

## On Mentoring at the University of Oregon: A White Paper

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### Introduction: Why Mentoring Matters

Mentorship describes the structured, intentional, and sustained relationships that guide and support an individual's professional growth. It has long been a standard, if informal, practice in higher education. The science of mentorship increasingly demonstrates the transformative nature of mentoring relationships. Positive mentoring relationships foster enhanced satisfaction and job performance on behalf of both the mentee and the mentor. They lead to better academic performance, productivity, and professional reputation. Critically, such high-quality mentoring is an especially powerful mechanism for retaining students and faculty with historically marginalized identities by validating the experience of the mentees and affirming their developing professional competencies. On the contrary, negative mentoring relationships yield professional dissatisfaction and can result in individuals choosing to leave the academy. Mentoring contributes to the success of individuals throughout their careers but is especially important at moments of transition. The outcomes attributed to mentorship suggest further enhancing our collective effectiveness in this area align with the Provost's Diversity Initiative while simultaneously contributing to individual and institutional excellence.

### Characteristics of High-Quality Mentoring

Ongoing research on mentorship increasingly points to the positive benefits of mentoring structures that are non-dyadic (e.g., consist of more than 2 people), mentee-centered, and dynamic. This research is summarized in reports such as The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM* (2019). Following these reports, I have proposed the following mentoring principles as ways that the UO could define and evaluate mentoring.

- 1. Culturally Responsive:** A culturally responsive mentor recognizes the different experiences and identities within the mentoring relationship, honors those differences, and reinforces their mentee's self-efficacy. Mentees are in charge of their own learning, with mentors operating as guides or coaches.
- 2. Network Based:** A network model of mentoring involves a rich constellation of formal and informal relationships with a variety of professional colleagues, each supporting the mentee according to their own competencies, skills, and lived experiences.
- 3. Reciprocal:** Reciprocal mentorship recognizes that mentees can bring complementary knowledge and experiences to the relationship. It functions as a creative and dynamic alliance in which all parties regularly engage in identifying, communicating, and investing time working toward developmental goals.
- 4. Adaptive:** Mentoring changes with the needs of mentees, reflecting the mentees' current career stage, professional goals, and need for guidance. Over time, adaptive mentoring relationships develop beyond transactional, hierarchical structures into ones in which all parties move between expert and learner roles as appropriate.

## The State of Mentoring at the University of Oregon

### *Existing University and College Mentorship Programs*

The University of Oregon has several active formal mentorship programs that operate at an institutional level (see Appendix A). These programs serve specific audiences and are housed in a variety of different offices. The greatest concentration of such programs is aimed at undergraduate students. As of AY 2021-22, there were a handful of programs for graduate students and faculty at the university or college level. Mid-career and senior faculty have few formalized mentorship opportunities.

### *Department Mentorship Programs*

Individual departments have a wide range of mentorship practices. Sierra Dawson and Maile Hutterer conducted a survey of departmental mentorship practices and needs at the All Department Heads meeting on February 23, 2022 (see Appendix B). This survey revealed that:

- 33% of departments assign mentors for early career faculty
- 36% of departments assign mentors for students and post-docs
- 20% of departments provide training and/or professional development for faculty who serve as mentors
- Department and Program Heads reported interest in additional support for: new faculty, mid-career TTF and NTTF faculty, new department heads, training and professional development for mentors

### *Graduate Student Mentoring*

Sierra Dawson, Maile Hutterer, and the Division of Graduate Studies conducted a survey of graduate student experiences of mentoring at the UO (see Appendix C). It launched mid-February and was open until April 15<sup>th</sup>. It received 125 total responses but allowed incomplete surveys to be submitted. Both MA and Ph.D. students have robust representation within the survey data (42 MA, 55 Ph.D., 1 post-bac). Students from CAS, Design, and Education made up most respondents.

Among respondents, approximately 62% reported having at least one mentor at the UO; 39% reported having more than one mentor. Slightly more than a third of respondents (38%) reported that they do not have a mentor at the UO. Respondents were most likely to form mentoring relationships with faculty advisors (43%) or other UO faculty (29%). Less frequently, mentorship came from peers (14%) or UO employers/supervisors (10%). The two most frequently cited catalysts for forming mentoring relationships were to have mentors assigned by the department (39%) or coursework (20%).

