

## TIPS FOR MENTORS AND MENTOREES

In general, an effective mentoring relationship is characterized by mutual respect, trust, understanding, and empathy. Good mentors are able to share life experiences and wisdom, as well as technical expertise. They are good listeners, good observers, and good problem-solvers. The ultimate goal is to establish an environment in which the junior faculty's accomplishment is limited only by the extent of his/her talent.

### 1/ TIPS FOR MENTORS

---

- ✦ Exchange CV's with your protégé to stimulate discussion about your respective career paths, possibilities and academic roles
- ✦ Describe what the protégé can expect from the relationship and suggest that the mentoree may wish to speak with prior protégés about realistic expectations
- ✦ Ask about and encourage accomplishments. Provide constructive criticism and impromptu feedback
- ✦ Use your knowledge and experience to help junior faculty member identify and build on his/her own strengths
- ✦ Commit to making one contact per month to demonstrate you're thinking about your protégé's career
- ✦ Discuss annual performance reviews with the junior faculty member: how to prepare, what to expect, how to deal with different outcomes
- ✦ Aid the junior faculty in exploring the institutional, university, and departmental culture, i.e. what is valued? What is rewarded? Recall the mentoree to set a meeting with his/her University department head/chief to discuss academic career trajectory and opportunity
- ✦ Check-in with “Comité de mentorat” with any concerns, or problems. Respond to occasional calls from the “Comité de mentorat” to see how each pair is doing
- ✦ Share knowledge of important university and professional events that should be attended by the junior faculty member

## 2/ TIPS FOR MENTOREES

---

- ✚ Show initiative in career planning: write a personal statement about your educational philosophy (to be amended as needed); exchange your CV with your mentor and discuss your short- and long-term objectives.
- ✚ Find out about, and take advantage of, opportunities for learning about how the university, and your field, operate. Write down questions as they occur to you, and then begin searching out the answers.
- ✚ Make and maintain contacts with other junior faculty, within your department as well as in other departments and schools.
- ✚ Make your scheduled meetings with your mentor a priority, and take advantage of e-mail and the telephone to keep in touch informally.
- ✚ Be willing to ask for help.
- ✚ Let the “Comité de mentorat” know if you have questions or concerns about the program.
- ✚ Begin assembling your "advisory board" of supporters and advisors in the university community.
- ✚ Realize that your success is important not just to you, but also to your institution, Department and the University. Consider that "going it alone" doesn't work that well for anyone.
- ✚ Become familiar with the resources available to support and strengthen your teaching and research.

## 3/ SUGGESTED TOPICS OF DISCUSSION FOR MENTORS-PROTÉGÉS

---

### **GENERAL :**

- ✚ How is the institution/university department organized? (Divisions, Committees?)
- ✚ How are decisions made? What are the opportunities for junior faculty involvement?
- ✚ Is support staff available to junior faculty at the institution/university? What can be expected of support staff?

## **RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (IN A LABORATORY ENVIRONMENT):**

- ✚ What research resources are available to you? Ask about funding opportunities and how to interact with program officers. Ask about strategy for funding and list all available opportunity to draw a realistic schedule suited to you.
- ✚ How important are grants? How do you get hooked into the grant-writing process? How much effort should you be investing in capturing research funding? How can you find people to assist you in writing the best possible proposal, to draw up the budget?
- ✚ What do you see as your research "niche" in your institution, in your area of research? What does your chair see your area of research contributing to the department, eventually to the university?
- ✚ For clinical scientists, what is the expected level of clinical duty while trying to write and acquire external funding? Is clinical research funding equivalent to basic research funding?

## **PROMOTION:**

- ✚ Discuss career trajectory and deliverables needed to progress in your department. Obtain university departmental forms and information and prepare a long-term strategy to succeed in your area of excellence.

## **STUDENT SUPERVISION:**

- ✚ How and where do you recruit graduate students? How important is your work with graduate students? How many should you expect to supervise? How many is too many? How much advising should you expect to do? How do you set limits on the amount of time/effort you invest in graduate students?
- ✚ How do you identify "good" graduate students? What qualities should you look for? How aggressive should you be in recruiting them to work with you? What should you expect from your graduate students? How do you identify a problem graduate student?
- ✚ How important is it to the institution/department that you are a Ph.D. student advisor? On a Ph.D. student committee? A mentor for a professional school thesis? Mentor for an independent honors thesis?
- ✚ What should you keep in files on your students? Remember that you have to write reviews and recommendations for them.
- ✚ Should you hire postdoctoral fellows? What are the advantages/disadvantages?

