Proposal for EAD Mentoring Program – April 22, 2011

We have identified three primary needs in mentoring for EAD faculty:
1. A department-wide program that incorporates issues for faculty at all career stages.
2. A program that can be put in place in summer 2011 for the four incoming tenure-track faculty in K-12 and HALE.
3. A way to provide mentoring for pre-tenure faculty already in the department (currently just one person, who will be 5th year in 2011-2012).

Long-Term EAD Mentoring Program Plan
In terms of the larger project, we propose to develop a relatively simple mentoring needs assessment survey, to be administered to all EAD faculty in early May 2011. The results of this assessment will guide development of an overall EAD mentoring program and specific plans for 2011-2012. Overarching principles of the plan we develop will be:
1. Individual faculty have different needs and interests in mentoring, and these needs may change over time for individuals and for EAD as a whole.
2. Mentoring activities should be voluntary, though their potential benefits should be explained to faculty at all career stages.
3. Though an overall goal of the plan is to support career development and advancement, mentoring program activities are a potential site for peer mentoring, “reverse” mentoring (i.e., earlier career colleagues may be able to mentor more senior colleagues in some areas), and collaborative activities that contribute to the work of the department.

2011-2012 Plan for Incoming EAD Faculty and Current Pre-Tenure Faculty
To address the immediate need for mentoring the four incoming faculty, we propose the following plan. The current pre-tenure faculty member will be invited/encouraged to join the activities of this group; she will be matched with an individual mentor who may be one of the mentoring team (see #1) or outside the team.

1. The department chair identifies four current faculty who agree to serve on a mentoring team for the academic year. Members should be diverse in academic interest, demographic background, and career stage (see section at end of document for desired characteristics of the group of mentors). Each new faculty member will be matched with one of these current faculty for one-to-one mentoring.
   (Guiding idea: In addition to one-to-one matching of mentor and new faculty, a small group of mentors provides diversity of perspective and a greater likelihood that new faculty will find a resource for different questions and needs they may have. Individual matches provide a more focused, private context for the new faculty members to receive mentoring and advice.)

2. The mentoring team and new faculty meet for an “orientation to EAD” session in August (2-3 hours, a morning or afternoon session) to discuss plans for the year and to address immediate questions of the new faculty; consult on questions related to getting courses ready to teach; share accumulated wisdom, advice, and MSU-specific useful information (e.g., how to get stuff done, which university-sponsored workshops are useful, reading unit, department, and college cultures, etc.). At least one hour of this session is set aside for individual mentoring pairs. A lead member
of the mentoring team will develop an agenda for the group time and suggestions for topics for the individual time, should new faculty and mentors lack ideas. Current pre-tenure faculty are invited to attend this session.

(Guiding ideas: Having an established faculty member draw up the agenda may help address some of the questions that new faculty may not know to ask, or may not feel comfortable asking; new faculty can serve as peer mentors while also benefitting from the experience of mentoring team; establishing the one-to-one relationship early will provide a resource for new faculty during the back-to-school rush when having a designated resource for questions may be especially useful.)

3. The group meets once a month to address “ongoing orientation” questions during first semester. Proposed topics: getting started teaching in EAD, identifying useful resources outside EAD/COE, getting a research program started at MSU, advising graduate students. Mentors each take responsibility for planning one of these discussions. At the December meeting, the group will discuss the fall sessions and determine if there are topics that make sense to continue in the spring (see #5 regarding January and the annual review process). If there are topics that make sense to address as a group, mentors and new faculty will determine the most effective way to conduct those sessions.

(Guiding idea: Current faculty have some expertise both in performing the faculty role and in being successful in our units, department, and college; working from this base of knowledge is sensible and supports induction of new faculty. If additional spring sessions are being planned, guiding idea: mentoring relationships benefit from having a specific project on which to work, rather than being only about the process of being mentored.)

4. Individual pairs meet at least once a month to address questions that new faculty have and to develop resources for learning. In addition to discussions pairs could together attend, for example, faculty development activities planned by FO&D or Instructional Technology.

(Guiding idea: Ongoing one-to-one relationship that is designated as being for the benefit of new faculty provides a location for asking questions and developing resources.)

5. Spring group meetings will focus on the annual review process as a planning, self-assessment, and developmental process. They will be a split of group meetings and individual meetings, as follows:

- January: a group meeting to discuss the intent, structure, and mechanics of the review process
- Also in January: pairs meet individually to discuss the nature of self-reflection and goal-setting
- February: individual meetings to review new faculty’s narratives
- March: individual meetings to discuss goal-setting

6. In May, the group will meet as a whole to determine plans for 2012-2013 – which could be a continuation of this plan focused on the fall 2011 cohort of new faculty, or folded into the department-wide plan, or something else.

Big Issues Yet to be Figured Out
- How to incorporate other pre-tenure faculty (and possibly other tenured faculty) in the 2011-2012 plan?

- What is accountability system to make sure this actually happens? How do we define roles and responsibilities? Basically: Who’s in charge?

- What is the role of inside-EAD versus outside-EAD colleagues as mentors? What about K-12/HALE cross-mentoring? What combination(s) best serve the needs of new faculty? Continuing faculty?

- What is role of mentoring for established/senior faculty?

- How do we balance the voluntary nature of mentoring programs with the perception (shared by the authors of this document) that sometimes “we don’t know what we don’t know” and thus can’t ask for advice/guidance?

- Where does mentoring – and being mentored – fit in the priorities of EAD, COE, MSU, our academic fields?

**Suggested Knowledge Base for the Mentoring Team**

Among the group assembled to be the mentoring team, we recommend the following non-exclusive set of knowledge/experience:

- research
- publication
- grants – application and management
- annual review process
- RPT process
- teaching, learning, advising
- outreach (esp. important for K-12)
- organizational environment scanning
  - internal (unit, dept, college, university) and external (e.g., schools, associations)

Submitted by Department Committee on Academic Programs: Melinda Mangin, BetsAnn Smith, Steve Weiland and Kris Renn – Incorporating feedback from Department Advisory Committee meeting 4/19