

**Mentoring Early Career Faculty Toward
Promotion and Tenure: A Resource Guide**

**Center for ADVANCING UH Faculty Success
University of Houston**

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We would welcome any feedback you have about the document.
 Share your comments at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Q3F82W>

INTRODUCTION

The Center for ADVANCING UH Faculty Success' **Guidelines in Mentoring Early-Career Faculty** are grounded in the empirical findings on effective mentoring of early career faculty toward achieving promotion and tenure. The purpose of this resource is to aid departments in complementing their own mentoring practices or to develop a formal departmental mentoring program. Extant literature and the Center for Advancing UH Faculty Success' own research support that early career faculty benefit from targeted feedback and support of their research, teaching and service responsibilities.

The Guidelines also align with the University of Houston **Powerhouse Faculty Recruitment Toolkit** that includes extensive university resources and professional development information related to effective negotiation, research and publishing, teaching, tenure and promotion, and work-life integration:

[http://www.uh.edu/provost/powerhouse-faculty/ documents/Powerhouse Faculty Recruitment Toolkit.pdf](http://www.uh.edu/provost/powerhouse-faculty/documents/Powerhouse_Faculty_Recruitment_Toolkit.pdf)

SECTION 1: MENTORING MODELS FOR EARLY CAREER FACULTY

SECTION 1: GUIDELINES FOR MENTEES

The Role of the Tenure-Track Faculty Member

Your success at UH is the focus of this mentoring relationship. It is important to be proactive in communicating your questions and concerns to your mentor so that you can get the support you really need. You should be open to feedback and willing to listen to advice even if you decide not to act on some of your mentor's recommendations.

Terms of the Mentor-Mentee Agreement

By entering into a mentoring relationship, you agree to:

- Respond promptly to your mentor's invitation for a first meeting. Agree upon a mutual understanding of confidentiality.
- Establish meeting times and modes (email, phone, in-person) that work for both parties. Meet regularly (once per month is optimum) with your mentor.
- Communicate your questions and concerns about university life and faculty success.

Issues to Address through the Mentoring Relationship

Potential topics to address with your mentor include:

- UH tenure and promotion policies and procedures
- Formulation of career goals and timelines
- Processes and experiences using family-friendly policies and benefits Strategies for attaining academic leadership positions
- Knowing when to say no and how to negotiate effectively
- Prioritizing teaching, publishing, research, and service commitments Internal funding opportunities and resources for external funding support Communicating your science and raising your research profile
- Professional issues related to identity such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, or sexual orientation. (The Powerhouse Faculty Recruitment Toolkit document provides relevant readings: http://www.uh.edu/provost/powerhouse-faculty/_documents/Powerhouse_Faculty_Recruitment_Toolkit.pdf.)
- Family leave. See Powerhouse Faculty Recruitment Toolkit (above)
- Work life integration
- Development of skill sets such as grant proposal writing, academic advising, lab management, or giving talks.¹ (See Division of Research: <http://www.uh.edu/research/>.)
- Strategies for developing list of External Reviewers

Tips for Communicating Effectively

Practical strategies² for communicating effectively with your mentor include the following: Use active listening in discussions with your mentor.

- Be prepared to ask for explicit advice on your skill sets, goals, and challenges.
- Make it easy for your mentor to give you honest and specific feedback. Ask for it early in your relationship.
- Be willing to accept constructive criticism. Thank your mentor for being honest with you and request precise recommendations for areas of improvement.

Build Community

- Create mentee “peer groups in your department to provide a forum for mentees to exchange experiences

Cross-Institutional Mentoring

- ADVANCE Regional Network* (ARN) E Mentoring Network. The E-mentoring network is open to junior women STEM faculty (mentees) and tenured women (mentees or mentors) and men STEM faculty (mentors). <https://arn.mentornet.org/login>

Consortium of ADVANCE institutions in Texas that includes Texas A&M, Prairie View A&M, Rice University, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), and UH

1 Reimers, Tine. (2007) BIRS Workshop on Mentoring for Engineering Academia II. Planning for and Defining a Mentoring Relationship New Mentees. <http://birs07.stanford.edu/Mentoring-HOs-for-BIRS-Reimers.pdf>

2 University of South Florida Health, Faculty and Academic Affairs. Tips for Mentees. <http://health.usf.edu/facultyaffairs/mentorship/Mentees.htm>

SECTION 2: GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

The Role of the Mentor

Mentors are trustworthy advisors who strive to share the wisdom gained from their own experiences. Ideally, a mentor is:

- An advisor who helps the tenure-track faculty member set and attain career goals A strategist for building relationships that will sustain a successful academic career An advocate for scholarly values and academic integrity
- Knowledgeable about UH institutional culture, faculty life, and university policies/resources
- Skilled at resolving difficult work-related issues
- Able to provide constructive guidance and practical feedback Sensitive to the challenges of creating work-life integration
- Prepared to make a reasonable time commitment
- Responsive to professional issues associated with identity including gender, race/ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation.

