

# Mentoring Guidelines for Tenure Track Faculty

## Department of Modern Languages

### Goals

Mentoring is a process in which a **mentor** (an experienced, empathic associate or full professor) works with a **mentee** (an assistant professor seeking career guidance) to help the mentee earn tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.

According to Fogg, Masterson, and Zachary, mentoring assistant professors...

1. Facilitates promotion, tenure, and increased compensation
2. Increases the amount of time spent on research, the amount of research published, and the amount of research funding received
3. Enhances teaching effectiveness
4. Fosters the success of women and underrepresented minorities in academia
5. Improves work/life balance
6. Increases job satisfaction

As part of a Carnegie R1 research university, Modern Languages values consistent, high-caliber scholarly output. And as a teaching-intensive discipline, Modern Languages values excellence in teaching and service to our students. Considering these high standards, the Modern Languages faculty genuinely wants our untenured colleagues to succeed and our goal is to support mentees' professional success through this structured mentoring program.

### Mentee and Mentor Pairing

The chair of Modern Languages will pair a mentee with a mentor based on common interests, experiences, languages, teaching, and research specialties. The chair will then consult with both the mentee and mentor to gauge the willingness of both parties to enter into the mentoring partnership. During these consultations, both the mentee and mentor will have the opportunity to request changes before the mentee/mentor pairing is formalized. This mentoring program is optional for all faculty members.

### Responsibilities

Mentees should think of the mentor as a personal sherpa: S/he has climbed this mountain before and can show the successful paths to scale, summit, and plant one's professional flag atop Mount Tenure. In the most successful mentoring partnerships the mentee is pro-active. The mentee takes the initiative, defines her/his career goals, engages in career self-evaluation, and outlines short-term and long-term plans. Then reviewing these plans the mentor may offer more finely-tuned advice that focuses on the mentee's specific needs and objectives.

Mentors provide candid yet non-judgmental feedback to their mentee about how to advance toward tenure and promotion. As such the mentor serves as a guide, role model, and source of moral support. Most importantly the mentor assists the mentee

achieve yearly success (the annual FAR) and long-term success (tenure and promotion to Associate Professor). Moreover, mentors also benefit from the mentoring partnership, by developing a personal support network, receiving feedback from colleagues, and enhancing job satisfaction through helping others

By entering into the mentoring partnership, the mentor and mentee agree to the following responsibilities:

<b>Mentee Responsibilities</b>	<b>Mentor Responsibilities</b>
Provide your current CV to your mentor before your first meeting	Provide the “Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion” document to your mentee before your first meeting
Provide details of your current <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) teaching</li> <li>2) research</li> <li>3) service</li> </ul>	Candidly evaluate your mentee’s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) teaching</li> <li>2) research</li> <li>3) service</li> </ul>
Articulate your teaching goals, research agenda, and service plans to your mentor	Evaluate mentee’s short term goals (for the FAR) and long term goals (for tenure and promotion to associate professor)
Formulate specific questions regarding your teaching, research, service	Provide honest, constructive, non-judgmental feedback
Admit mistakes and missteps when they inevitably occur and commit to correcting them	Provide positive feedback on your mentees successes (“catch them doing something right”)
Provide drafts of upcoming projects to your mentor and carefully consider her/his constructive criticism	Evaluate your mentee’s upcoming projects (conference presentation, manuscript revision)
Identify specific concerns for your mentor’s advice (a troublesome student, time commitments, motivation, work/life balance)	Advise your mentee of professional opportunities (conferences, CFPs, research grants), facilitate networking with experts
Identify and communicate your specific professional needs (grants, library resources, technology)	Help mentee access university resources (ORSP/RSIC, FTDC, CLA Research Grants, ILL, ordering library resources)
<b>Spring Semester:</b> Complete an early draft of your FAR for your mentor to review by your mentor’s deadline	<b>Spring Semester:</b> Assist mentee with FAR (look for common mistakes, advise writing an effective narrative)
Seek a sensible work/life balance	Provide a model for a long-term satisfying and successful academic career

## Responsibilities of Both Mentor and Mentee

Commit to meeting at least once per semester (and possibly arrange a check-in during the summer)

