

Lawrence Technological University

Guidelines and Procedures for Faculty Mentoring

June 13, 2011

Introduction

Faculty mentoring is recognized by both faculty and administration as an important component of faculty career development as well as a contributor to institutional preeminence. In its 2010 report to the provost on the subject of faculty mentoring, the Lawrence Tech Faculty Senate stated:

[T]he primary benefit of the mentoring process is the development of professionals who serve the University and (most importantly) their students. Priorities in the process should include: encouragement and support of faculty research and teaching interests, access to resources and best practices with respect to effective teaching, guidance in prioritizing service roles, reinforcement of individual career paths and objectives, and orientation to University policies, resources, and governance.

Faculty mentoring is also addressed in section 2.9 of the Lawrence Tech Faculty Handbook, which has been mutually agreed to by faculty and administration:

The university recognizes the essential role of mentorship in the professional development of all faculty members. Although most commonly conducted by senior faculty in mentoring junior faculty, mentorship is essential in a wide range of faculty effort, and a faculty member may be a mentor for a colleague in one area while being mentored by another colleague in a different area. All tenured faculty members carry a special responsibility for the mentoring of untenured faculty to provide them the greatest possible opportunity for achieving promotion, tenure, and professional distinction. At the same time, all faculty are responsible for being receptive to appropriate mentoring.

Faculty Mentorship at Lawrence Tech

These principles reflect the shared viewpoint of Lawrence Tech faculty and administration. Portions of this section are adapted from the 2010 Faculty Senate report on faculty mentoring.

Faculty mentoring at Lawrence Tech consists minimally of a two-year process. The first year of a new faculty member's experience at the University focuses on orientation to the University and development of professional working relationships with faculty colleagues and administrators. The orientation process begins at the University level with a new faculty orientation held in August and optionally in January. In addition to collaboration between new faculty member and college administrative staff, the dean offers the services of a faculty mentor to each new faculty member. Faculty mentors should be full-time faculty members with three or more years of employment at Lawrence Tech, and must volunteer to be a

mentor as a portion of their college or University service. Upon mutual agreement, mentor and mentee meet at least once each month to develop their relationship. The provost supports this relationship by funding one working lunch for mentor and mentee during the first academic year of their relationship.

During the second year of mentorship, mentor and mentee focus on professional and personal development of the new faculty member. The new faculty member may wish to retain their first-year mentor but are free to choose another mentor best suited to their professional aspirations. This deeper mentor/mentee relationship should be built upon a strong foundation of trust, mutual respect, and shared scholarly and/or personal interests. The college dean may suggest potential mentors to new faculty members upon their request. Mentor and mentee should meet at least twice each semester, with the understanding that the relationship may be dissolved at any time.

The University encourages faculty members to maintain relationships with one or more experienced faculty members through the mid-term tenure review process, which occurs at the end of the tenure-track faculty member's third full year of service at the University. The University acknowledges that there are differences between mentoring tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty member. Mentors of tenure-track faculty should be tenured and should be able to provide guidance on the mid-term and final tenure review processes. Such preparation should include an understanding of the objectives and processes of tenure at both the college and University levels, and should include tenure expectations of relevant professional associations such as the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture and the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association.

The University recognizes the significant contribution of faculty mentors as college and/or University service. Interdisciplinary mentoring is especially encouraged at Lawrence Tech. The Office of the Provost will maintain a collection of resources for mentors and mentees, will hold periodic training sessions for new faculty mentors, and will hold periodic recognition events for faculty mentors. College deans will periodically follow up with mentors and mentees to provide counsel and address issues as they arise. The Office of the Provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate, will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring program and make improvements to the program as needed.

The mentor-mentee relationship, while voluntary and mutually agreed to, is confidential in nature. The mentor is not expected to address disciplinary matters, but is obligated to address potential violations of University policies or professional standards with their mentees and potentially with the college dean.

The University recognizes that not every faculty member is well suited or willing to serve as a mentor to new faculty members. There is no expectation of any faculty member to volunteer to be a mentor. Conversely, not all volunteers will be assigned a mentee. All faculty mentors are expected to participate in University mentor training programs and must demonstrate commitment to successful mentor-mentee relationships.

Summary of the Mentorship Process

This section summarizes the process used at Lawrence Tech for supporting the mentoring of new faculty members. This underlying principles of the faculty mentoring program are agreed to by both faculty and administration, with college deans responsible for administering the mentoring program in collaboration with faculty mentors and mentees.

1. New faculty members participate in the University New Faculty Orientation Program offered in August or January, as well as orientation programs sponsored by their home college and/or department.
2. The deans, in consultation with the provost, identify a faculty member to mentor the new faculty member. Faculty members may or may not be from the same College but should have similar backgrounds, experiences, research focus, or other factors identifying them as qualified mentors.
3. The deans communicate with the proposed faculty mentor to gain their approval of the mentorship experience, which will count toward college or University service.
4. With agreement of the mentor, the Dean introduces the mentor and mentee and discusses the purpose of the mentorship program. Both mentor and mentee must agree to the relationship.
5. The mentor and mentee agree to a meeting schedule for the first year of their relationship. As part of the first year meeting schedule, the provost sponsors one lunch meeting per month at a modestly priced restaurant. Mentors present the bill to the Office of the Provost for reimbursement.
6. The mentor and mentee may agree to continue the mentoring relationship following the first year of mentorship, or the mentee may select another mentor for future years.
7. The University encourages all new faculty members to work with a mentor until at least the mid-term tenure review process.
8. The Provost's Office will maintain a collection of guidelines and resources for mentors and mentees.