Faculty Mentoring Initiative

Mentoring Check List for Mentors and Mentees
Assistant Professor Level

To the mentee: Welcome to University of Delaware and to our department. Our Department is committed to helping you achieve the best possible outcome in the promotion and tenure (P&T) process and an overall successful career progressing towards becoming a full Professor at University of Delaware. The time to begin preparations for this process is now. This document serves as a mentoring guide for both you and your mentor by presenting a timeline for activities in the form of a checklist. The checklist identifies which action items should be undertaken when. The checklist also provides hyperlinks to other sources of information. As such the checklist serves as a resource for both mentors and mentees.

To mentor and mentee: The checklist is organized by years and meetings within each year. Each meeting has a focus and purpose. This formal interaction represents the minimum interaction you both should have. Mentees are encouraged to additional support/mentoring both external to the university, within the university but external to the department and informally within the department.

For many meetings questions are posed. The intent is that the question addresses an important area and the answer provides an opportunity for the mentor to offer advice or suggestions on how to address issues. There are generally no right or wrong answers.

To the mentor: What worked for you may not work for your mentee. Listen, pay attention, don't make the process about you!

Year 1 (First semester on campus)

Meeting 1.0: (preferably early in the summer)
Focus: Getting set up.
Purpose: To initiate actions that will help you be productive as soon as possible

_____ Do you have graduate students? If yes, then request their email address and contact
          them. If no, speak with the graduate program coordinator to review files.

_____ Does your lab space need to be renovated? If yes, are your involved? If not, it is
          time to get involved.

_____ Have you ordered your equipment including computer(s)?

_____ How are you going to set up your lab? Do you need help?

Meeting 1.I: (preferably before the start of the term)
Focus: Teaching.
Purpose: To assure that the first semester of teaching is off to an informed start.

_____ Is your teaching load in compliance with departmental norms/weights?

_____ Do you know where your class is taught, do you know how to use the AV
          equipment in your classroom?

_____ Are you ready for class? Things to think about and discuss:
  - Syllabus - advice on and examples of syllabi for classes include contact
    information, grading policies, class schedule etc
  - Feedback from and to students (including department teaching
    evaluations, and mid-semester evaluations),
  - Support mechanisms for teaching (CTE, Sakai, other faculty teaching the
    same class and/or who have taught the same class)

_____ Are you ready to work with graders and/or teaching assistants?

_____Are you aware of relevant University Policies related to students?
Academic Regulations (page 59)
http://dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/bitstream/19716/3254/19/INTRO%2008-09.pdf
University Attendance Policies (page 61)
http://dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/bitstream/19716/3254/19/INTRO%2008-09.pdf
Student Guide to University Policies
http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/08-09/index.html
Academic Honesty
http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/08-09/code.html

_____ If your class is a core requirement in engineering, do you understand what student work you need to be documenting as part of the accreditation process?

_____ Things to note:
- Keep teaching in perspective. Teaching only represents a fraction of your time commitments.
- A positive gradient over time is an important measure of successful teaching.

Meeting 1.II: (preferably first or second week of classes)
Focus: Research Goals and Policies and Procedures.
Purpose: To introduce policy and procedures and explore how research goals relate to expectations

_____ Have you reviewed the following documents?
- University P&T guidelines (as in the Faculty Handbook Section 4).
- College P&T guidelines
- Departmental P&T guidelines and Work Load agreement,
- Faculty handbook
- AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Family Friendly Policies brochure

_____ What are the highlights of these documents, including, the research semester (note especially the timing of P&T reviews, yearly evaluations, 2 and 4 year reviews AND the filing deadlines/procedures for the research semester)?

_____ What are your research goals/plans and support mechanisms (e.g., external collaborators/mentors, mechanisms to obtain graduate students)?

_____ Do you know how to submit a research proposal? Are you aware of the role of the Research Office, and of departmental and college support mechanisms, of possible sources of funding, of the pros, cons of "group" and interdisciplinary proposals within the department/college/university, and of the possibility and desirability of external collaborations.

Meeting 1.III: (mid-semester)
Focus: Policies/Procedures discussion.
Purpose: To introduce the concept of the dossier.

_____ Work through some of the documents downloaded for the previous meeting.

_____ Walk through the process of yearly evaluation, including discussing the role of the workload document, the expectations of the department chair, and the mechanisms for raises.

