

ST. OLAF COLLEGE

FACULTY MENTORING GUIDE

Purpose and Goals

With the intention of strengthening the mentoring support provided to faculty, a task force (Francesca Anderegg, Dan Dressen, Ryota Matsuura, Gary Muir, Amanda Randall and Mary Titus) met throughout the spring semester of 2021 to review current methods of mentoring faculty at the College, to interview faculty that recently completed the tenure/promotion review process, to review current literature, and to visit mentoring websites at other institutions of higher education. With the gathered information in hand, the task force created general goals for a mentoring program dedicated to developing a culture of mentoring at the College that is: multi-layered by focusing on all of the various aspects of faculty life with disciplinary and institutional mentors, multi-directional through dynamic dialogue between multiple mentors and multiple mentees, holistic by addressing social and cultural issues as well as criteria for faculty review described in the Faculty Manual, and that provides training for faculty serving as mentors. You will find in what follows the task force's recommendations for a vital and sustainable faculty mentoring program.

Mentoring Goals

- Create a sense of belonging for all new faculty
- Support faculty retention
- Counsel new faculty regarding resources available to support their teaching and scholarly/artistic work
- Create connections throughout the campus for new faculty
- Guide new faculty through the expectations and processes around tenure and promotion

Program Structure

There are several models of mentoring identified in the literature on the subject:

1. Traditional model of one mentor and one mentee
2. Group model with a senior mentor or mentors working with a small group of junior faculty
3. Peer mentoring model that unites junior faculty or small groups of junior faculty
4. Mentoring network that consists of multiple relationships with variable types of support and duration.

The St. Olaf mentoring program seeks to combine the traditional one-on-one model—using mentors from both the college and department perspective—with the group model such as the learning community that CILA hosts. As those relationships become established, the program will encourage mentors and mentees to seek peer mentors and mentoring networks so that each new faculty will

encounter several mentoring relationships. The three-part plan at St. Olaf is conceived as providing new faculty a foundation upon which to build a mentoring community that provides support for faculty to thrive.

Three-Part Mentoring Program

College Mentor

- Orients new faculty to the college and the larger perspective of the campus community
- Mentors from an entirely formative perspective (no explicit expectations of being a contributor to a review dossier)
- Assists in connecting new faculty to affinity groups
- Connects new faculty to academic leaders that can assist with specific needs and difficult situations
- Initiates liaison with the department mentor

Department Mentor

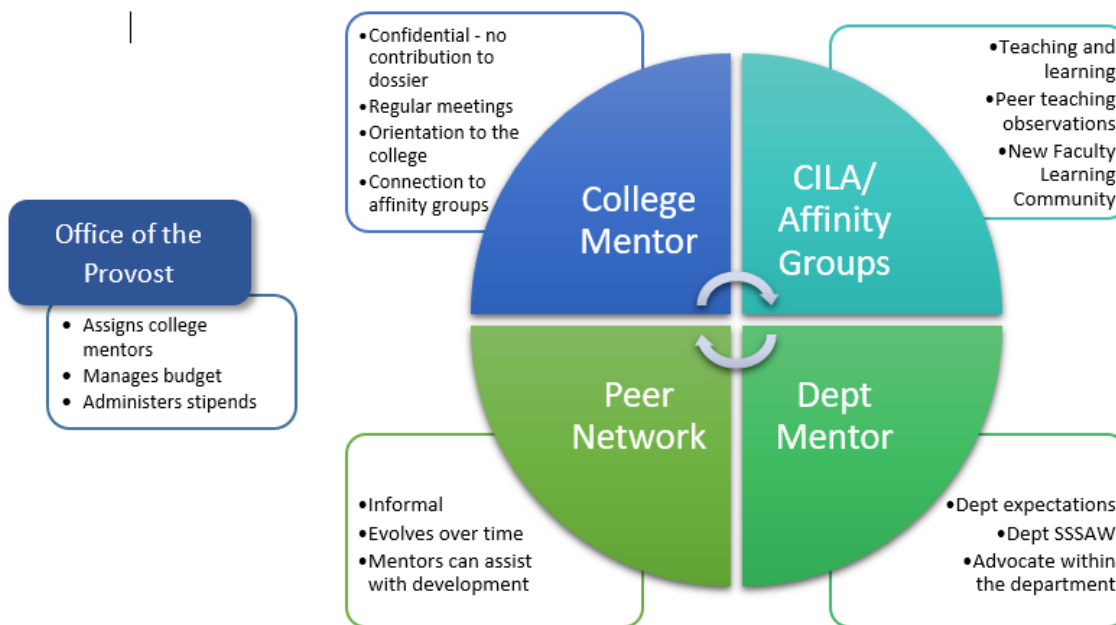
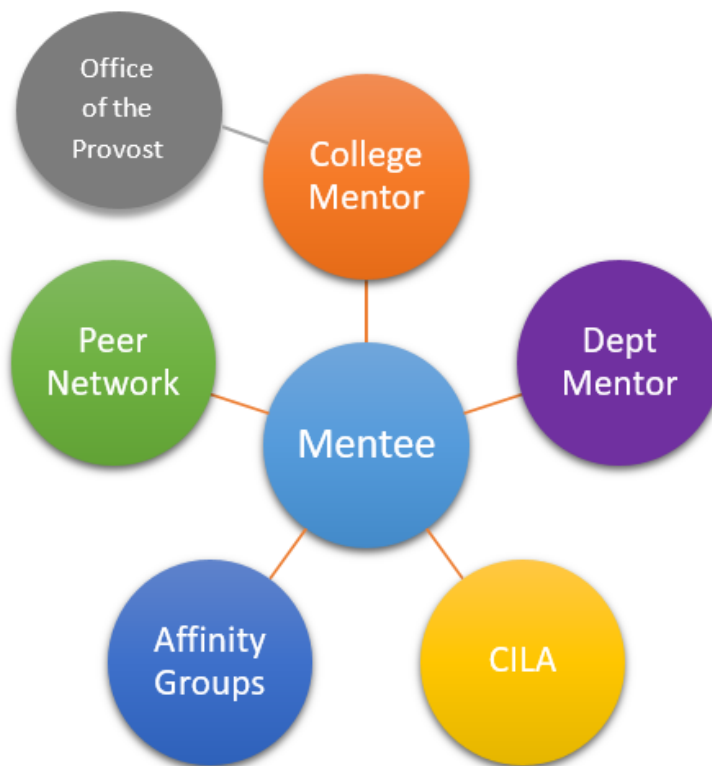
- Guides new faculty through departmental expectations that include any department-specific expectations regarding teaching
- Helps to unpack the department SSSAW
- Assists with the understanding of department citizenship
- Serves as an advocate for the new faculty within the department and promotes the unique contributions the new faculty will provide

Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA)

- Focuses primarily on teaching and learning
- Presents New Faculty Orientation to Teaching
- Leads new faculty learning communities
- Administers peer teaching observations
- Sponsors workshops that address specific pedagogical elements

Role of the Provost's Office

The provost's office administers the coordination of the whole program, which includes training mentors, and fosters communication among all loci of mentoring efforts. The Associate Provost serves as the primary source for administering the faculty mentoring program and ascertains that each of the three parts of the program are in communication with each other. The Associate Provost will perform a regular assessment to verify if new/newer faculty are satisfied with the quality of their mentoring experience and will form a mentoring advising group to provide counsel in the pairing of mentors and mentees.



Peer Mentors and Networks

Effective mentoring models appear to be multi-modal with multiple available mentors. As faculty move through years two and beyond, they may find a need for more than a single mentor. They are encouraged to seek out other mentors as they become more familiar with faculty colleagues in their department(s), Faculty, or across the whole of the academic division. They are also encouraged to seek advice from the college or department mentor about making those connections.

Affinity groups and mentors have different functions. Mentors can be advocates, but affinity groups generally cannot. Affinity groups are informal, safe spaces. CILA learning communities and teaching groups tend to be very open and informal and likely form a type of affinity group.

Dynamics of the Mentor–Mentee Relationship

Successful mentoring is a combination of structure and relationships.

Mentoring is defined by two types of relationships, formal and informal. Both provide distinctive value. Studies reveal that formal mentoring structures—those organized with specific tasks and regular meetings—tend to foster longer relationships that are sustained over an extended period, while informal mentorships appear to grow organically from an affinity and can be particularly effective in addressing challenges faced by women and faculty of color.

Building trust is foundational to an effective mentoring relationship. One builds trust through consistency, discretion, careful and active listening, and positive feedback. Mentors are encouraged to engage in active listening, informed by the principles of equity and inclusion and expressed in culturally responsive practice.

The mentee and mentor relationship is one built on mutual respect, with common intellectual and professional aspirations as faculty at an undergraduate, liberal arts college. It should be a dynamic relationship, each learning from the other. The mentee and mentor alike should be open to constructive feedback.

Guidelines for College and Department Mentors

The mentor performs at least two functions: one focuses on guiding the mentee through the teaching, scholarly/creative and service expectations of successful faculty advancement, and the other focuses on the interpersonal nature of the mentoring relationship with a focus on being a colleague, advocate and coach. It is likely unrealistic to expect a single mentor to fully occupy both functions. Mentees are encouraged to build a network of mentors that can support the mentee holistically. Mentors are encouraged to seek allies that supplement the type of mentoring suited to the mentee.

Mentoring relationships can be enhanced by seeking support from individuals with specific expertise in areas that complement that of the mentor. This is a strategy for both the mentor and mentee to initiate.

Facilitate the connection to faculty (and staff) networks and affinity groups. Such networks can be internal and external.

The college and department mentor are encouraged to meet together with the department chair(s) to:

- Share details of each mentors plan to meet and advise the mentee
- Discuss plans for communication with each other
- Inquire about the chair's thoughts and goals for the mentee

All three individuals, but especially the college mentor, should respect the confidentiality of the information shared at any of these meetings.

