

## **Mentoring Policy Department of Teacher Education for Pre-Tenure Faculty Members<sup>1</sup>**

As per university policy, each new, un-tenured faculty member in a tenure-stream position will be temporarily assigned at least one tenured faculty member from the department as mentor with feedback and approval from the new faculty member about the choice of mentor. The mentoring relationship will be reviewed annually to determine whether any changes might be necessary. If the mentee/mentor/department chair deem it to be productive, the mentor will serve for at least the first three years of the new faculty member's appointment, which can then be continued beyond the first three years.

### **Mentor Assignment**

The department chair, in consultation with the pre-tenure faculty member and with the chair of the search committee hiring the new faculty member, will assign one mentor to the un-tenured faculty member as early as possible prior to or during the mentee's first semester of employment. Additionally, the department chair will discuss mentorship with the faculty member to help them understand that mentoring is dynamic and multi-faceted. As such, the department chair will discuss a network of mentorship that includes others within and outside of the department and Michigan State University to best support the mentee in advancing his or her career. As such, the new faculty member can, in consultation with the department chair, select one or two additional department faculty as formal mentors as well as informal mentors outside of the department. Selecting additional mentors can happen early on in the mentee's appointment in the department (roughly half a year into the first year of employment) and/or later on as the mentee moves toward reappointment and tenure. The department chair will have the responsibility for assigning additional formal department faculty mentors in consultation with the mentee. To avoid conflicts of interest, appointing mentors who are in a supervisory relationship with mentee should be considered carefully. Mentors' service on the department's RPT is allowed. Mentors can report this work on the annual review form as part of service.

### **Mentor Responsibilities**

Mentor responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Meet individually with mentee two to three times per academic year to get to know the mentee and help the mentee match his or her interests and skills with the demands of the department and of the academy.
- In the event a mentee has more than one mentor, meet with mentee and other mentors as a committee at least once per academic year

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- Be available to address mentee's questions and concerns;
- Advise and assist in preparation of annual review, reappointment and/or tenure files;
- Provide feedback on manuscripts for publications and grants;
- Provide advice on how mentee can enhance her or his teaching;
- Recommend additional or different mentors (either internal or external to the department/college) as appropriate;
- When appropriate, facilitate mentee's entrance into the relevant disciplinary/scholarly communities.

### **Formative Evaluation**

Following university guidelines that formative evaluations be incorporated into the mentoring program to ensure the benefit to each individual being mentored, the chair will meet with each mentor (or mentoring committee) and mentee at the end of the academic year to assess the value of the relationship to the mentee. To evaluate the relationship, this group will use indicators such as informal feedback from mentee/mentor, annual evaluation reviews with respect to progress towards tenure, or potentially other feedback on scholarship, teaching, service, and well-being. After the evaluation, the chair and mentee will determine whether to continue the mentor/mentee relationships or to seek different mentors. A mentor and mentee can talk with the department chair at any time throughout the year about ending the mentor/mentee relationship.

Further, the department chair is encouraged to check in with the mentor once a year and point to potential resources such as those listed below to aid in that mentoring. Mentoring groups of faculty are also encouraged to informally meet with one another to discuss faculty mentoring.

### **Mentoring Program Evaluation**

This document recommends revisiting the department's mentoring program every 5 years and based in university, college, department information as well as reappointment and tenure outcomes.

### **Other Program Components**

The following practices can be considered as part of the overall mentoring program:

- College and department faculty orientation sessions sponsored by the Associate Dean for Research and/or other administrators throughout the year on how to be a good faculty mentor including effective mentoring regarding reappointment, promotion and tenure;
- Annual sessions held by the College of Education RPT to explain tenure and promotion;
- Ongoing meetings and focus groups, as deemed necessary or helpful, with the chair

and/or other relevant faculty committees.

- Finding time at least once a year for the un-tenured faculty to meet as a separate group and for tenured faculty to meet to discuss faculty mentoring practices.
- Department sessions on how to be a good advisor for CITE students.

### **Resources and Guidelines from Other MSU organizations**

Note that an online **Faculty Mentor Resource Center** has been launched where tools can be found to help mentors/mentees. Other resources will be added to the site on an ongoing basis so please check it regularly for updates. That website is: <http://www.adapp-advance.msu.edu/faculty-mentoring-resource-center>

The MSU College of Veterinary Medicine Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences has suggestions as to **specific roles for lead and supporting mentors**. For example the lead mentor:

- Works with the Chair to help communicate Department expectations to mentees.
- Provides guidance on matters related to teaching, scholarship, or clinical and/or academic service.
- Provides guidance about ways for the mentee to advance his/her career objectives.
- Helps the mentee with “networking,” (e.g., through introductions to other colleagues) and integration into Department and College culture.
- Helps convey expectations of collegiality.
- Works with other mentors to review mentorship activities and recommendations.
- Contributes his/her insights to support the Department review processes.

### **Suggested questions for mentee/mentors to discuss (from the College of Veterinary Medicine mentoring policy at MSU):**

*Typical Issues to address in mentor/mentee relationships:*

- How does one establish an appropriate balance between teaching, research and committee work? How does one say "no?"
- What criteria are used for teaching excellence? How is teaching evaluated?
- How does one obtain feedback beyond SIRS concerning teaching? What resources are available for improving one's teaching?
- How does one identify and recruit good graduate students?
- How are graduate students supported? What should one expect from graduate students? What is required in the graduate program? How does someone find answers to these questions?
- What are the criteria for research excellence? How is research evaluated?
- How does the merit and promotion process work? Who is involved?

- What committees should one be on and how much committee work should one expect?
- What social events occur in the department?
- What seminars and workshops does the department organize?
- What is the college system? What responsibilities come with appointment to a particular college?

*Department or Research Unit (College) Culture:*

- Who are the key people in the department or College?
- What are appropriate ways to raise different kinds of concerns or issues and with whom?
- Who can help me find out about resources like intramural funding or processes like grading?
- How do people find out about and get nominated for awards and prizes?
- What organizations are important to join?

*Research:*

- Can you tell me about the Institutional Review Board, which provides approval for human and animal subject research?
- What University regulatory offices must I have approval from for my research?
- Are my grant proposals appropriate for this department or College?
- Are there research projects being developed by other faculty in the department that I can or should get involved with?
- May I read some successful grant proposals, as close to my research area as possible?
- What conferences should I attend?
- Are there people with whom I should collaborate?
- How do you get on professional association panels or editorial boards?
- What are the journals to publish in?
- Am I publishing enough?
- How can I increase my visibility in the field?

*Teaching:*

- How are departmental teaching assignments decided?
- What classes do I need to teach?
- How do I get to teach a mix of classes but avoid having to create too many new classes?
- How do I deal with problems with students?
- How are teaching evaluations handled and weighted?
- Should I sponsor undergraduates doing independent research? How many?

*Service:*

- What is the right mix of service assignments for a pre-tenure faculty member?
- How is this work documented?
- Are there assignments to avoid?

*Promotion and Tenure:*

- What are the department's formal and informal criteria for promotion and tenure?
- What or who can clarify these criteria?
- What would you have wanted to know when you began the tenure process?
- How does one build a tenure file?
- Who sits on the tenure committee and how are they selected?
- How should I prepare for the annual review?
- What can I negotiate when I get an outside offer?
- How should I prepare for the third-year review?
- Is my job description matching the work I do?
- Are my research, teaching, service and grants of an appropriate level?
- Who should I meet in the institution, in the discipline and even worldwide?