For respondents who report having local mentoring relationships, they generally found these relationships to be moderately to extremely effective across the mentoring activities that we probed. In 8 of the 9 mentoring activities, respondents assessed their mentors as moderately, very, or extremely effective at a rate of 69% or higher. In particular, respondents gave the highest marks to the activities of does your mentor “Respect your perspectives, experiences, and identities” (88%) and “Model excellence within their field(s)” (88%). The one exception was the activity does your mentor “Assist with finding other mentors.” In this category, only 52% of respondents found their mentor to be effective, with 18.86% finding them to be only slightly effective or ineffective.

Respondents without mentors reported that the most challenging obstacle to finding mentors was not knowing how to form mentoring relationships (40%), followed by their department not assigning

mentors (in addition to advisors) (24%). This theme is mirrored in responses about their hopes for intervention, which prioritized having departments assign mentors (in addition to advisors) (42%) and creating informational opportunities to meet possible mentors (28%). Differences between faculty and peer interests and experiences did not rank among the top challenges for finding mentors (12% and 2%, respectively).

Female- and male-identifying respondents had similar rates of success in finding mentoring relationships at the UO (41.3% and 44.4%, respectively). A total of 11 respondents listed a different gender identity or preferred not to give their gender identity—6 of these 11 individuals (54%) reported having a mentor at the UO, making them less likely to have local mentoring relationships than the bulk of respondents who reported being female- or male-identifying. In addition, female-identifying respondents generally reported that their mentors were less effective across mentoring actions than what their male-identifying counterparts reported.

Respondents who identified as BIPOC (including American Indian, Asian, Black/African America, and Hispanic or Latino) were about 10% less likely to have a mentoring relationship at the UO than respondents who identified as white.

### Recommendations for Enhancing a Culture of Mentorship at the UO

The following recommendations are offered to facilitate a culture where every member of the UO community is both mentor and mentee, with targeted support for individuals who have recently experienced a transition. They derive from existing research on mentorship (see bibliography) and the result of information gathering conducted over AY 2021-2022. They envision a layered approach to mentorship in keeping with a network-based mentoring model.

#### *Office of the Provost*

- Launch mentorship programs to support new faculty, recently promoted Associate Faculty, recently promoted career faculty, and new department heads
- Hold a Year of Mentorship as a way of educating the UO community about mentorship and amplifying existing high-quality practices
- Pursue a senate resolution that would define mentoring at the UO
- Establish mechanisms for evaluating and rewarding mentorship
- (Div of Grad Studies) Provide formal training to graduate students about how to find mentors and be mentored. Such training could be added to Week of Welcome and/or programmed during the fall term.
- (Div of Grad Studies) Continue to develop and support graduate student affiliate groups to provide opportunities for students to meet potential mentors.

#### *Colleges and Schools*

- Each college or independent school should have its own formal mentorship program for faculty. The mentorship program in the College of Design offers one possible model.
- Deans should remind department and program heads to connect new hires to appropriate OtP programs and to a local, departmental point person. Since departments do not necessarily have new hires every year and DHs change regularly, Deans can provide consistency

### *Departments and Programs*

- At a minimum, each faculty member should have a local point-person in their department or program who is assigned by the unit head at the time of hire
- Departments and programs should each establish consensus about what mentorship looks like in their unit. This could be a short statement about the assignment of a local point person and why types of questions a mentee is invited to bring to that person.
- Formally assign mentors to incoming graduate students. Mentors should be a second individual who is not the primary advisor. Departmental mentors could be faculty or peers and could be research or teaching focused
- Hold informal gatherings of faculty and students to facilitate the formation of mentorship relationships according to the network model of mentorship

### Selected Bibliography

Byars-Windston, Angela and Maria Lund Dahlberg, eds. *The Science of Effective Mentorship in STEMM*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, 2019.

Columbia University, The Office of the Provost. "Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Mentoring." August 2016.

Johnson, Brand, W. *On Being a Mentor: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Lunsford, Laura Gail and Vicki L. Backer. "Great Mentoring in Graduate School: A Quick Start Guide for Protégés." *Council of Graduate School Occasional Paper Series 4* (September 2016).