Defining Advocacy

Serving as an advocate³ means helping your mentee to:

- Navigate the “unwritten rules” and avoid the pitfalls of academia when dealing with reviewers, editors, and research sponsors.
- Manage the practicalities of professional setbacks such as manuscript and grant proposal rejections or poor teaching evaluations.
- Negotiate effectively to avoid overextension in service, advising, or teaching loads.
- Become well versed in current tenure and promotion policies and procedures.
- Establish networks of support through introductions to key university administrators, faculty, and staff.⁴

Terms of the Mentor-Mentee Agreement

By entering into this mentoring relationship, you agree to:

- Initiate contact with your matched tenure-track faculty member to set up a first meeting. Share information about your own background and experiences at UH and elsewhere.
- Meet regularly with your mentee. We recommend meeting in person ONCE A MONTH. Know how to access tenure and promotion policies and utilize family-friendly benefits. Communicate to assess whether or not the mentoring match is working.
- Make referrals and/or gather resources in response to questions you may not be able to answer.

3 University of Michigan, Provost's Advisory Committee on Faculty Mentoring and Community Building. (2004) Recommendations to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs <http://www.provost.umich.edu/reports>

4 University of Rhode Island, ADVANCE Program. 10 Best Mentoring Practices. <http://web.uri.edu/advance-women/files/10-Best-Mentor-Practices-NN.pdf>

Promoting Effective Communication

Follow these tips⁵ for fostering a positive mentoring relationship:

- Make it easy for your mentee to contact you. Take advantage of email to keep in touch, though be conscious of the importance of setting aside time to meet face to face.
- Be explicit about your scheduling needs, identifying times that are good for meeting or when you are unavailable. Your mentee will have similar requirements.
- Help the junior faculty member explore options and understand the impact of different choices.
- Follow constructive criticism with mutual problem-solving and plans for improvement. When possible, provide specific examples based on your own experiences and expertise.
- Encourage your mentee to consider your suggestions along with recommendations from other colleagues and advisors.
- Do not divulge confidences. Your mentee must trust that anything said to you will be kept private unless instructed otherwise.
- Offer strategies or approaches that have helped you balance work and personal demands.
- Share instances of your failures as well as your successes.

Mentoring Women Faculty

Best practices⁶ for mentoring women faculty include the following:

- Help your mentee develop an elevator speech about her current research and explore ways of raising her research profile.
- Boost her participation in meetings by discussing ways to be assertive without giving offense and tactful in retaining credit for her ideas if they are attributed to someone else.
- Discuss how to manage a predominantly male class where she may be challenged more than a male instructor.

- Expectations based on gender stereotypes (for example, that women faculty are more nurturing) can result in conduct such as student attempts to dispute grades or seek deadline extensions. As you discuss course management and student behavior, be sensitive to your mentee's need to negotiate these gendered expectations and advise her on strategies for communicating firmly but fairly with students.
- Advise your mentee to choose assignments that serve the university or profession in the most significant ways and align most closely with her professional goals.
- Encourage your mentee to be selective when accepting assignments and to negotiate for help or a lighter load in other areas when she cannot refuse.
- Be conscious of hidden workloads given ones gender or race/ethnicity (e.g. student advising and committee assignments)⁷

Mentoring International Faculty*

- Assist international faculty with transition and adjustment to the community
- Refer faculty to resources for assistance with immigration.
 - UH International Faculty Mentor Program. <http://www.uh.edu/oisss/services/>
 - Non Immigrant (Temporary VISA Worker (nonimmigrant faculty and staff personnel). <http://www.uh.edu/immigration/non-immigrant/index.php>

**(J-1 Exchange Visitors, i.e., Professors, Research Scholars, and Short-term Scholars, H-1B Visa Holders, O-1 Workers of Extraordinary Ability, Treaty NAFTA Professionals)*

⁵ American Physiological Society, APS Women in Physiology Committee. *Guide for Mentors*. <http://www.the-aps.org/mm/Careers/Mentor>

⁶ National Center for Women & Information Technology. *Mentoring-in-a-Box: Women Faculty in Computing*. <https://www.ncwit.org/resources/mentoring-box-technical-women-work>

⁷ Brainard, Suzanne Gage. (2007) *BIRS Workshop on Mentoring for Engineering Academia II*. <http://birs07.stanford.edu/7.1-brainard.building.pdf>

SECTION 3: FIRST MEETING AND RELATIONSHIP PARAMETERS

The First Meeting

Both tenure-track faculty members and mentors should come to their first meeting prepared to share some of their experiences in the academy. To facilitate this opening discussion, we recommend exchanging CVs ahead of time. Each person should be ready to talk about her or his goals for the relationship.