- ✚ How are the pay scales set for the graduate students and Postdoctoral fellows?

### **PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES:**

- ✚ What conferences should the junior faculty attend? How much travel is allowed / expected / supported? How do you choose between large conferences and smaller events? What can you do at professional gatherings to gain the type of exposure that can lead to good contacts, and potential names of tenure-file reviewers?
- ✚ Authorship etiquette: On collaborative efforts, how are the authors listed? Where do graduate student names go? How important is first authorship? How is alphabetical listing of authors viewed?
- ✚ Where should you publish? What should you publish? How much/how often? What are your department/school's expectations regarding publication before tenure and promotion? How do journal/chapters in edited collections/conferences compare? How much "new" work is necessary to make something a "new" publication? May material published be submitted elsewhere? When is it time to worry if you haven't published?
- ✚ Is it worthwhile to send published reports to colleagues here, and elsewhere? What's the line between sharing news of your accomplishments and appearing self-congratulatory?

### **PRESENTATIONS ON RESEARCH:**

- ✚ Should you give presentations within your institution/department? How often? How are colloquia organized? What are the opportunities for your graduate students to present their work?
- ✚ Should you give presentations about your work at other universities/institutions/public settings? How often? How important is this? If it is important, how do you get invited to give these talks?
- ✚ For clinical scientists, should you present your work at Grand Rounds, give presentations for hospital and medical communities, and participate in clinical practice meetings?

### **COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH**

- ✚ Is collaborative work encouraged or discouraged in your institution? With other members of your institution? With international colleagues? With colleagues who are senior/more established? With other junior faculty/graduate students? Long-standing collaborations or single efforts? How important is it to have some (or all) single-author

papers to your credit or papers with multiple authors in which you are first author or senior author?

- ✚ Should you form a research group? What sort of activities should the group do, as opposed to work you should undertake individually?

### **TEACHING:**

- ✚ Will you be expected to assemble a teaching portfolio for your tenure review? What goes into such a portfolio?
- ✚ What are you expected to teach? Graduate, undergraduate, seminar, lecture, practicum, recitation, special topic, service course? Are some types of teaching more valued? How much flexibility is there in teaching schedules? Who controls the schedule?
- ✚ Which are the "good" subjects to teach? Is it good to teach the same course semester after semester, stay with a single area? Or should you "teach around"?
- ✚ Is it good to develop new courses? Specialized courses in your research area?
- ✚ How much time should you spend on your course preparation? Where's the line between sufficient preparation and over-preparation?
- ✚ What degree of freedom do you have in determining course content? Does your department expect midterm and final exams?
- ✚ How are you evaluated on teaching? What importance is placed on peer observation of your teaching? On student evaluations? If senior faculty do observe your classes, who asks them to come? To whom do they report, and in what way? What resources are there for improving your teaching?
- ✚ If a classroom problem arises you aren't sure how to handle, what are your options for seeking advice, help?
- ✚ What documentation related to teaching should you keep? Syllabi? Exams? Abstracts?
- ✚ How should you develop a teaching portfolio? What form should it take? What should it include?

### **SERVICES:**

- ✚ How much committee work should you expect to perform within your department?

- ✚ Hospital? University? What committees should you push to serve on? Are there any you should avoid pre-tenure? How much time should you expect to devote to committees and other forms of service as a junior faculty member?
- ✚ How important is professional service outside of the university? How much paper and proposal reviewing is reasonable? Review boards? Journal assistant editorships?
- ✚ How do you weigh the prestige of organizing a national event in your field versus the time commitment?

### **REVIEW PROCESS:**

- ✚ How long is your appointment? When will you come up for review? What sort of reviews? What is the process? (for tenure etc)?
- ✚ How can you get feedback on how you're doing at any point in your pre-tenure career?

### **PERSONAL ISSUES:**

- ✚ How do you balance family and workload? How do you make family decisions vs career?