Introduction

Mentoring can make important contributions to a faculty member’s professional development as a scholar, teacher, and university citizen. While individual faculty members are ultimately responsible for the quality and scope of their achievements and for the progress they make towards professional milestones, mentors provide useful guidance, advice, and support based on their own professional success, their disciplinary expertise, and their institutional knowledge and experience. Mentoring can be critical to both the development of a faculty member’s scholarly independence and his or her ability to work collegially within the university community.

Accordingly, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences values a culture of mentoring and considers mentoring an important responsibility. The College expects departments to be proactive in cultivating a culture of mentoring; ensuring that junior faculty have mentors; and encouraging, where appropriate, the establishment of mentoring relationships beyond tenure and promotion.

Central to the mentoring process is the responsibility of the department and the mentor to assist in

- introducing and integrating the faculty member into professional life and work at WSU;
- cultivating collegial relationships at the university and in the profession;
- developing an independent program of research and publication;
- setting priorities and developing potential; and
- working toward an appropriate balance of scholarship, teaching, and service.

Departmental mentoring policies and practices should formulate specific strategies to address these core areas. Moreover, in each mentoring relationship the circumstances, needs, and experience of the individual mentee should be discussed, assessed, and addressed to achieve the most effective mentoring plan possible.

Departments

Departments are expected to

- have explicit mentoring policies;
- ensure that each junior faculty member has a mentor; and
encourage mentoring relationships for senior faculty who could benefit from such an arrangement.

Additionally, departments and mentors are expected to

- recognize that mentoring begins with the interview and hiring process;
- ensure that a chosen or assigned mentor is suited to the candidate, realizing that the best fit may be with a senior colleague from another department;
- provide clear expectations for mentors;
- ensure that new faculty members attend the University’s new faculty orientation;
- provide appropriate information and resources that will assist the faculty member in all aspects of his/her work at WSU (e.g., promotion and tenure factors, procedures for submitting external grant proposals, important academic policies and practices, OTL);
- communicate clearly the department’s expectations;
- encourage participation in workshops (e.g., PAD seminars, grant workshops, P&T workshops);
- explain the nature of departmental travel funding and other forms of research support;
- provide feedback and advice concerning the mentee’s research program, publications, and grant applications;
- facilitate contacts with University colleagues, especially potential collaborators;
- take into account circumstances and needs of individuals engaged in interdisciplinary work;
- conduct annual reviews as currently required;
- assess and, if necessary, adjust the mentoring relationship annually for each faculty to ensure a suitable match and the effectiveness of the process.

College

The College will contribute to the culture of mentoring by

- regularly communicating to chairs and departments the importance of mentoring and expectations of the College pertaining to mentoring;
- assisting departments in the development of departmental mentoring policies;
• conducting workshops—for all faculty and chairs—on important topics (e.g., the promotion and tenure process, creating and maintaining the WSU Professional Record, grant proposal and processing);

• providing important information and resources (e.g., information for candidates on the promotion and tenure process, College grant proposal procedures, mentoring policy);

• assisting departments in finding appropriate mentors if necessary;

• discussing annually with chairs the progress of their faculty and the effectiveness of their mentoring policies.