Designing and Implementing Effective Faculty Mentoring Programs

DESIGN/PLANNING PHASE WORKSHEET

1. Appointment of individuals to oversee the Design/Planning Phase

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2. Needs assessment: What do people want and need?

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3. Designing the program: Key decisions

   A. Purpose/Goals: (Clarification of what is meant by “mentoring” and program goals)
      • To provide support for new faculty
      • To clarify expectations
      • To increase retention
      • To increase productivity
      • To promote tenure of junior faculty
      • To sustain the vitality of senior faculty
      • To build community among members of the college/school
      • To promote acculturation to the values and needs of the department, college and institution
      • To focus on teaching, research, service, department politics, socializing and social adjustment, balancing of the above, etc.
      • To reduce junior faculty stress
      • To promote collegiality

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   B. Program outcomes tied to Goals
C. Program design
1. For whom (mentees)
   - All new faculty
   - All junior faculty
   - All untenured faculty
   - Special focus: Women, Faculty of Color, International Faculty
   - Full or Part-Time Lecturers

2. By whom (mentors)
   - Pool: mid career faculty, senior faculty, administrators
   - Characteristics: Expertise in research and/or teaching, etc.
   - Inside department, outside department, across campus
   - Number of mentors
     - One inside department for research and teaching
     - One outside department for research and teaching
     - One inside and outside department
     - One inside department for research, one inside for teaching

3. Selection process
   - By mentee
   - By department chair
   - By personnel committee
   - By dean or associate dean
   - By mentor program administrator

4. Duration of relationship: (1 yr., 2 years until tenure)
   (Note: Kram 1985 identifies four stages in mentor/mentee relationships -- initiation, cultivation, separation, and later redefinition as colleagues and friends often after tenure)
5. Program elements

- Orientation
  - Distribution of resources on mentoring: topics to discuss, options for activities and approaches
  - Opportunities for mentors/mentees to meet and to define their modus operandi and clarify expectations
- Ongoing Individual meetings
  - Once a month
  - Once or twice a semester
  - Bi-weekly
- Mentor will conduct classroom observations or visits to mentee’s research lab
- Mentor will review mentee’s manuscripts for publication and grant proposals and provide feedback
- Mentor will review mentee’s course syllabi, assignments, exams, online materials
- Periodic group or cohort meetings
- Occasional special events for mentors/mentees: Luncheon speakers, social events, invitation to attend university events
- Resources (distribute books, etc.)
- Celebration and recognition: End of year dinner
- Other

6. Rewards for participation beyond intrinsic ones

- Honoraria
- Course release or other department perks
- Fellowship or Grants Tied to Mentoring
- Special Events
- Books
- Mentoring Awards
- Other

D. Policies and practices

- Participation: voluntary and invitation vs. required
- Guidelines for renewing the relationship (nothing formal, end of first semester or first year, after each year)
- Policies and practices re: terminating the mentor/mentee relationship and choosing a new mentor
- Guidelines for confidentiality
- Guidelines for expectations of mentor in the tenure process (Should mentors be tenure champions? Should they absent themselves from tenure decisions about their mentee?)
E. Evaluation: Measuring success (Did you accomplish your goals?)

- Define Program Outcomes
- Formative (e.g., satisfaction on part of mentees and mentors, identification of additional needs)
- Summative: Define Program outcomes (e.g., number of junior faculty retained, number tenured, productivity)
- Methods: Focus groups; surveys; interviews; end-of-year individual meetings; group meetings of mentors/mentees; reports or input from mentors, mentees, chairs, tenure and promotion committees, and associate dean/dean; data on faculty productivity and retention.
- Dimensions evaluated: program model, processes, components, leadership, short and long term impact, etc.
- Report Writing and Dissemination

F. Oversight and administrative responsibility

- Mentor Program Coordinator
- Associate Dean
- Mentoring Program Advisory Committee
- External Evaluator: F&OD, Consultant
- Other

G. Budget

- Program Coordinator
- Clerical Support
- Honoraria for mentors
- Other incentives and rewards
- Training materials and resources
- Food and events
- Guest speakers
- Supplies, copying
- Evaluator (if external to program)
- Other
Other Models:

Some schools identify a small group of faculty who are willing to serve as mentors and advisors for each new cohort. These faculty “advisors” identify the areas about which they can support new faculty, e.g., research, writing grant proposals, writing for publications, setting up your research lab, teaching, and service. New faculty can contact any of the advisors as needed. This form of mentoring ensures that new faculty have someone to go to with their questions but does not ensure an ongoing supportive relationship over time that looks at the multiple roles and expectations for new faculty in their quest for tenure. It can also be used as an interim model until a more comprehensive program can be designed and implemented.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

1. Inform administrators and faculty about the program
2. Identify mentors
3. Invite mentees to participate
4. Pair mentors and mentees or provide venues for them to self-select
5. Train mentors
6. Provide orientation program for mentors/mentees
7. Provide ongoing support and communication with mentors/mentees to ensure that all is going well, providing assistance when needed
8. Provide events for mentors/mentees based on the program model
9. Develop evaluation plan and evaluation protocols
10. Evaluate and report outcomes to key constituencies
11. Modify model as appropriate
12. Other