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

Mentorship Models

One-on-One

Group

Team

Hanover Research, 2014
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take relation</td>
<td>Do your job… don’t eat for the mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look for opportunities to hear your mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set goals of mentor and mentee</td>
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<td>Communicate regularly and put mentor’s goals in writing</td>
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<td>Clarify roles and expectations</td>
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<td>Provide self-reflection</td>
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<td>Support your peers</td>
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<td>Keep it CT, BP, or GQ</td>
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<td>Don’t lie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have realistic expectations</td>
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<td>Don’t use mentor</td>
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</table>
What Mentors Can Do

**Do**
- Listen actively
- Support and facilitate
- Setting and achievable
- Speak by examples
- Be aware of stress
- Encourage and involve
- Share their career
- Provide independence
- Include mentors
- Identify at success and
- Review goals
- Encourage reciprocity

**Don’t**
- Do the problems
- Take credit
- Take over
- Evaluation, costs in the
- Leave influence
- Lose credibility
- Other mentors to make
- Co-authors (transfers or lack
- Adequate feedback or non-
-_bhavior, absence)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting to Know the Institution</td>
<td>Understanding the academic culture of departments, schools/colleges, and the institution; identifying resources to support research and teaching; and creating a social network of junior and senior colleagues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Teaching and Research</td>
<td>Seeking support for research (e.g., developing a research mentoring plan, identifying support between internal and external funding, soliciting feedback on manuscripts and grant proposals), and finding support for teaching (e.g., developing new courses, pedagogical methods, technologies, and instructional partnerships).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding Tenure and Evaluation</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating Work-Life Balance</td>
<td>Prioritizing balancing teaching, research, and service; finding support for work-life setting; developing the management skills, attending to quality of life issues such as dual careers, childcare, and affordable housing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing Professional Networks</td>
<td>Establishing substantive, peer-enriched relationships with faculty who share similar interests in research and teaching.</td>
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</table>

Source: University of Florida (Ashe-Flaherty)
Reasons Mentorship Relationships Don’t Work

- Mentorship relationships are often more formal in nature, with the Department Chair assigning 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

- 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.

- 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.

UTSC Context
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 apprised
- 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?
Phases of the Mentoring Relationship

Initiation phase (6-12 months)
- Mentor is admired and respected for competence and ability to provide support and guidance
- Mentee represents someone with potential, can provide technical assistance and can transmit mentors values

Cultivation phase (2-5 yrs)
- Positive expectations are tested against reality
- Career functions emerge first; psychosocial functions emerge as the interpersonal bond strengthens

Separation phase
- Relationship is less central part of each individual’s life at work; feelings of loss, anxiety
- Structural and emotional separation
- Provides opportunity for mentee to demonstrate skills and operate independently and for mentor to demonstrate that one has been successful in developing new talent

Redefinition phase
- Relationship becomes, primarily, a friendship
- May have ambivalence, discomfort

(Kram 1983)
## Mentee Dos and Don’ts

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<td>Take initiative</td>
<td>Be passive—don’t wait for the mentor to initiate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look for opportunities to teach your mentor</td>
<td>interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be respectful of mentor’s time</td>
<td>Be late, disorganized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate agenda and goals with mentor prior to meeting</td>
<td>Stay in the comfort zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarify goals and expectations</td>
<td>Stay in a mentoring relationship when it is no</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice self reflection</td>
<td>longer helpful</td>
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<td>Support your peers</td>
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<td>Keep your CV, IDP, etc. up to date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have multiple mentors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarify your values</td>
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Evaluating Your Mentee’s Goals

Use the checklist below to appraise your mentee’s goals:

Specificity
☐ Has your mentee identified specific short and long term goals?
☐ Are the goals definite and precise?

Measurability
☐ Are your mentee’s goals quantifiable in nature?
☐ Has your mentee determined how to measure success?

Work Plan
☐ Does your mentee have an action plan to achieve their goals?
☐ Has your mentee considered the outcome of achieving these goals?

Reality Check
☐ Are your mentee's goals realistic given the circumstances?
☐ Has your mentee determined a completion date?
☐ Can success be achieved within the time allocated?
☐ Will additional resources or tools be needed to achieve success?

Your Role
☐ Is your role to advise, suggest or listen?
☐ Will your mentee’s goals require you to provide something other than guidance?
☐ How can you be most helpful to your mentee?
# Mentor Dos and Don’ts

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<td>• Fix the problem</td>
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<td>• Support and facilitate</td>
<td>• Take credit</td>
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<td>networking and brokering</td>
<td>• Take over</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teach by example</td>
<td>• Threaten, coerce or use undue influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be aware of role conflict</td>
<td>• Lose critical oversight—</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage and motivate</td>
<td>allow friendship to cloud judgment</td>
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<tr>
<td>mentee to move beyond</td>
<td>• Condemn (mistakes or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their comfort zone</td>
<td>lack of agreement are not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote independence</td>
<td>career altering disasters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote balance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rejoice in success and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>convey your joy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage reciprocity</td>
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Negative Mentoring Experiences

- **Dyad Mismatch**
  - Values
  - Work style
  - Personality

- **Mentor Role Conflicts**
  - Role demands of a direct supervisor may conflict with the role demands of a mentor

- **Lack of mentor expertise**
  - Interpersonal and/or technical incompetence

- **Manipulative Behavior**
  - Inappropriate delegation
  - Credit taking

- **General Dysfunctionality**
  - Bad attitude
  - Personal problems

- **Distancing Behavior**
  - Neglect (most common negative behavior)

(Eby 2000)