

# **Faculty Mentoring Program Recommendations**

## **Introduction**

Developed by Rider University's Faculty Mentoring Committee, these recommendations (1) clarify the roles of all parties in the mentoring process and (2) list best practices for mentoring. For mentoring to be most successful, each party should strive to incorporate the numbered expectations into a mode of operation. "Best practices" are lists of successful strategies, each of which may be considered for its appropriateness to a particular individual. Not every strategy will apply to every situation and conscientious mentoring may produce creative strategies that do not appear on the lists.

## **Goals of the Faculty Mentoring Program**

The purpose of mentoring at Rider University is to foster a motivating professional culture that is continually renewed through structured collegial support.

1. Attract and retain quality faculty.
2. Welcome new faculty within the Department, College, University, and greater community.
3. Assist new faculty in understanding and navigating the P&T process.
4. Encourage and support the new faculty member in setting goals to balance his/her efforts towards meeting criteria for P&T.
5. Inform the new faculty member of campus-wide resources to support their professional development.
6. Provide the new faculty member with opportunities to improve instructional practices.
7. Encourage and support research and scholarly activities.
8. Encourage, motivate, and inspire collegial relationships across faculty.

## **Faculty Mentoring Guidelines**

### **Provost**

1. Work with each Department and the AAUP to ensure a clear set of criteria on which to base P&T.
2. Instruct and support Deans in their efforts to promote mentoring.
3. Support the Faculty Mentoring Program by providing resources needed.
4. Model mentoring by taking an active interest in the professional development of faculty.
5. Monitor and contribute to the evolution of the Faculty Mentoring Program with the Faculty Mentoring Committee.

### **Faculty Mentoring Committee**

1. Provide framework for creating and developing a collegial mentoring structure as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and AAUP regarding Faculty Mentoring. The Faculty Mentoring MOU can be viewed at [www.rideraaup.org](http://www.rideraaup.org) under the current contract link.
2. Additional responsibilities TBD.

### **Dean**

1. Instruct and support Department Chairs in their efforts to promote mentoring.
2. Regularly evaluate with Department Chairs the progress of mentoring within the Departments.
3. Support the Faculty Mentoring Program by providing needed resources and ensuring that new and acting chairs are introduced to the mentoring program.
4. Model mentoring by taking an active interest in the professional development of faculty.

### **Department Chair**

1. Clarify expectations of the department regarding its P&T criteria.
2. Help candidates strategize to make progress towards achieving promotion & tenure.
3. Clarify deadlines and timelines in relation to reappointment and the P&T process.
4. Work in cooperation with the Department to select an appropriate Department Mentor for the Candidate, to continually assess the match between Mentor and Candidate, and to facilitate substitutions if necessary.
5. Maintain ongoing contact with the assigned Department Mentor to gauge the progress of the candidate and to collaborate in the mentoring relationship.
6. Maintain ongoing contact with the Candidate to gauge his or her progress and to provide guidance.
7. Provide the Candidate with ongoing feedback, identifying strengths, recommendations, and areas of concern.
8. Support the Faculty Mentoring Program by viewing mentoring as a Value activity in the university P & T proceedings.

### **Best Practices**

- Speak frankly, thoroughly, and early about tenure expectations.
- When possible, select Department Mentors who can stay with Candidates up to their next promotions, unless a Department prefers a different timetable. The key is to ensure Candidates receive continuous mentoring up to tenure.
- Encourage the Candidate to present ongoing documentation of progress towards fulfilling P&T criteria to the Department Chair and the Department and to request feedback in order to reinforce strengths and address weaknesses.
- Review progress in light of previous feedback, noting improvements and making further suggestions.
- Encourage and support faculty development activities and help improve instruction and the Candidate's interactions with students.
- Observe the Candidate's teaching and provide feedback on an ongoing basis.

- Encourage and support the development of a research agenda early in the Candidate's career.
- Support scholarship/research by introducing the Candidate to the appropriate human and material resources in and beyond Rider University.
- Encourage the Candidate to develop relationships with external mentors and/or scholars who might assist in professional growth and evaluate the significance of scholarly contributions.
- Encourage appropriate types and amount of service.
- Encourage active participation of senior faculty in mentoring.

### **Department**

1. Work in cooperation with the Department Chair to select an appropriate Department Mentor for the Candidate.
2. Provide the Department Mentor with input on how to guide the Candidate in order to best meet the P&T criteria and departmental expectations.
3. Clarify expectations of the department regarding its P&T criteria.
4. Support the Faculty Mentoring Program by considering the inclusion of mentoring as a recognized Value activity in departmental P&T criteria.