Ong, Maria, Janet M. Smith, and Lily T. Ko. "Counterspaces for Women of Color in STEM Higher Education: Marginal and Central Spaces for Persistence and Success." *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 55, no. 2 (2018): 206-45.

## UO Mentoring Programs and Resources

### MENTORING PROGRAMS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS AND FACULTY

[The Women's Innovation Network \(WIN\)](#) is a nine-month, cross-disciplinary program that helps UO faculty, researchers, students, and entrepreneurs in our community navigate gender-based barriers to bringing their research to market or launching and sustaining their businesses.

The College of Design Mentoring Program is a group-based mentoring program for all faculty in the College of Design. For more information contact Associate Dean Richard Margerum [rdm@uoregon.edu](mailto:rdm@uoregon.edu)

### RESOURCES FOR MENTORING GRADUATE STUDENTS

[Division of Graduate Studies guide for Best Practices in Mentoring](#)

### MENTORING PROGRAMS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

[Peer Advisors for Veterans Education \(PAVE\)](#) is a peer support program that connects incoming student veterans with student veterans already on campus to help them navigate college life, identify challenges they are facing, refer them to the appropriate resource on or off campus, and provide ongoing support to their academic and personal ventures.

[The Intercultural Mentoring Program Advancing Community Ties \(IMPACT\)](#) is a peer-to-peer mentoring program for students of color and first-generation college students. IMPACT student coordinators support first-year and transfer students with their transition to the UO. It is through IMPACT that you will have the opportunity to be part of a community that is comfortable, accepting, and truly yours.

[Lindquist College of Business Flight School](#). Designed specifically for first-year and new transfer business students, the Lundquist Flight School will help you launch your academic journey and set you up for success.

[Academic Advising PeerLink](#). PeerLink Advisors provide UO students with academic advising, mentoring, and support, including: hosting drop-in and appointment-based advising hours in the Office of Academic Advising; explaining general education requirements; connecting you with campus resources and academic support services; helping you identify additional academic or co-curricular opportunities; and serving as a comfortable and continuous point of contact

### MENTORSHIP AWARDS

[Excellence Award for Outstanding Faculty Mentorship in Graduate Studies](#). This award recognizes outstanding mentorship of graduate students. Mentorship includes fostering the academic and professional development of students.

## Summary of Findings (All Unit Heads Survey on Mentoring)

1. **Existing Programs (Process):** The bulk of reported mentoring assignments made in programs are focused on early career faculty (32.84%) and graduate students and post docs (combined, 35.82%). Undergraduate mentoring assignments are also a focus for programs (7.46%).
  - This means that very few programs reported making mentoring assignments to mid-career faculty (1.49%) or other types of faculty with statuses of visiting or in-residence (4.48%). Note: Some programs reported not having applicable groups of people like new faculty to create these mentoring experiences around.
  - Finally, of the programs that responded, a substantial group do not assign mentors formally (17.91%)
2. **Existing Programs (Training):** Only 20% of respondents said that YES they do provide department or program trainings/professional development for faculty who serve as mentors. This leaves 80% (respondents said NO) without training, tools, or discussions around mentoring.
  - Of the 20% that do provide tools, trainings, and discussions to mentors:
    - The most popular tools were static guides reviewing expectations and best practices.
      - Some materials mentioned were from NCFPD
    - College level resources in CAS were leveraged.
    - Once per term discussions were leveraged as a way to go over issues and practices.
    - Many resources were aimed at graduate students as mentees with a few stating resources were aimed at new faculty or faculty mentoring graduate students.
3. **Priorities:** The greatest perceived area of support for mentoring was identified for New Faculty (with 79.31% of the respondent's votes). It was a close ranking in priority between Recently Tenured Associate Professors, Recently Promoted Career/NTT Faculty, and New Department Heads/Directors. The average ranking of urgency for additional mentoring support (for the top ranked group, New Faculty) was 6.23 out of 10.
  - Summary of comments to contextualize ranking of priority support:
    - *Considerations*
      - New faculty at any level need the most support and guidance.
      - Smaller units should be supported by colleges or university in mentoring efforts.
      - Mentoring beyond the unit seems the most beneficial.

