Checklist: Developing a Faculty Mentoring Program
PHASE 2: Designing Your Program

The following are examples of key program elements and decisions you might make for each element.

☐ **Determine Program Goals (both unit- and mentor/mentee- level)**

Examples:

— To provide support for new academics

— Clarify expectations for promotion and tenure, where applicable

— Increase retention

— Increase research productivity (e.g., number of publications, grants submitted/funded, etc.), where applicable

— Enhance quality of specific areas (teaching/learning, scholarship, creative activities, service, clinical skills, advising, etc.)

— Sustain vitality and productivity of senior faculty

— Build community, collegiality, and positive climate

— Promote acculturation to values and needs of the department, college and institution

— Assist academics in balancing teaching, research, service, and department politics

— Provide a "safe" venue in which to discuss concerns

☐ **Determine Specific Measurable Outcomes for Each Program Goal**

Examples:

— All tenure track faculty will obtain tenure

— All continuing system specialists will achieve continuing status

— Unit publications will double

— Mentee satisfaction surveys will be completed by all mentees

— Mentoring is provided by senior faculty from different departments

☐ Determine Desired Program Design Elements that Meet Needs and Goals [i]

— For whom (e.g., pre-tenure only, fixed-term faculty, academic staff, individuals at mid-career, etc.)

— By whom (e.g., internal or external mentors)

— Mentor criteria based on particular expertise

— Opt in/out policy (e.g., written, clear, form used for faculty to opt out)

— Selection/assignment process (e.g., by department chair, mentor coordinator, specific committee)

— Mentor model (see above)

— Role of mentor in review process (e.g., for tenure system faculty, consider whether mentors serve as champions or whether they should recuse themselves from tenure/promotion decisions about their mentee)

— Confidentiality guidelines (see above)

— Duration of relationships (e.g., one year, until tenure is earned, etc.)

— Training/orientation (e.g., for mentors/mentees, initial/ongoing)

— Rewards/recognition

— Evaluation plans (e.g., needs assessment, ongoing monitoring to determine if mentoring is taking place [performance measures], and outcome measures

— Overview/oversight plan

☐ Determine Budget and Resources

— Program Coordinator

— Clerical support

— Honoraria for mentors

— Other incentives/rewards

— Training materials

— Food and events

— Guest speakers

— Supplies/copying

— External Evaluator

☐ **Determine Evaluation Plan and Protocols**

Evaluation is meant to help measure success at both formative and summative stages. Formative evaluation assists in creating the best possible program by assessing components of structure and process throughout the life of the program for continuous quality improvement. Summative evaluation assesses the impact of the program on desired goals. Below are some basic steps to guide evaluation planning and delivery.

— Identify why you would be most interested in evaluating your program. Why is it important for you to know whether your mentoring program works or not? For example:

- We need to do a better job of retaining women academics.

- We need more diversity among individuals in leadership roles.

- We need faculty to be more successful at obtaining funding.

- We want all individuals to be satisfied with their job in this unit/department.

— Use your program goals and objectives to guide your evaluation.[21][ii]

— Identify measurable indicators of change for each program objective. How will you know whether your program is working? What are indications of program success?

Examples:

- If short-term goals are focused on mentee satisfaction, then mentee level of satisfaction with the program would be an indicator of success and would need to be tracked.

- If a long-term goal is to have every new tenure system faculty member obtain tenure in the next 5 years, then an indicator would be overall success rates. A short-term goal of progress toward tenure could be measured by identifying benchmarks that need to be completed within an agreed upon timeframe. These indicators could be assessed each year through the annual review process.

— Collect data on each indicator. It may be that needed data are already being collected such as in annual review letters and committee meeting minutes. Using existing records will reduce workload and increase the chances of evaluation becoming embedded in standard practice. Otherwise, ways in which to collect data will need to be determined. For example, if you determine that the length of the mentor/mentee relationship indicates program success, then track pairs, the length of time they work together, and reasons for ending the relationship. If mentee satisfaction indicates success then conduct mentor satisfaction surveys regularly. Anonymous, open-ended surveys may be most informative. Data can also be collected through focus groups, interviews, reports, etc.

— Use results to adjust the program as necessary to meet goals. Findings of data analyses will help identify strengths and weaknesses and where to

target improvements. For example, if mentee satisfaction surveys indicate that mentees feel they can't switch mentors without negative personal or professional consequences, consider establishing a process by which "no fault" changes can be made. For more immediate feedback, consider a confidential, anonymous way for faculty to provide feedback (e.g., a suggestion box, feedback to Faculty Excellence Advocates).

For more ideas about how to use results to adjust programs to meet goals, see:

Patton, M.Q. (2012). *Essentials of utilization-focused evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

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[i] When determining desirable program outcomes and elements to emphasize or evaluate, consider findings from previous literature. This article found satisfaction with the mentoring relationship had more influence on career attitudes than merely the presence of a mentor. See Ragins, B. R., Cotton, J L., & Miller, J. S. (2000). Marginal mentoring: The effects of type of mentor, quality of relationship, and program design on work and career attitudes. Academy of management Journal, 43(6), 1177-1194. Listed as item 21 in the Literature Cited section.

[ii] An example program evaluation study: Anda, D. (2001). A qualitative evaluation of a mentor program for at-risk youth: The participants' perspective. Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 18(2), 97-117. Listed as item 22 in the Literature Cited section