____ Walk through the process of P&T focusing on research and external letters.

____ Begin discussion of documentation, the importance of maintaining a record of all activities (meeting programs with title and abstract of talk, thank you letters for service on a committee, letters from students, nominations for awards, awards received, acceptance rates for papers or proposals). The simplest way to do this is to start to build your P&T Dossier now.

____ Check on teaching problems or successes. Discuss teaching evaluations (both informal mid-semester evaluations and the end of semester evaluations).

____ Check on research

Meeting 1.IV: (end of first semester)
Focus: An informal meeting
Purpose: To catch up on how things have gone for the first semester and to assure the mentee has a clear research plan.

____ Revisit the topics covered in the first three meetings.

____ Discuss balancing the demands of research, service, and teaching. Revisit the candidates c.v., discuss the yearly evaluation update form.

____ If not already discussed, the mentee's service load should be evaluated.

____ Clarification should be given of the need to show service, but of the need to discriminate among service activities. Service at this level should be fairly light and should constitute a role where the mentee's strengths are highlighted.

____ Discuss developing your professional network. Develop a list of conferences and meetings to target along with relevant deadlines. Identify journals of interest and send a note to the editor offering to review papers.

____ Develop a research funding strategy. Identify funding sources with annual solicitations and due dates. Link to databases and resources that provide notification of relevant proposals, such as COS.

____ Discuss the mentee's long-term research plan and draft a (albeit brief but clear) five-year research plan for the next meeting. A sample plan is attached.

Meeting 1.V: (second semester, halfway through the semester)
Focus: Five year research plan
Purpose: To revisit the topics of the first semester in light of the Chair's evaluation.

_____ Did the Chair point out deficiencies/proficiencies that hadn't been noticed/discussed?

_____ Are there issues or problems?

_____ Is the teaching load still appropriate and on track?

_____ Is research on track? Go over the five year research plan.

_____ Is the mentee's service load reasonable and optimal? Clarification should be given of the need to discriminate among service activities so that service is fairly light and constitutes a role where the mentee's strengths are highlighted.

_____ Reminder of deadlines for applying for research leave.

Year 2:

In Year 2 the mentoring relation will, hopefully, be less forced and more informal. Still, it is necessary to revisit the topics of year one since, in year one, there is a wealth of new information to digest. It is important to continue "formal" timed meetings so that nothing slips through.

Meeting 2.I: (first semester, before the start of the semester)
Focus: Short term planning
Purpose: To develop short term plans focusing on teaching and research

_____ Go back over the timetable for application for the research sabbatical!

_____ Did you meet your objectives you set for the summer?

_____ Have you got paper reviews back? Are you able to deal with reviewer comments in a timely manner? (Note to mentor: Reviewer comments need to be put in perspective)

_____ How are you modifying your teaching to respond to feedback received in year 1?

_____ Review deadlines for grants (for example, the funding opportunities site) and graduating students (for example, step-by-step guide including dates).

_____ Review the sections in the dossier. Begin to update dossier for 2-year review. Can you identify areas where you would like additional feedback?

Meeting 2.II: (first semester, halfway through the semester)
Focus: Two year review and the road to promotion
Purpose: Primarily to discuss the upcoming review (two year review) before the renewal of the contract.

____ The mentor should check that the mentee is attending national meetings and making external contacts

____ The mentor should suggest appropriate faculty members to advise the mentee on research proposals.

____ Mentor and mentee should review materials for the two-year review.

Meeting 2.III; (Beginning of second semester)
Focus: Overall Check of mentee's load balance
Purpose:

____ The mentee should revise and update his/her five year research plan with two particular goals in mind: first, a concentration on the first four years and preparation for tenure; second, some thought to longer term projects (a head start on post tenure).

____ Mentor and mentee should review the mentee's teaching load, evaluations and needs.

____ Mentor and mentee should review the mentee's service - does it highlight the mentee? Is it onerous or is it nonexistent?

Meeting 2.IV: (second semester, halfway through the semester)
Focus: Going forward
Purpose: Review and analyze the recommendations of the review committee (coupled with the Chair's second year evaluation).

____ Review the two-year review. How does the review differ from how you see yourself? What steps do you need to take to be successful?