- Unit heads need mentoring around balance and how they can support mentorship in their units (training the trainer).
- *Barriers*
  - Time and training identified as barriers for mentoring faculty (at any level).
  - Money identified as an issue around student mentoring (graduate, undergraduate).
- *Opportunities*
  - External channels like NCFDD are identified as providing support (in addition to department heads).
  - As departments stabilize and grow, there is an increased need for mentoring and formalized programs.

#### 4. Additional Areas of Interest

- *Resources Needed*
  - Online resources for mentoring seem helpful for creating larger guides, events, and assignments for those running departmental or unit trainings/mentoring meetings.
  - Mentions of the Leadership Academy as being the sole source of support for department heads/faculty.
- *Student Focused Concerns*
  - Most of the undergraduate mentorship takes place in research labs (limited to specific programs of study). Seeking resources and help with undergraduate mentoring particularly around career development.
  - [Opportunity Identified: Next Generation of Student Success will address this need.](#)
- *Barriers*
  - Directors and graduate studies directors seem to have the bulk of the mentoring load before there is a handoff to faculty advisors.
  - Lack of relevance to reporting units (e.g., they don't have these kinds of faculty)
  - Faculty structure at UO creates unique opportunities and barriers.
  - Issues with dealing with bad mentoring, inconsistent mentoring, and then compensate for good mentoring. Needing unit/department head resources to manage conflicts and poor mentorship.
  - Faculty interest often sways or determines mentorship.
  - Retirements and hiring create odd fluctuations in mentoring needs.
- *Considerations*
  - Associate professors who have been in their rank for a long time and are stuck could be a program target.

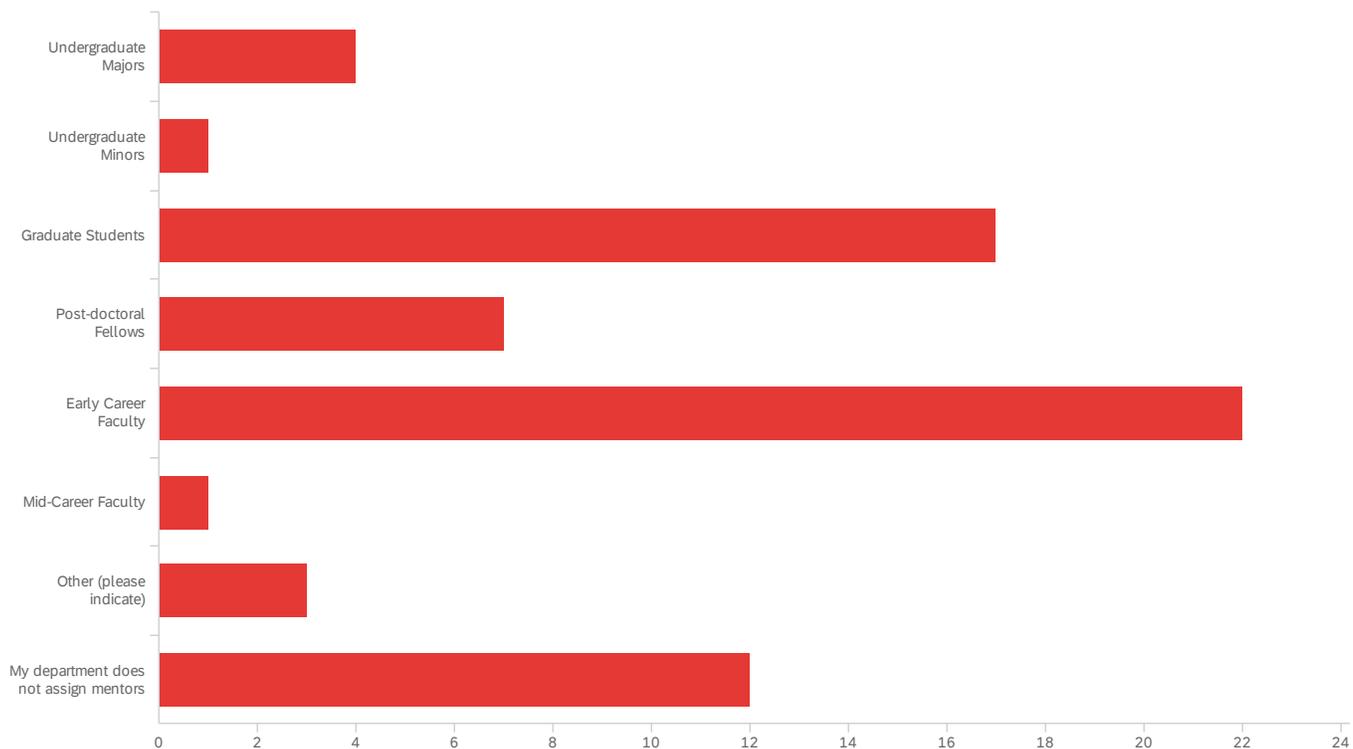
- Some areas offer more direct teacher training and mentoring around teaching.
- College wide events are only hosted every so often.
- Formalization and actual programming are needed to reform ad hoc and casual mentoring.
- Program development around veteran faculty and topic-specific mentorship around teaching.

