

Activities and Topics for Faculty Mentoring¹

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Effective mentoring is crucial in helping tenure-earning faculty make informed decisions about the development of their teaching, research and original creative work,⁴ and service. Tenured faculty members can also benefit from effective mentoring. Expectations for faculty performance should not exceed the level of support the university provides to help faculty members succeed in their work. Mentoring is an essential element of the support provided to faculty.

The purpose of this paper is to provide mentors with potential activities and discussion topics for faculty members receiving assistance with their faculty development at the university. The specific activities and topics selected for discussion will vary depending on the individual needs of each faculty member receiving mentoring.⁵

- For tenure-earning assistant professors, mentors can provide support and assistance with establishing a successful academic career at FSU, as well as obtaining promotion and tenure.
- For tenured associate professors, mentors can provide support in developing a specific plan for promotion to full professor.
- For more experienced tenure-earning associate and full professors, mentors can provide support and assistance in continuing a successful academic career at FSU, as well as obtaining tenure.
- For tenured full professors, senior faculty with considerable experience can provide support and assistance in developing plans to make substantive contributions, such as assuming major leadership roles in the profession and in the university.

Faculty interaction for mentoring typically ranges from weekly scheduled meetings to periodic meetings scheduled on an as-needed basis. Meetings for mentoring are likely to be more regular during the first two to three years of the appointment of a tenure-earning assistant

¹ This paper is intended to be used along with *Successful Faculty Performance in Teaching, Research and Original Creative Work, and Service; Self-Evaluation of Faculty Work in Teaching, Research and Original Creative Work, and Service; Writing Personal Statements for Faculty Evaluations, and Creating Effective Faculty Improvement Plans*. (Citations for these documents are available in the reference section of this paper.)

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⁴ The meaning of some of the terminology used in this paper has been clarified in the additional information section of this paper. These terms include: research, original creative work, program of research, and focus of original creative work.

⁵ Mentors may or may not be involved in helping to create and monitor faculty improvement plans.

professor. Meetings for mentoring more experienced associate and full professors typically occur on an as-needed basis.

All tenure-earning faculty members are strongly encouraged to work with a mentor. The department chairperson should ensure that all tenure-earning assistant professors have access to a mentor. All tenured faculty members who are seeking mentoring should have access to a mentor as needed. Tenured faculty members should be encouraged to serve as mentors to tenure-earning faculty. The department chairperson or a tenured faculty member should manage the mentoring program. Managing a mentoring program includes ensuring that: a) faculty members have access to mentors, b) mentors complete training that is appropriate for their mentoring experience, and c) the performance of mentors is evaluated on an annual basis. The contributions of mentors to faculty development should be recognized in their annual evaluations as service to the university.

The professional relationship between colleagues in a mentorship suggests that the topics discussed will relate primarily to teaching, research and original creative work, and service. However, it is likely that the mentorship will also provide opportunities for the mentor to help his or her colleague consider professional issues within the larger context of life, including family, health, and other areas. The discussions that focus on these issues are often as necessary as the discussion of specific professional topics, regardless of the faculty member's rank or status.

The effectiveness of mentoring may vary. If the skills or the availability of the mentor limit effectiveness, the department chair should be consulted to remedy the situation.

The following sections identify potential activities and discussion topics for tenure-earning assistant professors, tenure-earning associate professors, tenure-earning full professors, tenured associate professors, and tenured full professors.

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Mentoring for Tenure-Earning Assistant Professors

Year 1

- Discuss the culture of the program, department, college, and university related to teaching, research and original creative work, and service
- Review and discuss the criteria and process for promotion and tenure
- Assist in creating an annual plan⁶ and AOR that takes advantage of the potential for synergy among teaching, research and original creative work, and service at FSU
- Assist in planning a program of research/focus of original creative work, including any appropriate follow-up from dissertation research
- Assist in creating a preliminary two-year schedule for completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Assist in planning applications for external funding to support the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Critique a grant application for FSU funding or external funding
- Critique the First Year Assistant Professor Award application
- Critique manuscripts for refereed journal and book chapter submission
- Critique program proposal submissions for professional meetings
- Assist in exploring opportunities for collaborative research and original creative work with other faculty members
- Critique course syllabi
- Observe and discuss teaching
- Review and discuss teaching performance, including first semester teaching evaluations
- Assist with planning for obtaining doctoral directive status
- Review and discuss the process for chairing master's and doctoral supervisory committees
- Review and discuss opportunities for continuing professional development
- Discuss common ethical and legal issues
- Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 - Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 - Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 - Critique the Vita
 - Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
- Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure
- Provide other assistance as needed