Keep the content of your conversations confidential

Provide each other with honest, candid, and respectful feedback

Identify good habits that are worth continuing

Identify unproductive habits to evaluate and correct

Recognize if this particular mentor/mentee partnership is not a good fit—due to communication style, personality, time commitments, or unhelpful advice—and request to change mentors if needed

## Questions For Reflection and Potential Discussion

While mentoring may seem uncomplicated (*'mentees ask questions, mentors give advice'*), Tenner observes that mentoring is a nuanced process based as much on the dynamics of human relationships as on sound advice. Mentoring often falters due to a lack of preparation and unclear expectations. Mentees may be unsure what questions to ask and have not sufficiently planned a research agenda. Similarly, a common pitfall for mentors is giving vague or ineffective advice. The more specific the guidance, the better ("You should write more" versus "To improve your writing habits, try a pseudo-NaNOWriMo method: Write 500 words every day for 14 days, no exceptions. Then let's discuss your results in two weeks").

To help mentees and mentors prepare for mentoring and to engage in professional self-evaluation, consider the following questions for reflection and possible discussion.

### For the mentee:

- Do I understand the timeline for tenure and promotion?
- Do I understand how the department measures successful teaching, research, and service?
- Am I making satisfactory progress in my teaching, research, and service?
- What are my professional needs? What do I need to advance my teaching, research, and service?
- Have I clearly defined my short term and long term goals?
- Have I clearly defined my research agenda?
- Do I need help with my writing? With my methodological skills?
- What difficulties am I having in the classroom? What challenges or obstacles do I face in my teaching?
- Am I sufficiently participating in the life of the department?
- Am I involved in service activities that are too time-intensive, too emotionally/intellectually draining, or unrelated to my professional success?

- Do I feel pressured to participate in service activities that are unrelated to my professional success?
- Do I consistently follow through on my professional commitments?
- Am I open to new perspectives and constructive criticism? Am I willing to change my behaviors?
- What are my recent successes or breakthroughs?
- Am I comfortable asking for help in areas where I am falling short?
- Do I feel like I fit in and belong in my language section? In the department?
- Do I feel like my opinions matter? Do I feel like I am being heard?
- Do I feel supported by my colleagues? Do my colleagues encourage me to succeed?
- Am I having a conflict with a colleague? Am I avoiding a colleague because of a conflict? Am I willing to ask for advice and take proactive steps to diffuse this conflict?
- Am I using my time effectively?
- Am I able to maintain a sensible work/life balance?
- Do I enjoy coming to work? Can I identify why or why not?
- Are there changes on the horizon that my mentor can help me navigate?
- How can my mentor help to motivate me: Do I respond best to encouragement and praise or challenges and deadlines?

**For the mentor:**

- Am I clearly communicating the timeline for tenure and promotion?
- Am I clearly communicating how the department measures successful teaching, research, and service?
- Am I able to identify and assess my mentee's strengths and assets?
- Am I able to identify and assess my mentee's opportunities for growth and development?
- Am I sufficiently motivating my mentee with encouragement and praise or with challenges and deadlines, according to his/her personality?
- Am I offering sufficient positive feedback to encourage my mentee?
- Am I helping my mentee distinguish urgencies from long-range goals?
- Am I setting high standards as a model for my mentee? Am I able to lead and teach by example?
- Am I encouraging my mentee to move beyond her/his comfort zone?
- Am I guiding my mentee to become an independent scholar?
- Am I promoting an appropriate work/life balance?
- Am I promoting a departmental culture of inclusion, support, trust, and cooperation?
- Am I giving honest and constructive feedback, even if it is feedback may be difficult for my mentee to hear?
- Is my mentee engaged in unproductive habits or harboring unproductive attitudes?
- Am I offering effective advice for defusing conflicts with colleagues?
- Am I sympathetic to the anxieties and insecurities that my mentee invariably experiences when approaching the tenure and promotion?
- Am I able recognize instances when other colleagues may provide my mentee better guidance on academic or nonacademic matters than I can?

- Am I sharing how my mentee may be perceived—negatively or positively—by her/his colleagues?
- Is my advice focused on specific behaviors, specific actions, specific solutions, and specific strategies?

#### Works Consulted

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