2018/19 Mentorship Initiatives Fund

Project Title: Department of Psychology (UTSC) Pathways from Associate to Full Professor
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Background & Areas of Impact: Mentorship has many benefits for both mentors and mentees, and hence the broader university. For mentees specifically, mentorship has been shown to (UCSF Faculty Mentoring Program, 2017):

- 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)
- 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

Most mentorship programs focus on assistant professors as they are new to academia and are on the tenure/associate professor promotion timeline. However, it is well accepted that associate professors are also in need of mentorship, though few programs are developed specifically for their needs.

The following barriers to promotion to full professor have been identified by associate professors (Buch et al., 2011):

- Lack of attention to career planning by associates
- Lack of institutional and departmental attention
- Lack of career-development opportunities for associates
- Disproportionate service demands/administrative duties for associates that interfere with progress
- Lack of transparency and clarity regarding promotion criteria
- Need for more flexible and inclusive “paths that recognize a broader range of contributions

Buch and colleagues (2011) created a comprehensive faculty planning process which is the gold standard in the area (see Figure to right).
**Proposed Program for Psychology UTSC:**

Combining the literature on mentorship programs for associate professors with the local context of the Department of Psychology, we propose the following model:

(1) Combine mentorship opportunities with natural junctures where evaluation and feedback are already occurring (promotion committee’s evaluation of CV and recommendation) or could occur in department (PTR evaluation and determination).
   - Associate faculty members should create a career plan for achieving promotion and discuss it with the Chair of the Promotions Committee along with the Chair of the Department (if they are not the same person) and with goals for that specific academic year. Progress on goals can then be reviewed after the PTR evaluation with the Chair of the Psychology Department.

(2) Host peer information sessions over lunch for associate professors to discuss these potential topics (minimum once a semester).
   - Criteria for promotion to full professor for research and teaching stream
   - Goal setting and career planning
   - How to balance teaching, research, and service
   - Elements of teaching and research dossiers
   - Going over successful dossiers
   - Potentially peer reviewing promotion dossiers of members within the group

(3) Form peer mentorship triads of associate professors. Also assign one full professor to each triad. These groups can meet for lunch more frequently than the full associate professor group and help the members navigate the day-to-day service requests, graduate teaching and mentorship issues, undergraduate teaching and mentorship issues, monitoring of goals etc. (minimum once a semester). We will intermix teaching and research streams in the triads to build community as all faculty contribute to the teaching and research mission of the university.

**Impact:** The goal of this program is to further cultivate a “culture of promotion” in the Department of Psychology. Not only will this program try to remove some of the barriers to promotion to full professor identified in the literature (e.g., lack of knowledge of promotion criteria, lack of attention to career planning by associates, lack of attention by department to professional development of associates), it will enhance a sense of community through the peer support groups.

**Reference:**

Kimberly Buch, Yvette Huet, Audrey Rorrer & Lynn Roberson (2011): Removing the Barriers to Full Professor: A Mentoring Program for Associate Professors, Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 43:6, 38-45