⁶ The *Annual Plan for Teaching, Research and Original Creative Work, and Service* is one element of the Florida State University Faculty Development System. The Annual Plan provides a tool to help faculty members select a balance of teaching, research and original creative work, and service activities that is most likely to be successful. Faculty work tasks are included in the Annual Plan because the effort required for completion of the tasks needs to be considered in planning how to make best use of the faculty members' time.

Year 2

- Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and AOR, then discuss any changes that may be needed
- Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Review and discuss the schedule for completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Assist in planning applications for external funding to support the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Critique a grant application for FSU funding or external funding
- Critique a manuscript for refereed journal and book chapter submission
- Critique a program proposal submission for a professional meeting
- Review and discuss teaching performance
- Review progress toward obtaining doctoral directive status
- Review any experience in chairing master's and doctoral supervisory committees
- Review and discuss opportunities for continuing professional development
- Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 - Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 - Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 - Critique the Vita
 - Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
- Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure
- Provide other assistance as needed

Year 3

- Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and AOR, then discuss any changes that may be needed
- Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Review and discuss teaching performance
- Review any experience in chairing master's and doctoral supervisory committees
- Review and discuss opportunities for continuing professional development
- Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 - Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research, and service
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 - Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 - Critique the Vita
 - Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
- Review of the third year review binder

Review and discuss the results of the third year review
Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure
Provide other assistance as needed

Year 4

Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and AOR, and discuss any changes that may be needed
Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
Review and discuss teaching performance
Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure
Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 Critique the Vita
 Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
Provide other assistance as needed

Year 5 or 6

Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and AOR, then discuss any changes that may be needed
Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
Review and discuss teaching performance
Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 Critique the Vita
 Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
Assist with preparation of promotion and tenure materials
 Observe teaching and write the observation letter for the promotion and tenure application
 Assist with conceptualizing the personal statements for teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 Critique the personal statement
 Critique the Vita
 Discuss candidate input to the chair for outside letter nominees and the chair letter
 Review of the promotion and tenure binder
Review and discuss the results of the promotion and tenure process and resulting options

Provide other assistance as needed

Mentoring for Tenure-Earning Associate Professors

Year 1

Discuss the culture of the program, department, college, and university related to teaching, research and original creative work, and service
Review and discuss the criteria and process for promotion and tenure
Assist in creating an annual plan that takes advantage of the potential for synergy among teaching, research and original creative work, and service at FSU
Discuss the continuation or revision of the program of research/focus of original creative work
Assist in planning applications for external funding to support the program of research/focus of original creative work
Critique a grant application for FSU funding or external funding
Critique course syllabi
Observe and discuss teaching
Assist with planning for obtaining doctoral directive status
Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 Critique the Vita
 Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure
Provide other assistance as needed

Subsequent Years until Promotion and Tenure

Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and discuss any changes that may be needed
Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
Review and discuss teaching performance
Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 Critique the Vita
 Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
Assist with preparation of tenure or promotion materials
 Observe teaching and write the observation letter for the promotion and tenure application

- Assist with conceptualizing the personal statements for teaching, research and original creative work, and service
- Critique the personal statement
- Critique the Vita
- Discuss candidate input to the chair for outside letter nominees and the chair letter
- Review of the promotion and tenure binder
- Provide other assistance as needed

Mentoring for Tenure-Earning Full Professors

Year 1

- Discuss the culture of the program, department, college, and university related to teaching, research and original creative work, and service
- Review and discuss the criteria and process for promotion and tenure
- Discuss the continuation or revision of the program of research/focus of original creative work.
- Assist with planning for obtaining doctoral directive status
- Assist with preparation of annual review materials
 - Discuss the faculty member's self-evaluation of their performance in teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statement (if used in the departmental evaluation process)
 - Critique the personal statement (if used in departmental evaluation)
 - Critique the Vita
 - Review a draft of the summary of accomplishments before the document is submitted to the departmental evaluation committee
- Review and discuss progress toward promotion and tenure

