Magna 20 Minute Mentor

Supplemental Materials

How Can I Be an Effective Mentor?

Presented by:

Ken Alford, Ph.D.
Tyler Griffin, Ph.D.

MAGNA

Magna20MinuteMentors

"How Can I Be an Effective Mentor?"

"Mentor, Noun:

> a person who acts as guide and adviser to another person, especially one who is younger and less experienced. Later, more generally: a person who offers support and guidance to another; an experienced and trusted counselor or friend; a patron, a sponsor. An experienced person in a company, college, etc., who trains and counsels new employees or students."

Oxford English Dictionary Online

Mentoring Essentials

- Establish a relationship of trust early.

    - You are to be a trusted adviser to help your mentee/protégé successfully navigate their first years as a faculty member.

    - You cannot be effective if they perceive you as a department spy.

- Jointly decide what strengths and weaknesses in your mentee's abilities need to be addressed during your mentoring relationship

- Clearly define expectations for your mentoring role.

- Build self reliance in your mentee over time using this pattern:
    - Show them
    - Help them
    - Watch them
    - Let them

Mentoring Do's and Don'ts

- **Don't** overwhelm your mentee with all that you have accomplished in your career.
  Do share vitas and discuss the mentee's goals and aspirations based on past successes and struggles for *both* of you

- **Don't** talk too much.
  Do ask a lot of questions listen, and try to understand where you might be of greatest help.

- **Don't** wait for mentoring interactions to happen.
  Do set a regular mentoring meeting based on need (e.g. weekly, twice monthly, monthly).

- **Don't** be too formal with your mentee.
  Do "drop in" on your mentee's (classrooms or office) when appropriate to show support and see how he/she is progressing.

- **Don't** give "You're doing great!" or "Well done; don't change a thing" comments unless you *really* mean it.
  Do give *specific* feedback, including constructive criticism when they need it.

- **Don't** do the work for your mentee. You are only a guide.
  Do empower them with formative feedback, encouragement, and needed resources along the way.

- **Don't** involve your mentee with departmental infighting or old struggles.
  Do take time to share appropriate department culture with your mentee.

- **Don't** put your focus solely on what your mentee does.
  Do focus on the kind of teacher and researcher your mentee is becoming.

- **Don't** try to clone yourself.
  Do help your mentee develop into the best they can be based on *their* talents, abilities, and experience.

- **Don't** think you will do all the teaching and your mentee will do all the learning.
  Do establish a respectful relationship where you learn and grow from working with your mentee.

- **Don't** be a one-stop shop for your mentee.
  Do point your mentee in the right directions to network with the right people at the right time.

- **Don't** pretend to know everything and make up answers to try to look good in the eyes of your mentee.
  Do model for your mentee how to really solve problems in your field and find answers to questions you have.

- **Don't** smother or ignore your mentee.
  Do find the right balance that works for both of you, knowing this balance will naturally need to change over time.

- **Don't** expect your mentee to understand the tenure process.
  Do guide your mentee through the tenure process.

Questions to Consider with Your Mentee

Mentoring Effective Teaching Practices

- How many credits is your mentee expected to teach each semester/term? How many per year?
- Who decides which classes your mentee will teach? Who decides what the teaching schedule will be? When are these schedules completed?
- What are the pros/cons of teaching the same courses repeatedly versus teaching a broad range of different courses?
- Teaching assistant questions:
  - Who selects and hires the TA?
  - Who trains the TA?
  - What can you expect of a TA?
  - How do you handle performance issues with TAs?
- What is a reasonable amount of time to spend on course preparation?
  How do you know when enough is enough with course preparation?
- How much leeway do we have in selecting course content and textbooks?
- What are the department's standards and expectations for grading?
- What are department expectations for testing?
  - Are midterms and finals required?
  - What kinds of graded evaluations are appropriate?
  - Are there departmental standardized evaluation measures?
- How does the department evaluate teaching?
- How does the department use peer observation of teaching?
  - Should junior faculty members need to invite others to observe their teaching?
  - Is this a coordinated effort?
  - Are junior faculty allowed to observe other teachers?
  - Do observers fill out evaluations? If so, how are those evaluations used?
- How does the department use student evaluations?
- What are departmental expectations for office hours and meeting with students?
- What resources are available for helping students with university accessibility exceptions (physical, emotional, or mental disabilities)?
- What departmental resources are available for teacher-improvement efforts?
- What campus resources exist for helping teachers with questions about syllabi, exams, grading, technology use, library resources, interdisciplinary collaboration, writing workshops, etc.?
- What kind of physical documentation should be kept for a teaching portfolio?
  What are some good *and* bad examples of past dossiers?
- What legal liabilities are potential issues for the department? Copyright and fair use? ADA issues? Protecting both the university's intellectual property and your own?