The Importance of Confidentiality

Use some time in your first meeting to establish a mutual understanding of CONFIDENTIALITY—what it means to each party and how it will be handled. This topic may need to be revisited as specific issues arise.

These questions can serve to begin your conversation about confidentiality:

- What topics or issues feel most in need of protection?
- Is there anyone with whom we may or may not explicitly share these conversations, and may we use our names?
- May we share with spouses or partners what we discuss in mentoring sessions, with or without the use of names? (Both participants should disclose if their spouses or partners are faculty members at UH and in which departments.)
- At what point might the mentor feel she or he has to act on an issue brought up by the tenure-track faculty member? Are there other confidentiality considerations or concerns?

Getting Acquainted

Questions that can help mentoring pairs become acquainted include:

- What was your tenure process like?
- What concerns you most as you anticipate your tenure process?
- What publishing hurdles are you encountering or have you overcome? When has identity been an issue in your academic career?
- How does tenure-clock relief work in your department?
- What are the best strategies for creating an atmosphere of collegiality or inclusivity? Have you approached a department chair or senior colleague with a difficult issue? What went well? What would you do differently?
- What do graduate students in your department expect and/or need from you? How do you achieve balance between professional and personal demands? What are your most pressing career goals?
- Where do you hope to be in three years? What do you need to get there?

Scheduling Ongoing Meetings

Conclude your first session with a discussion about the frequency of your meetings and which modes of communication (phone, email, in-person) will work for each of you. We recommend that mentoring pairs meet in person **ONCE A MONTH**. Set a date and time for your next meeting.

SECTION 4: SUSTAINING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Setting Career Goals

Mentoring pairs may find it useful to establish a list of short-term and long-term career goals, and to define specific benchmarks for these objectives.

Examples of these aims include:

Short-Term Goals	Long-Term Goals
Familiarization with administrative systems and campus resources	Identify criteria for promotion and tenure and expectations in various categories
Establishment of priorities and timelines for research, teaching, & service commitments	Discuss what progress might be expected during the first 3 years
Identification of research funding sources and grant proposal writing support	Discuss where the professional profile should be after 3 years

Succeeding at UH

The purpose of the Faculty Mentoring Guidelines is to help new tenure-track faculty members thrive at UH. Mentoring pairs should spend time discussing and seeking resources that will ultimately enable the junior faculty member to answer confidently the following questions⁹:

- What are the formal tenure and promotion criteria?
- Are there informal tenure and promotion criteria?
- Who can help to clarify my department’s expectations and practices?
- How is teaching reviewed and assessed at UH?
- What are the most important faculty committees?
- How are university service and professional membership weighed and evaluated?

Setting up a Mentoring Relationship

There is no one template for setting up productive mentoring relationships. What’s important is that the relationship works for both the mentee and mentor. There are many good models to choose from. Often mentoring involves perfect strangers, requiring careful thought and agreement on the definition of mentoring, and the parameters of the relationship. ⁽¹⁰⁾

If the Mentoring Relationship Does NOT Work

Should the tenure-track faculty member need assistance in an area where the mentor does not feel confident giving advice, the mentor may help find additional resources or refer the junior faculty member to someone else for further support.

If, on the other hand, the match is not working for either party, or if there is not enough common ground between participants, mentoring pairs should not feel pressure to maintain the relationship. If either party feels that her or his intended goals are not being achieved, discuss the situation as openly as possible with each other, and try to come to an understanding of why the mentoring match is not working. Both parties may then agree to a **NO-FAULT CONCLUSION** of the relationship.

After such a discussion, the parties should notify their chair or assigned designee, who will work with the tenure-track faculty member to address her or his mentoring needs.

⁸ University of Rhode Island, ADVANCE Program. *Guidelines for Mentors*.
http://www.uri.edu/advance/MentorTutorial/Guidelines_for_mentors.html

⁹ University of Michigan, ADVANCE Program. *Giving and Getting Career Advice: A Guide for Junior and Senior Faculty*.
<http://www.advance.rackham.umich.edu/ResearchFacultyCareerGuide.pdf>

¹⁰ University of Texas at El Paso. *Collaborative Faculty Mentoring Program*.
<https://academics.utep.edu/LinkClick.aspx?link=Defining+a+mentoring+relationship+and+goals+exercise+Proteges++09.docx&tabid=59366&mid=132284>

FACULTY CAREER PLAN

Instructions to Mentees:

Please complete this form yearly and give a copy to your mentor before your mentoring session. Attach an updated.

Instructions to Mentors:

Please review the mentee's CV and this form prior to meeting your mentee.

