

# New Faculty Team-Based Mentoring Guidelines

## A Shared Commitment to New Faculty Success

### Purpose

Mentor Teams provide a structure and process to foster the academic career development and success of faculty. It is recommended that every tenure track assistant professor has a Mentor Team starting from their first year. This document provides general guidelines that are recommended but not required, as it is likely that different teams might benefit from different structures.

### Mentor Teams support tenure track faculty by:

1. Providing individualized guidance and counsel in developing a fulfilling career as a faculty member in their Department.
2. Helping faculty plan for promotion and tenure.

### Structure

1. The team should include 3 faculty members, selected with guidance from the department Chair and the new faculty mentee and invited to participate on the Team by the faculty mentee.
2. Two team members should be from the mentee's Department, **one tenured senior faculty professor** and one **recently tenured associate professor** (preferably in the last 5 years). If possible, one of these members should be designated as **Career Guidance Mentor** who provides guidance on the general institutional culture and promotion guidelines, and helps advocate for and connect the mentee. The other should be a **Scholarly Mentor**, i.e., a faculty whose **research** area is as closely related to that of the

mentee as possible. The Scholarly Mentor provides guidance and feedback on the scholarly goals and activities, such as grant proposals and publications, as well as networking with researchers in the field both within and outside the institution, as needed.

3. If possible and unless the new faculty is part of an **ATHENA near-peer mentoring circle** (that combines faculty from different departments), the team should include one tenured full professor from another department than the mentee's department, selected based on affinity (based on identity or other criteria) with the mentee and with their approval.
4. Additional members internal to or **external** to the mentee's department may also be invited to participate based on the mentee's preferences, but **this is not needed for members of an ATHENA circle**.
5. Membership should include individuals with a) expertise in areas that fit with the faculty mentee's interests, b) capacity to provide useful career guidance and perspective, c) other characteristics that will serve to advance the mentee's career.
6. The Mentors team may or may not include the mentee's department Chair, since the Chair should by default, already be a valuable resource to provide career guidance and advocacy.
7. Consideration should be given to nurturing the careers of women and underrepresented minorities and attending specifically to diversity among Team memberships.
8. Mentors may change at any time, based on the needs of the mentee or other circumstances, though continuity with at least one member throughout these changes is encouraged.

## Timing

1. New faculty members should establish and meet with their Mentor Teams within the first 6 months of appointment.
2. Teams should meet as a group at least annually but preferably twice in the first year of a new faculty's career, with more frequent meetings if needed or desired, such as when the faculty mentee approaches mid-term tenure review or tenure and promotion application deadline.
3. Faculty mentees may also choose to meet individually with (and send emails to) Mentor Team members, and other mentors at any time when needed.
4. Mentor Teams are highly recommended for at least the first two years of the new faculty's career, but may choose to continue to meet beyond promotion.



## Faculty Mentees

1. Take primary responsibility for their individual career development.
2. Take primary responsibility for inviting mentors to serve and for convening Mentor Team meetings within required timeframes.
3. Maintain relationships based on good communication, trust and mutual respect.
4. Prepare for and lead Mentor Team meetings.
  - a. Assure that meetings are scheduled and reminders are sent.
  - b. Provide an updated CV and IDP draft, and come prepared with questions (please use the templates provided in ATHENA’s handbook) one week prior to the team meeting once a semester.
5. Consider including discussion about the Mentors’ Team status and or needs at the mentee’s Annual Faculty Performance evaluation.

## Mentors

1. Commit to serve the faculty mentee. Forms of assistance may include meeting outside of normal work hours, reviewing manuscripts or grant proposals, sharing one’s own promotion materials, facilitating networking for the mentee at national meetings, etc.
2. Assure that an agreed-upon set of expectations such as confidentiality and communication preferences and goals are in place.
3. Work with the mentee to create a career development plan that includes short and long term career goals (please use the templates provided in **ATHENA’s mentoring handbook**).
4. Provide coaching, constructive feedback and anticipatory career guidance.
5. Collaborate with other mentors on the team and the mentee to help with problem solving and giving feedback, while being open to differences with other mentors.
6. Promote and respect the growth in independence and agency of the mentee to choose or follow (or not) the appropriate advice that works best for the mentee’s situation.
7. Maintain relationships based on good communication and mutual trust.
8. Are familiar with the promotion and tenure policies/procedures at the University of Louisville.
9. Are familiar with faculty development resources offered by the University of Louisville and the mentee’s unit, school, or college.



10. Consider helping the mentee by informing them about and nominating them for opportunities for society membership/honors.

## Department Chairs

1. Assist new faculty in identifying potential mentors.
2. Assure that each assistant professor has held a Mentor Team meeting within the first 6 months of hire and at least annually thereafter.
3. May serve as a Mentor Team member or choose to participate in meetings, but always be proactive to stay informed about the career plans and progress of the faculty member.
4. Consider including discussion during the Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation meeting about the new faculty's mentor Team status and/or needs.

---

## Credits

This guide is adapted from evidence based guidelines from NSF ADVANCE programs.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. HRD-1936125. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.



Funded by NSF-HRD-1936125