### **Best Practices**

- Speak frankly, thoroughly, and early about tenure expectations.
- When possible, select Department Mentors who can stay with Candidates up to their next promotions, unless a Department prefers a different timetable. The key is to ensure Candidates receive continuous mentoring up to tenure.
- Encourage the Candidate to present ongoing documentation of progress towards fulfilling P&T criteria to the Department Chair and the Department and request feedback in order to reinforce strengths and address weaknesses.
- Conduct "dry runs" for P&T in the annual reappointment review.
- Provide feedback designed to reinforce strengths and address weaknesses.
- Review progress in light of previous feedback, noting improvements and making further suggestions.
- Encourage and support faculty development activities and help improve instruction and the Candidate's interactions with students.
- Observe the Candidate's teaching and provide feedback on an ongoing basis.
- Encourage and support the development of a research agenda early in the Candidate's career.
- Support scholarship/research by introducing the Candidate to the appropriate human and material resources in and beyond Rider University.
- Encourage the Candidate to develop relationships with external mentors and/or scholars who might assist in professional growth and evaluate the significance of scholarly contributions.
- Encourage appropriate types and amount of service.
- Balance teaching load with research needs; try to avoid new course preparations every semester.
- Encourage active participation of senior faculty in mentoring.

- Make successful departmental dossiers available for Candidate's review.
- Familiarize the Candidate with The Agreement between the AAUP and University and relevant policies such as parental leave.

### **Department Mentors**

1. Establish with the Candidate a regular meeting schedule, recognizing that true mentorship develops through ongoing contact.
2. Provide the Candidate with clear ongoing feedback, identifying strengths, recommendations, and areas of concern.
3. Maintain ongoing contact with the Department Chair about the progress of the Candidate.
4. Serve as the primary resource and referral person and direct the new faculty member to the best source for the information (i.e., technology, clerical support, program development, committee work, etc.).

### **Best Practices**

- Speak frankly, thoroughly, and early about tenure expectations.
- Advise the Candidate on appropriate documentation for reappointment and promotion, e.g., teaching, scholarship, and service.
- As requested by the Candidate, inform the Department's conversation regarding the progress of the Candidate towards reappointment and tenure.
- Encourage and support the Candidate in the development of strategies to address areas of weakness.
- Encourage the Candidate to solicit feedback from other members of the department, e.g., inviting colleagues to observe teaching and review scholarship.
- Emphasize and explain the support available to new faculty (e.g., travel fund, instructional grants, summer fellowships, etc.).

### **Informal Mentor**

1. Initiate contact with the Candidate to assess needs of the Candidate and determine best approach to interact, recognizing that true mentorship develops through frequent contact.
2. Encourage and facilitate Candidate's assimilation into the Rider community.
3. Serve as a resource and referral person and direct the new faculty member to the best source for the information (i.e., technology, clerical support, program development, committee work, etc.).
4. Promote and emphasize Candidate's continuing dialog with his or her Department Chair, Department Mentor and colleagues about the departmental Promotion & Tenure criteria and his or her progress.

### **Best Practices**

- The informal mentoring relationship should not engage in substantive P& T matters under the domain of a Department and the University; however, the Informal Mentor should from time to time engage in general discussions about the P & T process with

the Candidate and should refer her or him to the Department Chair and/or to an AAUP representative if and when such need arises.

- Invite and accompany new faculty to AAUP chapter meetings.
- Invite and accompany the Candidate to Rider social events (i.e., theater and WCC productions, social events at the President's home, athletic events, etc.).
- Recommend professional development opportunities, including those available through the Rider Teaching and Learning Center and other related programs.
- Emphasize and explain the support available to new faculty (e.g., travel fund, instructional grants, summer fellowships, etc.).
- Refer new faculty to an AAUP Grievance Liaison for all issues relating to the Agreement.

### **Candidate**

1. The University, in establishing the Faculty Mentoring Program, intends to provide a supportive environment for Candidates. Nevertheless, the Agreement places the ultimate responsibility upon the Candidate for developing professionally, for reviewing departmental criteria, and for asking questions of the Department Chair, Department, and Department Mentor in order to establish a clear understanding of the P&T process.
2. Assess progress and address recommendations made by the Department Chair, Department, and Department Mentor to facilitate progress.
3. Consult with Department Mentor and Informal Mentor to acquire and clarify helpful information about the Rider community and available resources.
4. Be an active agent in and judge of appropriate courses of action for his or her professional development and progress towards promotion and/or tenure by using the mentoring structure.

### **Best Practices**

- Speak frankly, thoroughly, early and often with Department Chair and Department Mentor about your plans for meeting P & T criteria.
- Become familiar with the Agreement and departmental criteria for P & T.
- Present ongoing documentation of progress towards fulfilling P&T criteria to the Department Chair and the Department and request feedback in order to reinforce strengths and address weaknesses.
- Invite members of the Department to observe teaching and solicit ongoing feedback.
- Avail oneself of opportunities for professional growth and excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Use the mentoring structure and the other resources available for developing teaching, scholarship, and service goals, as well as for seeking advice.
- Where the Candidate feels the mentoring structure is not working, seek assistance in the following order: Chair of the Faculty Mentoring Committee, Dean, AAUP Grievance Liaison.