Mentoring Effective Scholarship Practices
- What is the mentee's main research contribution potential to the department?
  What does the department hope to gain from their investment in your mentee?
- Where should you try to publish an article? Which venues should be sought out and which should be avoided?
- What is the publishing expectation for the department?
  What is the specific contractual agreement for research and publication with your mentee?
- How do various forms of publications compare with each other in the tenure process (books, chapters in edited publications, journal articles, conference papers/presentations, etc.)?
- How important is peer-reviewed research? What review resources does your department use?
- Questions of authorship:
    - How do the university and department view first authorship?
    - What differences exist in the value of single vs. multiple-author publications?
    - What is the department's standard for listing authors of collaborative works?
    - How much does the department value graduate students helping in our research and publishing? How should graduate students be listed in works they helped to publish?
- What research resources are available from the university or department? Is there money available for research assistants? Do we need to write our own grant proposals for funding?
  If so, what campus resources are the most useful in helping those efforts be most successful?
- Is intra-department or inter-department collaborative work encouraged?
- Are there research groups on campus or national societies that would benefit your mentee?
- What is a reasonable timeline for your mentee's research goals and departmental expectations?
- What should be included or avoided on a research vita?

Mentoring Effective Citizenship Practices
- What is the department's overarching philosophy regarding citizenship activities?
  What is valued and what is not?
- What are some of the specific committees and citizenship assignments that your mentee
  is likely to receive? What are the DOs and DON'Ts in each of these assignments?
- How often do performance reviews occur in the department? Who does them? Are there standardized forms used in these reviews? How can you make it a more beneficial experience?
- What university or departmental events/meetings are mandatory and which are recommended?
- How much time is reasonable to spend working on committees or department assignments?
- How is professional service outside the department or university viewed
  (e.g. community outreach, review boards, journal editing, conference committees, etc.)?
- If you are responsible for recommending outside reviewers in your tenure process
  what should you look for and what should be avoided?

General Questions for Discussion
- How is pay determined in the department? What factors contribute to raises and merit pay?
- How can you receive formative feedback on your progress toward tenure?
- What policies exist for missing class for family emergencies or personal leave time?
- Is there a process for appealing any decisions you feel are unfair or inappropriate?
- How does the department feel about working from home on non-teaching days?
- What are the university/department policies that every teacher needs to know
  (e.g. sexual harassment, technology use, plagiarism, cheating, etc.)?

Magna2⬤MinuteMentors

"How Can I Be an Effective Mentor?"

Online Resources

Emory University Passages Program
http://www.udc.edu/docs/faculty/passages.pdf

University of Albany
http://www.albany.edu/academics/mentoring.best.practices.toc.shtml

University of Massachusetts Amherst Mutual Mentoring Guide
http://www.umass.edu/ctfd/mentoring/resources.shtml

From Mentor to Mentoring Networks
http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=976

Principles of Good Practice
http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED450634.pdf

Ten Things New Faculty Want to Hear
http://academicladder.com/top-ten-things-new-faculty-members-would-like-to-hear-from-colleagues

Department Chair Advice
http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=976

Bibliography of Sources
http://www.albany.edu/academics/mentoring.best.practices.appendices.shtml#Bibliography

U.S. Department of Education Consumer Guide (Mentoring)
http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/mentor.html