Mentoring: An Important Dimension of Good Departmental Leadership

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<u>Mentoring</u> is an important part of running a school or department

Several types:

- Head to faculty member

- Faculty member to faculty member

- Head to head

Recommendations:

Be fair and consistent

Periodic reviews (written vs verbal)

Broad based feedback to junior faculty

Be (brutally) honest but encouraging

Personal best practices:

Monthly untenured faculty meetings

Direct junior faculty to high performance
senior faculty

Share P&T numerical data

Mentoring: faculty to faculty

Some good insights can be gleaned from the University of Wisconsin Women Faculty Mentoring Program Report and other sources listed in the bibliography.

http://www.provost.wisc.edu/women/mentor.html

1340 female tenure track faculty (60.3% response rate)

Mentoring was okay, but we only met a couple of times during the year. Not that helpful.

Some ideas for consideration

When do you start a peer mentoring program???

Should mentors be trained?

Some guidance for mentors and mentees can be helpful.

The new faculty member should leave sufficient time in the grant proposal and paper submission process to allow his/her mentor the opportunity to review

Short-term and long-term goals for the mentor

- Short-term: Helping to sort out priorities – budgeting time, balancing research, teaching, and service
- Long-term: Developing visibility and prominence within the profession

Address handling conflicts.

Questions for Discussion Between Mentor and Mentee

- Conferences and Networking
- Research Publishing
- Grant Writing
- Research Niche
- Buying out of Teaching
- Specialized Courses
- Course Preparation
- Grading Standards
- Teaching Evaluation
- Graduate Student Supervision
- Committee Work
- Tenure Review Process

Getting a mentoring program started. How do you do selection???

- Self selection vs mentor assignment

•This fall Purdue ECE plans to try an e-harmony mentor match-up approach for graduate student mentoring.

How should one set up a mentoring program?

Providing structure to the program can help, as discussed in an article by Boyle and Boice (Journal of Higher Ed).

25 pairs completed the year-long program over the course of two consecutive years.

Half of the mentors came from other departments and colleges on campus and about half came from already successful junior faculty.

Elements

- Pairs participated for at least one year.
- Met weekly
- Attended monthly group meetings.
- Weekly phone calls or visits from project experimenters

Control Group experiment was run in parallel for comparison.

Assessment: **Mentoring Index (MI):**

- 10 point scale on 10 dimensions of mentoring
- An average score of 6.5 represented an adequate level of mentoring.

Does Personality Make a Difference?

Five of the 25 pairs had similar Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) profiles, but those pair proved no more compatible or successful than other pairs.

Is it better to have mentors that are in the same department?

Pairs with each member from a *different* department rated slightly higher (73.9) than pairs from within departments (68.7).

Is it better to have senior faculty serve as mentors?

Senior Mentor Pairs(74.3), Junior Mentor Pairs(67.4)

Should one try to match ethnicity?

Four pairs with mixed ethnicity (70.1).
Pairs with the same ethnicity (Caucasian) (69.8).

Do administrators fair well as mentors?

Campus administrators (Dept. chairs, directors) pairs rated somewhat higher (73.8) than the overall mean (70.8).

The key is regular meetings with protégés.

How effective were mentors in assisting with teaching and scholarship?

Mentors were quick to admit deficiencies in assisting with either teaching or writing, primarily because they could not specify, in useful ways, how they had learned either set of skills

Results compared to Control Pairs:

– Of the 25 natural mentees, six persisted (albeit irregularly) in meeting with mentors throughout their first year on campus.

– Ten met so infrequently that they rated the benefits of mentoring to inconsequential and the other nine stopped meeting after the semester started.

– The MI rating of the 6 (all white males) who met regularly was about 58, significantly less than the mean of the pairs who participated in the systematic mentoring project (70.8).

Also important is head-to-head mentoring, a.k.a. networking.

Take away message: exploit resources of national organizations.

Example: Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association (ECEDHA) www.ecedha.org

The End

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1. Pair meets regularly, persistently, in substantial fashion
2. Pair experiences enthusiasm and motivation for mentoring
3. Pair reports compatibility
4. Pair reports helpful, supportive interactions
5. Pair shows reciprocity and similar perceptions of mentoring interactions
6. Mentor arranges collegial contacts for mentee and mentee follows through on them
7. Pair interacts to improve teaching of mentee
8. Pair interacts to improve scholarship of mentee
9. Mentee eventually shows interest and competence, for example, mentoring another new faculty member
10. Mentor evidences own benefits from mentoring