

# Michigan State University Faculty Mentoring Policy

*This policy was issued by the Office of the Provost on March 1, 2011 (to be effective fall semester 2011); it reflects advice by the Faculty Council and the University Committee on Faculty Affairs*

## **Academic Human Resources Policy**

Each college shall implement a formal mentoring program by August 16, 2011. As a part of the college program, colleges may also require that each department or school develop its own unit level- mentoring program. Effective mentoring is important to enhancing academic excellence and building a progressively stronger faculty composed of members who meet continuously higher standards and are competitive nationally and internationally. Mentoring programs will help the University achieve its goals for a high-quality faculty, diversity, inclusive excellence, and a respectful, positive work environment in which all members of the University community can thrive. While the responsibility for career development and success is ultimately that of the individual faculty member, opportunity, mentoring and the degree of environmental support that is available can affect success.

There are many forms of mentoring programs and no single model will meet the needs of all units or individuals. Each college (and/or unit) should develop a program that is most relevant to its needs based upon evidence based best practices. The practices and procedures in colleges may vary; however, all college mentoring programs must incorporate, at a minimum, the principles included below.

## **Principles**

1. For faculty members with joint appointments, there should be one mentoring plan for the faculty member, coordinated among the units, with leadership from the faculty member's lead unit.
2. Faculty members need different kinds of mentoring at different stages of their career. Initially, at minimum, colleges are expected to provide a mentoring program for pre-tenure, tenure system faculty, and build upon the program as capacity allows. This might include, for example, the addition of associate professors, HP faculty, or fixed term faculty for whom there is a long-term commitment.
3. Colleges, units and mentors should demonstrate sensitivity to potentially different challenges faced by diverse faculty including women, persons of color, and other facets of identity.
4. Conflicts of interest should be minimized, confidentiality protected, and all faculty members provided an environment in which they can address concerns without fear of retribution.
5. A faculty member may choose not to have a mentor.
6. Mentoring policies should be clearly communicated to all faculty members, and efforts must be made to ensure that there is clarity of both expectations and roles for all parties.
7. Mentoring excellence will be considered in the annual review of faculty.
8. Formative evaluation shall be incorporated into the design of the mentoring program to maximize benefit to each individual being mentored.
9. Colleges shall assess the effectiveness of their mentoring program on a cycle not to exceed five years.