____ Review the five-year research plan. What do you want to look like to an outside evaluator in three years?

Year 3, 4, 5

As in year 2, the mentors should continue to meet regularly and formally with the mentee assuring that all work is on track. These meetings should be formal, preferably twice per semester, in order to seriously discuss the topics below (as well as other questions that arise).

Year 3:

In recognition that the mentee may well have a research leave one semester of this year it is important that the mentor continue to check on the research activity and production during the year.

_____ A discussion of teaching should be reinitiated, if things seem problematic at all the mentee should be advised to get support and advise from CTE and continued faculty visits to the mentee's classes should occur with supporting documentation.

_____ Review teaching load.

_____ Consider opportunities for mentor to nominate mentee for awards.

_____ Regular re-evaluation by the mentor and mentee of the mentee's research progress: papers submitted, needing revisions or rewriting, or accepted; proposals/grants submitted, funded; and service should be maintained. [A discussion should be initiated on how to handle paper rejections and revisions.]

_____ The mentor and mentee should discuss how to represent the mentee's research – What is (are) the unifying theme(s)? [For example, one assistant professor characterized the body of work as "novel methods for dealing with messy data."] What are the contributions? Who is the audience? What is the relevance?

_____ A check should be made that the mentee is updating his/her c.v. regularly and is maintaining a file of supporting documents.

_____ In year three the mentee should write up and go over, with the mentor, a new and revised five-year plan. The mentor should pay specific attention at this point to whether research papers are being submitted in a timely fashion – that is the three-year horizon.

_____ The mentor and mentee should revisit the P&T guidelines of the department and any recommendations of the two-year review in preparation of the dossier for the four-year review. Some discussion of the "external reviewers" should be initiated so that the mentee can begin a thoughtful process of identifying external reviewers.

_____ Develop a tentative list of external reviewers. Will they know your work? Do you need to increase your visibility in the field?

Year 4:

In year 4, time begins to contract. The mentee must prepare for and go through the four-year evaluation in the Fall. At the same time the mentee must realize that any papers not submitted by the end of this year will most likely not be accepted/published by promotion time. It is important to do a realistic evaluation of the mentee's portfolio and make and needed corrections.

_____ Update dossier for 4-year review

_____ The mentee should write up and go over, with the mentor, a new and revised five-year plan – with special focus on the next two years. (Some caution is required here of the mentor. While the focus is on a two year plan – finishing off papers well before the P&T dossier is due, if things are going well the mentor should also initiate a discussion of longer term planning so that the mentee is on track, once promoted, for the next step).

_____ After the four-year review, both mentor and mentee should discuss any perceived weaknesses in the dossier and establish a plan to correct these now.

_____ Update the list of external evaluators. Discuss what should be included in the packet to send external evaluators.

_____ Thought exercise: 1) How do you think your colleagues would describe your work? How do you think someone outside your department but within your college, reading your dossier would describe your work? How do you think someone outside your college reviewing your dossier would describe your contributions? How do you think an external evaluator would summarize your contributions? 2) Do you think these comments are fair? 3) Do you need to change the kind of information you present for evaluation?

Year Five:

At this point the mentoring mentee relation is primarily for discussions regarding the P&T schedule, completing the P&T dossier and the future.

Some general thoughts

At all times the mentor should work towards introducing the mentee to other department members and to other members of the university community thus enabling the mentee to develop a network within the university. Additionally the mentor should encourage the mentee to establish a network of colleagues, mentors, collaborators beyond the university.

The guidelines above are a minimum, both mentee and mentors are encouraged to meet regularly, informally, for discussions. Family issues, illness, and life-changing events can disrupt the timeline. However, family friendly policies are intended to be supportive and the mentor should help the mentee navigate not only the bureaucracy but also the perceived hurdles.

