

Faculty Mentoring at Illinois

10 SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO AS A MENTOR

To Enhance and Promote a Productive and Positive Mentoring Experience

Mentors have the opportunity to help other faculty to fulfill their potential and to insure the long-term excellence of the university. As a mentor, you play an important and active role in developing mentoring relationships with your colleagues, especially with junior faculty.

- 1. Be proactive** and work with your mentee, with support from your department head or chair, to develop a mentoring plan. Over time adjust the plan as the mentee's career goals change.
- 2. Become familiar with your mentee's area of research expertise and teaching interests.** It is also important that you are conversant with your mentee's home unit's expectations and performance standards.
- 3. Provide your mentee with clear and honest input.** An effective mentor listens first and then provides complete, appropriate, constructive, and frank feedback.
- 4. Ask your mentee to identify specific areas of improvements** where he or she would like advice from you. You can start by offering to comment on a manuscript draft or teaching strategies.
- 5. Recognize when to refer your mentee to other faculty members and resources** with the relevant expertise. Research has shown that a network of mentors is most effective in helping faculty achieve their career goals.
- 6. Schedule meetings** with your mentee on a regular basis and always respond to him or her in a timely manner.
- 7. Support your mentee's development and independence.** Effective mentors allow their mentees to grow and chart their own career path. Avoid the temptation to provide the support that may, ultimately, prevent the growth of your mentee. For example, pulling your mentee into your own work is helpful only if your mentee will make an identifiable contribution and if his or her participation will not prevent your mentee from completing his or her own independent research work. Resist the urge to do your mentee's work for them.
- 8. Be a model for professional and ethical behavior.** Be respectful of confidentiality. Always maintain professional boundaries. Also, it is unethical and completely antithetical to a healthy mentoring relationship for you as a mentor to appropriate or steal your mentee's research work or ideas.
- 9. Give feedback** about the mentoring process to your (and your mentee's) department head or chair to help the unit or department enhance its capacity to strengthen its faculty mentoring program.
- 10. Share news of successes and achievements** to inspire others and create a sense of pride for all those who support your mentee.

Why become a mentor?

Mentoring benefits both the mentee and the mentor's professional growth.

Mentoring facilitates opportunities to exchange information and allows both mentor and mentee to learn from each other.

Mentoring provides opportunities for the mentor and mentee to develop a deeper level of cooperation and trust.

Office of the Provost Resources

Faculty Development and Resources -
<http://provost.illinois.edu/faculty/index.html>

Work Life Balance and Family Friendly Programs for Faculty and Staff -
<http://provost.illinois.edu/worklife/index.html>

For further assistance with faculty and career development, call the Office of the Provost at 217-333-6677