

Overview

The Mentor Program was implemented by the Academic Personnel Office in coordination with the Senate Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom Committee. The program pairs pre-tenure faculty with an internal mentor (UC Merced) and/or an external mentor.

Mentoring plays an invaluable role in faculty development, advancement, and retention. The success of faculty mentoring is enhanced when mentoring is faculty-driven, functional, and flexible. Accountability and assessment are key to ensuring that the goals and objectives of pre-tenure faculty members are met.

Formal mentoring is a service to the department, the institution and one's scholarly discipline. It is characterized by: specific, outcome-focused goals and expectations; strategic identification of mentors who can support the mentee's professional development needs and goals; and interactions that are structured around achieving these goals.

Research has shown that mentoring enhances faculty success and promotes a positive workplace climate. The goals of the formal mentoring program are to build community, collegiality, foster a positive work environment, and to identify and address challenges to faculty excellence at UC Merced.

The Role of the Mentor

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

- An advisor who helps the pre-tenure 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 the University of California's institutional culture and faculty life.
- Skilled at resolving difficult work-related issues.
- Able to provide constructive guidance and practical feedback.
- Sensitive to the challenges of creating work/life balance.
- Prepared to make a reasonable time commitment.
- Responsive to professional issues associated with identity including gender, race/ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation.

Recognition for Mentors

While not all faculty members will engage in formal mentoring, those who do should be recognized for their service. Mentors (i.e., tenured faculty who provide formal mentoring to others) should include their formal mentoring activities when reporting service activities on their curriculum vitae, self-statements, and bio-bibliographies.

Formal mentoring to...

Colleagues within one's department

Colleagues in another school but within UC Merced

Colleagues outside of the UC Merced community

Should be reported as...

Service to the Department

Service to the University

Service to the Profession

This information was adapted from the following sources:

Goodwin, Stephanie. "Faculty Mentoring Policy and Resources," *Wright State University, College of Sciences and Mathematics*, Jul. 2013

ADVANCE Program. "One-to-One Faculty Mentoring Program Guide for Participants," *Brown University*, Sep. 2013

The Role of the Mentee

To meet all professional and personal development needs, pre-tenure faculty may seek out multiple resources and mentors rather than a single mentor. Forming a “mentoring network” with internal and external resources may prove ideal in balancing one’s career and personal life. Before meeting with a mentor, it is recommended to do the following:

- Reflect on strengths and weaknesses professionally and personally.
- Define what you hope to gain from formal and informal mentoring.
- Identify goals in regards to research, teaching, grant writing, and achieving tenure.

Upon meeting with a mentor, one should share perspectives on the points listed above. It is also recommended to:

- Communicate expectations for the mentoring relationship.
- Give your full attention and be willing to accept constructive criticism and feedback regarding strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify topics and issues that need confidentiality.
- Use the information provided to foster your personal and professional development.

It is important to contact the Mentoring Program coordinator in the UC Merced Academic Personnel Office if the mentoring relationship is not meeting the needs of each person so that a new mentor can be assigned. Be honest with yourself and your mentor/mentee. Do not continue in an unproductive relationship.

Time Commitment for Mentors and Mentees

It is recommended that mentors be in contact with the mentee at least once a month. However, this time commitment may vary based on what works best for each mentee. It is expected that the relationship continues, formally, throughout the pre-tenure period and informally beyond the tenure period (the program does not offer funding support to faculty who have achieved tenure). It is also encouraged that, once reaching tenure, the faculty member seek out opportunities to mentor others with the knowledge and experience gained.

Funding Support

In order to meet the needs of pre-tenure faculty members within a specific area of discipline or research, some pre-tenure faculty may be paired with an external mentor. The Academic Personnel Office (APO) supports travel to/from the mentor’s home campus for meetings. Reimbursement is available **up to \$1500 per year** for a pre-tenure faculty member to meet with her/his external mentor at the home campus of the mentor, at UC Merced, or to attend an event or conference that will provide mentoring opportunities. It is strongly encouraged that faculty on both sides plan seminars, talks, and networking opportunities during the visit.

Prior to travel, the mentee must submit a “Travel Request and Reimbursement Form” ([UCM-AP 151](#)) for approval. Please send it to academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu. Upon return from approved travel, the mentee must complete the actual expenses section on the form and submit it with original itemized receipts to APO at academicpersonnel@ucmerced.edu.

Reimbursement includes cost for: airfare, hotel (up to two nights), car rental, meals (for mentor and mentee), and incidentals. Meals, incidentals, and mileage are reimbursed at the university rate at the time the expense is incurred. Rental cars and gas will only be reimbursed when not using a personal vehicle. Itemized receipts are required. The Academic Personnel Office retains final approval for reimbursements via the campus travel reimbursement system.

For more information:

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