T&P Guidelines:

*“The College expects Departments to form and implement effective mentoring committees for all promotable faculty. Their function is to advise on various local and discipline-specific aspects regarding the faculty member’s workload and progress towards tenure and/or promotion.”*

Effective faculty mentoring can cultivate a sense of faculty belonging, improve faculty retention, enhance collaborative learning, increase scholarship/creative activity productivity and teaching effectiveness, instill engagement and a sense of purpose within a unit, and overall build a community of care. The key word, of course, is “*effective*.” Effectiveness can be hard to define in advance of any given situation, but our aim with this document is to better describe the college’s expectations and guide units toward better practices for faculty mentorship.

### **College Responsibilities:**

- 1) Share best/better faculty mentoring practices (see attached).
- 2) Connect departments/schools with resources to support effective mentorship within their units.
- 3) Collect, review, and store faculty mentoring policies for each department/school.

### **Department/School Responsibilities:**

- 1) Create, maintain, and share written mentoring policy grounded in better & inclusive practices for tenure-track and career-track faculty.
  - a. Mentoring Policy/Plan should include:
    - i. Description of formal mentorship plan for tenure-track and career-track faculty.
    - ii. Expectations for both mentors and mentees.
    - iii. Logistic expectations for mentor/mentee meetings. These should include frequency, location, presence of members, and any reports. Note, mentors should meet as a group with their mentees.
    - iv. Guidelines of topics and mentoring activities.
    - v. Considerations for if/how mentoring activities play into key career points, e.g., annual review, peer teaching observations, preparation for tenure &/or promotion review, etc.
- 2) Foster community that values informal and formal mentorship grounded in better practices.
- 3) Ensure faculty remain up to date on university, college, and department T&P guidelines and expectations.

### **Chair/Director Responsibilities:**

- 1) Share written mentoring policy with *all* tenure-track and career-track faculty.
- 2) Oversee unit’s mentoring program (or appoint a faculty member/committee with this task)
  - a. Ensure adherence to unit policies supporting strong and sustained mentoring, which could include checking in with both mentors/mentees and refreshing committee membership due to professional leave, retirement, etc.
  - b. Be mindful that membership of mentoring teams/committees takes into consideration campus location, track, subtrack, workload distributions, any uniqueness of mentee’s scholarship (community-engaged, inter/multi-disciplinary), etc.
  - c. Assess effectiveness of overall mentoring program as well as address issues within specific mentoring relationships.

- d. Promote/build professional development opportunities beyond formal mentoring (see examples below in Better Practices).
- 3) Remain up to date on university, college, and department T&P guidelines and expectations.

**Better Practices:**

- 1) Build Programs around Needs
  - a. Professional Development
    - i. Reminder, mentoring guidance should align with workload expectations.
    - ii. Note, community-engaged scholars may have differing professional development needs.
  - b. Access to Networks
  - c. Accountability
  - d. Community
- 2) Consider Varied Mentoring Models
  - a. Individual vs Department-Wide Mentoring Committees
  - b. Mentoring Network
  - c. Peer and/or Mutual Mentoring
  - d. Inclusion of External Mentors
  - e. Note, single mentor models are outdated and discouraged; however, lead mentors within a committee/team/network can be helpful for accountability. In addition, mentors should meet as a group with their mentees regardless of mentoring model type.
- 3) Design for Flexibility, but Consistency
  - a. There is no universal model for mentoring, so it may be good to build a plan that allows for the use of a variety of the above models.
  - b. There remains, however, still a need for some sort of formal plan with regular and intentional interactions.
  - c. Responsibility for maintaining the mentoring relationship should not lie solely with the mentee. In particular, managing the basic logistics of formal mentoring meetings (scheduling, location, topics) should be initiated by the mentor(s).
- 4) Use Mentoring Agreement
  - a. Formalize a plan at either entering a mentorship relationship or each academic year.
  - b. Examples of mentoring agreements:
    - i. Iowa State University Provost's Office
    - ii. University of California at Davis Health Sciences
- 5) Center Intentional Practices
  - a. All members should reflect on and account for assumptions that they may bring to mentoring relationships and acknowledge and account for how their career development might differ from others.
  - b. Mentors should recognize and be mindful of the inherent hierarchy they bring to mentoring relationships.
- 6) Think and Build Beyond the Formal Committee
  - a. Writing groups
  - b. Professional development seminars
  - c. Teaching circles
  - d. Targeted workshops/work sessions around key events (such as preparing tenure and/or promotion materials or annual review)