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Department of Biological Sciences, University of Delaware Guidelines for Mentoring Teaching-Intensive Faculty

New hires will be assigned a formal faculty mentor to assist with their transition to UD and to serve as a source of advice during the period prior to contract renewal and promotion. This document serves as a guide to highlight important topics and milestones for the mentee. The formal mentor will review these topics and make sure the mentee is aware of necessary resources, however the mentee should take full ownership of the relationship and reach out to their formal mentor and other faculty for additional mentoring as needed.

All mentors are encouraged to attend a Culturally Aware Mentorship training workshop.

Year 1

Meeting 1: After letter of hire is signed; before the mentee arrives at UD.

Direct them to BISC weblinks “under resources” for information on Faculty Handbook, AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement, campus resources for faculty housing, benefits and family friendly policies so that the mentee can review as needed/interested.

When workload is assigned, check on mentee’s teaching preparation plan, to include coordinating with the course teaching team of faculty, lab coordinators, and teaching assistants (depending on the specific course assignment).

Meeting 2: Before First Semester

Discuss if mentee has any concerns regarding their teaching assignments.

Ask if the mentee has any questions on the information sent to them as part of Meeting 1. Answer the questions and/or direct the mentee to the appropriate campus resources for more information.

Share sample class syllabi, evaluation mechanisms, teaching resources (including CTAL and Faculty Commons), University policies related to students, including student deadlines (add/drop, change of status and so forth). Suggest resources to streamline mentee’s teaching preparations.

Offer to review the mentee’s syllabi if they would like feedback.

Meeting 3: First week of classes

Check-in: How is it going? Let's have coffee. Option: walk over to the Faculty Commons to remind them of those resources.

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- Introduce mentee to other faculty (informal group lunch or door to door meet and greet) especially with those faculty (CT, TT) that they might have less day-to-day interactions with.
- Review UD CTAL and Faculty Commons resources.
- Suggest obtaining mid semester feedback from students by week 3 or 4 to get a sense of how the class is going. There could be issues that are easy to fix such as voice volume, class pace and so on.
- Connect mentee to support and interest groups on campus for local informal networks including informal introductions to identity groups (essential for UR faculty to feel connected but could include CT caucus, UD African Heritage caucus, young Moms with daycare, LGBTQ etc.).

Meeting 4: Mid-Semester

- Check on teaching and service activities. Are they feeling overwhelmed? What resources can help ease the transition?
- Determine if the mentee is able to attend faculty meetings, chalk talks, and seminars, and interact with other faculty members. Are they more isolated and need to be encouraged? Are there structural issues affecting their availability (e.g., they are assigned to teach when faculty meetings or seminars are held, or they have family care responsibilities)? If the former is the case, point this out to the Chair and Associate Chair. If the latter is the case, check that the mentee knows about family care resources available through the University.
- Review optional processes of collecting mid-semester evaluation data from students.
- Review course evaluation process and show mentee how to personalize those evaluations.
- Review yearly evaluation, peer evaluation and promotion (focus on criteria in Departmental by-laws, teaching performance metrics, external letters and the necessity to keep records of all teaching, scholarship and service activities, including a current CV).

Meeting 5: End of First Semester

- Go over annual evaluation process so the mentee knows what to expect.
- Revisit topics from first four meetings.
- Check in on how balancing a teaching intensive workload with service (if assigned) and life is going.
- Review potential scholarly activities (e.g., curriculum development, discipline-based education research (DBER), community outreach, Partnership for Public Education).
- Discuss ways to develop a professional network inside and outside of UD based on the mentee's interests. Suggest specific potential mentors.

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- Discuss the mentee's goals for the winter break and ways to make it productive.

Meeting 6: Middle of Second Semester

- If the mentee desires, discuss their annual evaluation. Were any deficiencies or proficiencies pointed out? Are there issues to be addressed?
- Discuss objectives for the summer Including Summer Institute in Teaching by CTAL and other national or regional meetings to build professional portfolio.
- Review the mentee's five-year plan. Do they have specific objectives for the summer? Consider introducing the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based) goals framework which the mentee may find helpful for organizing his/her/their time.

Year 2

Meeting 1: Before Start of First Semester

- Did the mentee meet his/her/their objectives for the summer?
- Consider scholarly activities. How can you help connect/facilitate this aspect of the mentee's position?
- If the mentee desires, discuss their teaching reflection statement. Are there any particular concerns from teaching evaluations that they wish to share? What did the mentee do right and thus will continue to improve on? What could the mentee change or reassess?
- Review the process for the 2-year review. Discuss potential Dossier Committee and Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee members. Discuss material to provide to these committees and the timeline for doing so.
- Check the mentees involvement with the training of Graduate Teaching Assistants and local and national professional initiatives.
- Discuss mentee's long-term professional plans, including promotion, and how to start on and integrate professional development and teaching scholarship.

