



# Mentorship: Importance and Best Practices

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# Overview

- What is mentorship and who is a mentor?
- How can mentorship benefit you?
- Different mentorship models
- How to build an effective relationship?
- The UTSC context
- Your experiences and thoughts



# What is Mentorship? Some Definitions:

- A long term relationship with a responsibility to provide the support, knowledge and impetus that can facilitate professional success
- A personal process that combines role modeling, apprenticeship and nurturing
- The mentor will act as a teacher, sponsor, guide, exemplar, counselor, moral support but most important is to assist and facilitate the realization of the dream



# Who is a mentor?

- Focuses on professional and personal development
- Based on mentee's expressed needs
- Driven by specific learning agenda identified by the mentee (specificity depends on formal vs informal nature)
- Share their experience and insights
- Confidential



## A great mentor...



# Mentorship Models



**One-on-One**



**Group**



**Team**



**Peer**



**E-mentoring**



**Reverse**

# How can mentorship benefit mentees?

- Promote career development and satisfaction
- Improve success of women and underrepresented minorities in academic careers
- Enhance faculty productivity (mentoring is linked to funding and publications)





# How can mentorship benefit mentees?

- Predict promotion in academia
- Improve self efficacy in teaching, research and professional development
- Increase the time that educators spend in scholarly activities
- Lead to less work-family conflict



# How can mentorship benefit mentors?

- Developing a personal support network
- Gain information and feedback from protégés
- Satisfaction from helping others
- Recognition (including accelerated promotion)
- Improved career satisfaction



## Building an effective relationship



# What Mentees Can Do

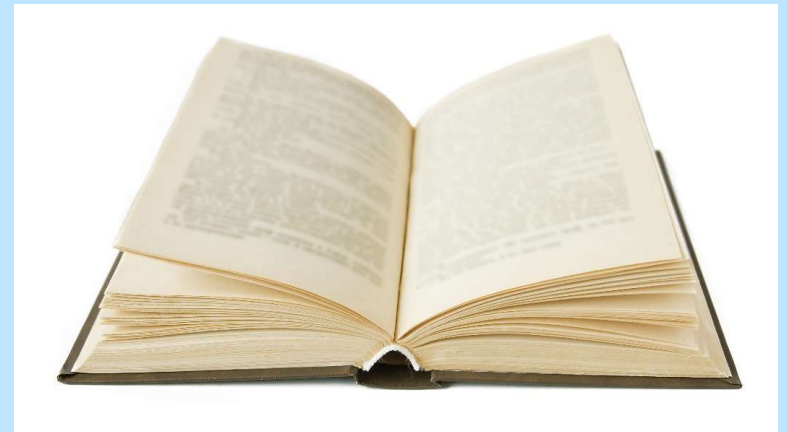
<b><u>Do</u></b>	<b><u>Don't</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take initiative</li><li>• Look for opportunities to teach your mentor</li><li>• Be respectful of mentor's time</li><li>• Communicate agenda and goals with mentor prior to meeting</li><li>• Clarify goals and expectations</li><li>• Practice self reflection</li><li>• Support your peers</li><li>• Keep your CV, IDP, etc. up to date</li><li>• Have multiple mentors</li><li>• Clarify your values</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be passive—don't wait for the mentor to initiate interactions</li><li>• Be late, disorganized</li><li>• Stay in the comfort zone</li><li>• Stay in a mentoring relationship when it is no longer helpful</li></ul>

# What Mentors Can Do

<u>Do</u>	<u>Don't</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen actively</li><li>• Support and facilitate networking and brokering</li><li>• Teach by example</li><li>• Be aware of role conflict</li><li>• Encourage and motivate mentee to move beyond their comfort zone</li><li>• Promote independence</li><li>• Promote balance</li><li>• Rejoice in success and convey your joy</li><li>• Encourage reciprocity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fix the problem</li><li>• Take credit</li><li>• Take over</li><li>• Threaten, coerce or use undue influence</li><li>• Lose critical oversight—allow friendship to cloud judgment</li><li>• Condemn (mistakes or lack of agreement are not career altering disasters)</li></ul>