Date:

Mentee Name:

Mentor Name:

Time Allocation as Estimated by Mentee:

___ % Teaching/Training/Providing Mentoring

___ % Research

___ % Service

___ % Administration/Other Services

How (if at all) would you like to change this time distribution? Consider your 5 lists:

1. things you're doing now that you want to quit
2. things you've just been asked to do that you want to refuse to do
3. things that you're doing that you want to continue
4. things that you're not doing that you want to start
5. strategies for improving the balance within the above 4 categories

Academic Appointment

Do you understand your academic appointment and the expectations for promotion and tenure?

___ Yes ___ No

Explain:

Current Professional Responsibilities

List your major professional responsibilities and if you anticipate significant changes in the coming year:

Future Professional Goals

Short Term Goals

List your professional goals for the coming year. Be as specific as possible, and indicate how you will assess if the goal was accomplished (expected outcome).

1. Goal:
Expected outcome:
2. Goal:
Expected outcome:
3. Goal:
Expected outcome:

Long Term Goals

List your professional goals for the next 3-5 years. Again, be specific, and indicate how you will assess if the goal was accomplished.

1. Goal:
Expected outcome:
2. Goal:
Expected outcome:
3. Goal:
Expected outcome:

Based on Faculty Mid-Career Plan:

Obtained from 2012, Mitchell D. Feldman, MD, MPhil

http://academicaffairs.ucsf.edu/ccfl/faculty_mentoring_program.php

MENTEE STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE MENTORING OBJECTIVES

Whether your objectives focus on broad issues or more specific developmental areas, your mentor's ability to help you attain those objectives will be enhanced when you have clearly defined where you want to go and how you want to get there. It's important to think carefully about your objectives and the challenges to achieving them.

Use the questions below to appraise your objectives:

Specificity

- Have you identified a specific objective for the partnership?
- Are your objectives definite and precise?

Measurability

- Are your objectives quantifiable in nature?
- Have you decided how to measure success?

Work Plan

- Do you have an action plan to achieve your objectives?
- Have you considered the outcome of achieving your objectives?

Reality Check

- Are your objectives realistic given the circumstances?
- Have you determined a completion date?
- Is your timeline realistic?
- Will you need additional resources or tools to be successful?

The Mentor's Role

- Will your objectives require your mentor to provide you something other than guidance?
- How can your mentor be most helpful to you?

Based on Faculty Mid-Career Plan:

*Obtained from 2012, Mitchell D. Feldman, MD, MPhil
http://academicaffairs.ucsf.edu/ccfl/faculty_mentoring_program.php*

EVALUATING YOUR MENTEE'S GOALS

Use the checklist below to appraise your mentee's goals:

Specificity

- Has your mentee identified specific short and long term goals?
- Are the goals definite and precise?

Measurability

- Are your mentee's goals quantifiable in nature?
- Has your mentee determined how to measure success?

Work Plan

- Does your mentee have an action plan to achieve their goals?
- Has your mentee considered the outcome of achieving these goals?

Reality Check

- Are your mentee's goals realistic given the circumstances?
- Has your mentee determined a completion date?
- Can success be achieved within the time allocated?
- Will additional resources or tools be needed to achieve success?

Your Role

- Is your role to advise, suggest or listen?
- Will your mentee's goals require you to provide something other than guidance?
- How can you be most helpful to your mentee?

Based on Faculty Mid-Career Plan:

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DOCUMENTING MENTORING ACTIVITIES

Mentee: _____ Start Date: _____

Mentee Dept: _____ End Date: _____

This mentoring activity was in service to:

- Department
- College
- University
- Profession

Please describe, in your own words, the formal mentoring activities that you offered in service to your department, college, institution or profession over the past year. Formal mentoring activities occur as a result of the strategic identification of an individual who can support another's professional development. These activities should have specific, outcome-focused goals and expectations and involve interactions that are structured around achieving these goals. Both **short-** (e.g., commenting on a manuscript draft) **and long-term** (e.g., meeting for a pre-determined number of times during the year to discuss teaching) **efforts may qualify as formal mentoring as long as the activities are intentional and structured to meet a particular goal, rather than incidental and unstructured.**

When describing each of your formal mentoring activities, please indicate:

- Whether the service you provided supported faculty within your department, your college (but outside your department), institution (outside the college), or profession (another institution);
- Whether the activity was formally initiated by you or the protégé; and
- A short description of the activities engaged in, their specific goals and outcomes; and a short descriptions of additional resources from the department/college/university you used or would have liked to have had available in support of your role mentoring the protégé.

Obtained from Faculty Mentoring Policy & Resources, Wright State University, College of Science and Mathematics.

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ADVANCE at UH has adapted the guidelines prepared by Brown University under NSF ADVANCE Grant No. 0548311 to suit UH needs. The complete Brown University document is found at the following link:

<http://www.brown.edu/research/projects/advance/sites/brown.edu.research.projects.advance/files/uploads/2011%20Mentor%20Guide.pdf> .

We would welcome any feedback you have about the document.

Share your comments at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Q3F82W>