# Default Report

Departmental Heads Meeting—Mentorship

February 25, 2022 12:11 PM MST

Q2 - Does your department/program assign mentors to (select all that apply)?



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Undergraduate Majors	5.97% 4
2	Undergraduate Minors	1.49% 1
3	Graduate Students	25.37% 17
4	Post-doctoral Fellows	10.45% 7
5	Early Career Faculty	32.84% 22
6	Mid-Career Faculty	1.49% 1
7	Other (please indicate)	4.48% 3
8	My department does not assign mentors	17.91% 12

67

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Q2\_7\_TEXT - Other (please indicate)

Other (please indicate)

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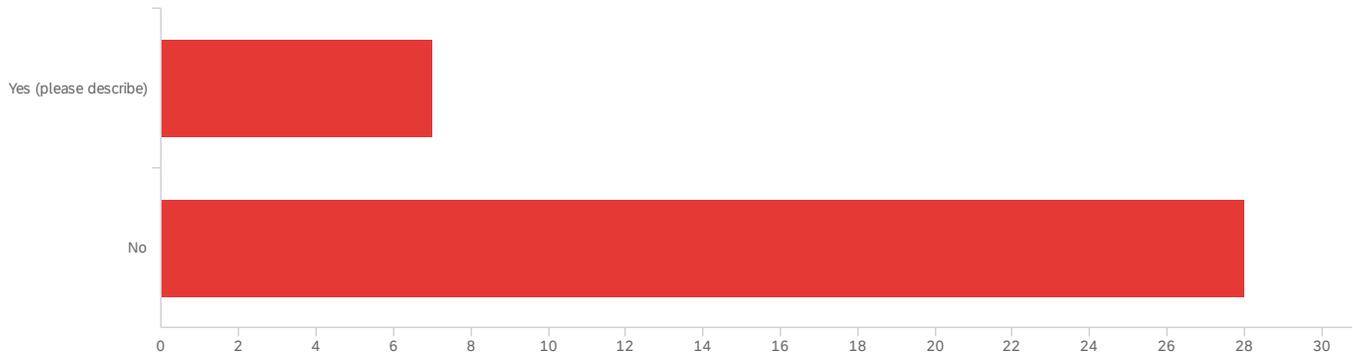
Mentoring is offered only when we have these categories

new faculty-in-residence? Maybe?

Visiting professors

### Q3 - Does your department/program offer training or professional development for faculty

who serve as mentors via local training, tools or discussions?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Does your department/program offer training or professional development for faculty who serve as mentors via local training, tools or discussions? - Selected Choice	1.00	2.00	1.80	0.40	0.16	35

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes (please describe)	20.00% 7
2	No	80.00% 28
		35

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

#### Q3\_1\_TEXT - Yes (please describe)

Yes (please describe)

In the past, when we had GEs and new faculty, we did have trained faculty to serve as mentors.

We have a document that discusses best practices for advising of new graduate students (those who have not yet chosen a PhD advisor).

We share some good practices and expectations with mentors

Faculty mentors meet once a term to discuss issues, common problems, practices, etc.