# Get on the Same Page at Beginning of Relationship

- Scheduling and logistics of meeting
- Frequency and mode of communicating between meetings
- Responsibility for rescheduling any missed meetings
- Confidentiality
- “Off-limits” conversations
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Working with formalized mentee goals



# Priority Mentorship Areas

AREA	DESCRIPTION
<b>Getting to Know the Institution</b>	Understanding the academic culture of departments, schools/colleges, and the institution; identifying resources to support research and teaching; and creating a trusted network of junior and senior colleagues.
<b>Excelling at Teaching and Research</b>	Finding support for research such as developing a research/writing plan, identifying sources of internal and external funding, soliciting feedback on manuscripts and grant proposals; and finding support for teaching such as developing new courses, pedagogical methods, technologies, and interdisciplinary curricula.
<b>Understanding Tenure and Evaluation</b>	Better understanding the specific steps of the tenure process, learning more about the criteria for evaluating research and teaching performance, finding support in developing the tenure dossier, soliciting feedback on the quality and quantity of work through the annual faculty review.
<b>Creating Work-Life Balance</b>	Prioritizing/balancing teaching, research, and service; finding support for goal setting; developing time management skills; attending to quality of life issues such as dual careers, childcare, and affordable housing.
<b>Developing Professional Networks</b>	Establishing substantive, career-enhancing relationships with faculty who share similar interests in research and/or teaching.

Source: University of Massachusetts Amherst

# Reasons Mentorship Relationships Don't Work



Eby, L. T., & Lockwood, A. (2005). Protégés' and mentors' reactions to participating in formal mentoring programs: A qualitative investigation. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 67(3), 441-458. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2004.08.002



# UTSC Context

- More of a formal mentorship program – Department Chair assigns mentor-mentee pairings
- Relationship typically lasts until tenure and promotion to associate
  - If you are both enjoying the relationship and it is helpful consider continuing for three years post promotion and informally for your career!
  - If the relationship is not working discuss with each other if you feel comfortable and also your department chair



# UTSC Context

- Mentorship Excellence & Diversity (MEAD) Steering Group
  - New mentorship programs with different structures will also be available
- Institutional membership for National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity

The logo for UTSC features the letters 'UTSC' in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters have a slight 3D effect with a white highlight on the top and a dark blue shadow on the bottom.

**TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK**

# UTSC Context for Mentees & Summary

- Meet with your formal mentor at least once a semester
  - Consider doing it over lunch or coffee to facilitate social aspect of relationship
  - In between meetings send emails etc. as appropriate to keep the mentor appraised
- Consider being open to technology to have meetings (e.g., skype) to facilitate scheduling
- Keep connected with your previous mentors & look into mentorship opportunities at your professional societies & research conferences

## UTSC Context for Mentees & Summary

- Still seek out informal mentorship from other colleagues in the department/university you connect with
  - Engage in peer mentorship
- Update your department chair on how your mentorship relationship is progressing (as well as your general progress)
  - Recommend at least once a semester
- Have realistic expectations – this is just another human relationship!

# UTSC Context for Mentors & Summary

- Self-reflect on your strengths and weaknesses and what being a mentor means to you
- Only agree to be a mentor if you have the time and energy to commit to it!
- Make sure you are familiar with review process for tenure/promotion and performance through the ranks assessment
- Keep up to date on best practices in teaching

# UTSC Context for Mentors & Summary

- Consider forming a network for mentors
  - Mentoring is hard work!
  - Check in with your department chair regarding this important role and how it is going for you
- Proactively bring up difficult topics like confidentiality and bring them up throughout the relationship
- Be proactive about scheduling meetings
  - At least once a semester

# Mentorship and You!

- What experiences have you had with mentorship?
  - What worked and what didn't?
  
- Anything specific you would like to know about mentorship in the UTSC context?
  
- Any general questions or comments?