Subsequent Years until Tenure

- Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and discuss any changes that may be needed
- Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Review and discuss teaching performance
- Assist with preparation of tenure materials
 - Observe teaching and write the observation letter for the tenure application
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statements for teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 - Critique the personal statement
 - Critique the Vita
 - Discuss candidate input to the chair for outside letter nominees and the chair letter
 - Review of the promotion and tenure binder
- Provide other assistance as needed

Mentoring for Tenured Associate Professors

- Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and discuss any changes that may be needed
- Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Review and discuss teaching performance
- Review and discuss options for continuing education within the university
- Review and discuss the option of sabbatical study
- Assist with preparation of promotion materials
 - Observe teaching and write the observation letter for the promotion application
 - Assist with conceptualizing the personal statements for teaching, research and original creative work, and service
 - Critique the personal statement
 - Critique the Vita
 - Discuss candidate input to the chair for outside letter nominees and the chair letter
 - Review of the promotion and tenure binder
- Provide other assistance as needed

Mentoring for Tenured Full Professors

- Review and discuss the ongoing appropriateness of the annual plan and discuss any changes that may be needed
- Review and discuss progress toward completing the program of research/focus of original creative work
- Review and discuss teaching performance
- Review and discuss options for continuing education within the university
- Review and discuss the option of sabbatical study
- Review and discuss plans for working with and/or mentoring new faculty, if appropriate
- Review and discuss range of work at the national and/or international level (i.e., goals for this career stage and strategies for reaching these goals)
- Provide other assistance as needed

Additional Information

Research and Original Creative Work

Research includes various scholarly efforts designed to examine questions of scientific, social, literary, or artistic importance by obtaining, analyzing, and interpreting data that can guide future research and in some cases lead to application of the findings and the refinement of public policy. Research contributions are most often made through publications and conference presentations. **Original creative work** includes various imaginative and innovative contributions that can have artistic, social, and economic value. Examples of original and creative work include novels and novellas, short stories, poems, scripts, screenplays, musical compositions, musical arrangements, choreography, performances, production and design for performances, visual art, interior design, apparel design, edited works, Internet Web site development, computer software development, and inventions.

Program of Research or Focus of Original Creative Work

A **program of research** involves a systematic investigation of related elements of a topic over a period of time. A **focus of original creative work** involves the exploration of related artistic themes or media of expression over a period of time. Having one or two clear and consistent programs of research or foci of original creative work makes it more likely that faculty members will achieve their goals and make substantive contributions to their fields. The synergy inherent to programmatic research helps faculty members gain insights and specialized expertise that would not be possible if their research were conducted on a variety of unrelated topics. Programmatic research builds on the prior research of faculty members, as well as that of students and other researchers. Programmatic research also provides greater visibility for a faculty member as other researchers note the consistent contributions of the faculty member in publications and conference presentations. Similar advantages exist for having a thematic focus for original creative work. However, a program of research or focus of original creative work should not be restrictive. Serendipity resulting from new funding options, technology, or other developments may provide new opportunities that should not be ignored.

A faculty member typically has only one or two programs of research that typically evolve or change over time. The same is true for original creative work. The two can be distinct or related in various ways. A program of research statement or focus of creative work statement can reflect current work, past work, or both. A statement is typically no longer than one or two sentences. The following example shows a faculty member having a single program of research: “Examine the influence of extracognitive factors (beliefs, emotions, culture) in shaping the teaching and learning of science.” In this second example, the faculty member has two programs of research: “Examine the content and process of career decision making using a cognitive information processing approach, and then apply the knowledge gained to designing and delivering cost-effective career resources and services. Also, examine the design and appropriate use of information and communication technology in the delivery of assessment and information resources as well as counseling and guidance services.” An example of a focus of original creative work statement is as follows: “Explore the interaction among light, composition, and subject matter in expressing mood in still life photographs.”

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