Meeting 2: Mid-Semester

- Is mentee attending national meetings for professional development, and making contacts that are external to the Department and UD?
- Depending on the mentee's workload allocation for and interest in scholarship, suggest appropriate faculty to advise mentee on grant proposals.

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- Are they on track with their dossier development for their 2-year review?

Meeting 3: Beginning of Second Semester

- Review the mentee's progress through the 2-year evaluation process. Do they have Peer Review of Teaching and Dossier Committees assembled? Is their documentation for the review ready to go?
- Are the mentee's teaching load, evaluations (if the mentee would like feedback on those) and assigned service responsibilities appropriate and allow for professional development? If, in your opinion, the mentee needs more development opportunities, point this out to the Chair and Associate Chair and brainstorm with the mentee. What opportunities make sense given their interests?

Meeting 4: Middle of Second Semester

- Review feedback the mentee received during the two-year review process. What steps must the mentee take to move forward?
- Review five-year teaching and professional development plan. What does mentee want to look like to an outside evaluator in three years?
- What are the mentee's summer plans?

Year 3

- Review best practices for managing teaching load, facilitating student engagement. Discuss the mentee's teaching reflection. Is the mentee implementing changes for their 3rd year of teaching based on feedback from the 2-year review?
- If the mentee is assigned advisees, suggest training and best practices. Review departmental curriculum, majors and year plans. Let the mentee know about common timelines for advising and suggested responses.
- Consider opportunities for mentor or another individual to nominate mentee for specific awards.
- Reevaluate mentee's teaching and professional development progress, and especially what is "the story" (identify mentee's unifying interests and themes).
- Check that mentee updates CV and maintains a file of supporting documents.
- Suggest that the mentee write a new teaching philosophy and compare with job teaching philosophy? What changed and why? With growth and experience there should be change.

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- Suggest that the mentee writes up and reviews with mentor a revised five-year teaching and professional development plan.
- Revisit promotion guidelines. Develop tentative list of external reviewers (avoid close personal contacts like old mentors - include more professional contacts).

Years 4 & 5

- Update dossier for four-year review. Identify dossier and peer review of teaching committee members – ideally each committee has 1 member from the 2-year review and 2 new members so that the faculty member's work is shared more widely in the Department.
- Suggest that mentee write up and reviews with mentor a revised five-year teaching and professional development plan with focus on next two years.
- After four-year review: discuss perceived weaknesses in dossier and how to correct them.
- Update list of external evaluators required for promotion to Associate Professor.
- Possible thought exercise for the mentee: How would colleagues describe your teaching contributions, professional development and educational scholarship? How would an external evaluator describe your contributions? Are these comments accurate and fair? What do you need to change?
- It is in the best interests of the mentee to decide in January of the fifth year if the year 6 evaluation is strictly for contractual renewal or if it is for contractual renewal and promotion. Regardless of the year in which the mentee decides to apply for promotion to Associate Prof., the process is multistep:
 - The Chair must be notified in writing in the spring prior to the academic year in which the mentee is applying for promotion.
 - The mentee prepares a dossier which documents his/her/their work at the rank of Assistant Professor.
 - A Peer Review of Teaching Committee and Dossier Committee is formed and evaluates the candidate.
 - External reviews are solicited early in the summer prior to fall Departmental vote.
 - For more details, see the relevant section of the faculty handbook (link below).

<https://facultyhandbook.udel.edu/handbook/416-non%E2%80%90tenure-track-faculty>

Year 6

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Requires a review for the transition from a 2 year to a 3 year contract (if promotion is also sought, see the section above).

- The mentee prepares a dossier of accomplishments during year 5 and 6.
- A Peer Review of Teaching Committee and Dossier Committee is formed and evaluates the candidate.
- The Committee recommendations are sent to the Chair in early spring.

Review mentee's teaching contributions and discuss future plans and new opportunities.

Discuss mentee's service interests and responsibilities; what leadership opportunities might there be in the department and at UD?

Review awards, honors, etc. that mentee might pursue.

Review funding opportunities for mentee's scholarship.

Review professional visibility and leadership at conferences, editorial boards, professional network.

Year 9

Year 9 requires a review for the transition from a 3 year to a 4 year contract. See the year 6 description.

Year 13

Year 13 requires a review for the transition from a 4 year to a rolling 5 year contract. See the year 6 description.

NOTE: For promotion of a faculty member from Associate Professor to Professor, the Departmental By-laws state that a robust independent research and scholarship program is necessary. However, the mentee may not have assigned workload in this area.

If promotion to Professor is a goal of the mentee, is desirable that the mentee seek out and assume leadership roles in the department, at UD and nationally. Also, the mentee should explicitly state their goal to the Chair. An external mentor will be helpful and may be necessary to help achieve this goal. It is recommended that mentor and mentee meet at least once per year to discuss progress.

If the mentor or mentee feel that the mentor-mentee fit is not appropriate, either one should feel free to bring this to the attention of the Chair.