College and department mentors together clarify roles and set plans for communication and coordination of meetings with the mentee.

Mentors should have a basic understanding of the parts of the Faculty Manual that describe tenure, faculty evaluation and review procedures (§4.V,VI and VII). Department mentors should also learn the department's citizenship expectations.

Mentors should address service expectations with the mentee. Department mentors should explicitly address department citizenship expectations.

Mentors should acknowledge that women and BIPOC faculty have had and continue to have a challenging experience in the academy that impacts their professional advancement, sometimes very significantly. These experiences include unintended bias and microaggressions from colleagues and students, exclusion from informal networks on campus, the isolation of being the sole representative from a particular demographic group, and a need to be self-assured in more than one culture.

Mentors should guard against the risk associated with traditional mentoring models that engender a culture of merely replicating the mentor's methods and perspectives.

Mentoring and Advocacy

New faculty bring new ideas, new perspectives, new pedagogical practices, and new methods of demonstrating scholarly and artistic achievement. There is a good reason that chairs and faculty recommended them for appointment. It is not uncommon, however, for those special gifts to be forgotten upon arrival at St. Olaf, as more senior faculty may try to assimilate new colleagues into the existing nature and structure of the department and college. For this reason, mentors, both college and departmental, should feel empowered to advocate for their mentees. Junior faculty frequently feel vulnerable, even powerless and would likely benefit from the advocacy of a faculty mentor. In some of the mentoring literature, advocacy is also described as sponsorship, going beyond providing feedback and advice to using one's influence to promote the value the new faculty brings. The role of advocacy can be even more important when mentoring women and BIPOC faculty.

Mentor/Mentee Meetings

- Mentors commit to the time necessary for meetings, advising the mentee, reviewing mentee's work and guiding goal setting.

- Set clear expectations regarding meetings (frequency, agenda and outcomes).
- Mentor and mentee agree on methods of communication and how frequently they will occur.
- Mentor and mentee discuss and agree on levels of confidentiality to be maintained and respect personal boundaries.

Specific Expectations of College Mentors

- Meet with a mentee at least once per month for the first year of appointment. Funds will be provided for lunch meetings on campus. Meetings are encouraged (1-2 per semester) in ensuing years (until the second comprehensive review).
- Mentors should invite the new faculty member to join them at one CILA Faculty Lunch Conversation each semester (schedule permitting).
- College mentors will have primary responsibilities with maintaining good communication between the two formal mentors (college and department) and with CILA. Avoiding mixed messages with the mentee and mitigating redundancy will require a clear plan for communication.
- Be proactive in seeking campus-wide connections and cultivating affinity groups and peer mentors for the mentee.
- Be open to feedback from the mentee.

Specific Expectations of Department Mentors

- Meet with mentee at least once per month for the first year of appointment.
- Establish with the mentee a regular meeting schedule.
- Provide feedback to mentee regarding teaching observations and review of course materials
- Encourage other faculty in the department to visit mentee's classes.
- Know the department SSSAW well enough to guide mentee with its understanding.
- Serve as the primary contact person in the department regarding department meetings, department handbook, support from the AAA, technology needs, department committees, etc.
- Be open to feedback from the mentee.

Expectations of Mentees

The mentees will commit to the time necessary for creating constructive relationships with the mentor(s) and agree to develop goals, strategies and outcomes that are measurable (e.g., create a professional plan related to one's pedagogical and scholarly/artistic goals, set some specific outcomes that are measurable and framed by a time frame).

The mentee will contribute to the agenda of scheduled meetings and commit to being an active participant in them.

The mentee will be open to constructive feedback.

Resources

ACM Antiracism Workshop - Culturally Responsive Mentoring - Faculty. Heather Lobban-Viravong and Mark Schneider.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1SmpJqEQXpincaZU3RYgRw3zhLZf67ad3/edit#slide=id.p1>

Can I Mentor African-American Faculty? Kerry Ann Rockquemore. Inside Higher Ed. (February 17, 2016)

<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/02/17/advice-white-professor-about-mentoring-scholars-color-essay>

Creating an Ecosystem for Faculty Mentorship. Adam Weinberg. Inside Higher Ed. (February 25, 2019)

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/02/25/fostering-faculty-mentorship-your-campus-opinion>

Experiences of Early Career BIPOC Faculty at St. Olaf College. Kumea Shorter-Gooden. (October 29, 2020)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_HOvab7I_pN1Q5HfnUJ_SxRW38oeZrMF/view

Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring. Columbia University

<https://provost.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/MentoringBestPractices.pdf>

Mentoring for Diversity and Inclusion. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill - Center for Faculty Excellence.

<https://cfe.unc.edu/2018/10/mentoring-for-diversity-and-inclusion>

Riders University Mentoring Program Recommendations.

<https://www.rider.edu/sites/default/files/files/tlc-FacMentoringProgramRecsRevApr26-2010.pdf>