Resources

Center for Teaching Effectiveness (CTE) – http://cte.udel.edu/aboutcte.html
Collective Bargaining Agreement -
http://www.udel.edu/EMPRELATION/CB/cba05/Index.html

Community of Science (COS) – http://www2.lib.udel.edu/database/comsci.html

Dossier - http://www.udel.edu/provost/fachb/IV-D-9-dossier.html

Faculty Handbook - http://www.udel.edu/provost/fachb/

Family Friendly Policies - https://www.engr.udel.edu/wie/faculty/family_friendly.html

Funding Opportunities - http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/funding.html

Graduate and Continuing Education – Step by Step Graduation - http://www.udel.edu/gradoffice/polproc/#steps

Policies and Procedures Manual - http://www.udel.edu/ExecVP/policies/

Promotion and Tenure Guidelines
- University P&T guidelines – as in the Faculty Handbook
- College P&T guidelines - http://www.udel.edu/provost/dept.html
- Departmental P&T guidelines - http://www.udel.edu/provost/dept.html

Research Office - http://www.udel.edu/research/researchers/index.html

Sakai - https://sakai.udel.edu/portal

Work Load agreement - http://www.udel.edu/provost/dept.html

Sample Five Year Research Plan – Chris Smith

End of 2ⁿᵈ Semester Year 1.
Recruit graduate students for fall
Submit a paper.
Hire undergraduate research assistant for the summer.
Draft paper for conference on XX in YY to be presented in summer (abstract submitted prior fall.)

Summer Year 1.
Submit 2ⁿᵈ paper.
Extend work for conference paper into material for another paper.
Attend conference XX – network with other junior faculty, attend keynote address by a "god", introduce yourself to "god".
Submit paper for conference AA in BB to be held January.
Draft proposal to NSF for October submission

1ˢᵗ Semester Year 2.
Revise paper
Conduct training for new graduate students
Complete experiments for new paper on FF.
Submit NSF proposal.
Revise paper for AA conference
Respond to reviewers comments for 1ˢᵗ paper submitted (as above).

Winter Break
Complete paper on FF and submit for review.
New proposal awarded!
Attend AA conference – be sure to network.

2ⁿᵈ Semester Year 2.
PhD student takes qualifying exams.
Work with MS student to complete thesis.
Plan summer work for 1ˢᵗ year graduate students and 2ⁿᵈ year PhD student.
Recruit graduate students for fall
Hire undergraduate research assistant for the summer.
Finalize 1ˢᵗ paper.
Revise 2ⁿᵈ paper - respond to reviewers comments.

Summer Year 2.
Draft NSF CAREER proposal. Send proposal to advisor and an external mentor for feedback. Submit proposal.
Submit abstract for MM conference.
Submit paper for conference AA in BB to be held January.
Submit journal paper for review.
Finalize 2ⁿᵈ paper.

Work with PhD student to develop proposal.

1ˢᵗ Semester Year 3

Winter
Attend AA conference

2ⁿᵈ Semester Year 3
Research leave!
Recruit graduate students for fall
Hire undergraduate research assistant for the summer.

Summer Year 3.
Submit paper for conference AA in BB to be held January.
Develop new proposal.

1ˢᵗ Semester Year 4
Draft paper with PhD student and submit to journal.
Revise paper submitted during research leave.

Winter
Attend AA conference
Draft another paper and submit

2ⁿᵈ Semester Year 4
Recruit graduate students for fall
Hire undergraduate research assistant for the summer.
Work with PhD student to complete dissertation.

Summer Year 4.
Submit paper for conference AA in BB to be held January.

1ˢᵗ Semester Year 5

Winter
Attend AA conference

2ⁿᵈ Semester Year 5
Recruit graduate students for fall
Hire undergraduate research assistant for the summer.

Summer Year 5.
Submit paper for conference AA in BB to be held January.

Regular activities (Every year)

Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Train new graduate students Help PhD students prepare for qualifiers	Attend AA conference	Recruit graduate students Recruit undergrads for the summer Assist graduate students complete dissertations and theses.	Submit paper for AA conference Prepare proposal for NSF October deadline

Other activities

Year	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
1	Finish setting up lab Submit conference abstract		Submit journal paper Draft conference paper	Attend conference Submit journal paper Begin proposal draft
2	Complete experiments for new paper Revise papers Submit dossier for 2 year review	Complete paper Initiate new research	Revise papers, prepare for summer research	Prepare CAREER Proposal Submit conference abstract Submit journal paper PhD student presents proposal
3	Initiate new research		Research leave	Submit 3 journal papers, 2 conference papers
4	Expand research funding Revise journal papers Submit dossier for 4 year review	Participate in collaborative research proposal	Submit new paper	Submit journal papers, revise previous papers
5	Explore new area	Get invited to give talks at prestigious institutions	Revise papers Submit list of external reviewers	Finalize dossier