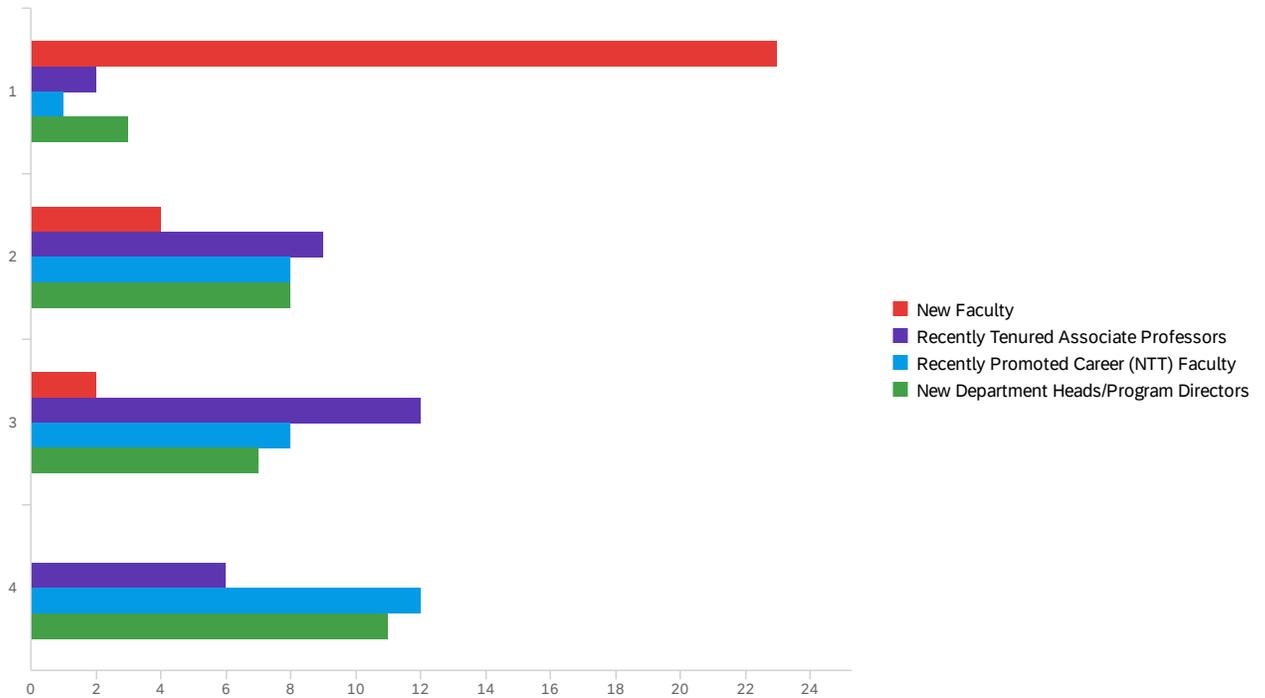
Not beyond those provided by CAS

Yes (please describe)

Rich Margerum has been organizing mentoring for faculty. I'm not sure about training for mentors

Periodic meetings and follow up. As well as the Boot Camp thing ncffd?

Q6 - Please rank the following options according to where you perceive the greatest need for additional mentoring support (1 = greatest need).



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	New Faculty	1.00	3.00	1.28	0.58	0.34	29
2	Recently Tenured Associate Professors	1.00	4.00	2.76	0.86	0.73	29
3	Recently Promoted Career (NTT) Faculty	1.00	4.00	3.07	0.91	0.82	29
4	New Department Heads/Program Directors	1.00	4.00	2.90	1.03	1.06	29

#	Field	1	2	3	4	Total
1	New Faculty	79.31% 23	13.79% 4	6.90% 2	0.00% 0	29
2	Recently Tenured Associate Professors	6.90% 2	31.03% 9	41.38% 12	20.69% 6	29
3	Recently Promoted Career (NTT) Faculty	3.45% 1	27.59% 8	27.59% 8	41.38% 12	29
4	New Department Heads/Program Directors	10.34% 3	27.59% 8	24.14% 7	37.93% 11	29

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

## Q8 - Is there anything you would like to add to contextualize your rankings above?

Is there anything you would like to add to contextualize your rankings abov...

New faculty — whether pro-tem or TTF — need a lot of guidance and support

Department is very small. The mentorship program should be in the college or university level

The department has changed overtime and it is in recent years that has become more stable thus it needs to start implementation of mentoring and other support for students and faculty.

Our program has no tenured faculty.

Our greatest need is for mentoring resources at the junior faculty level. In my experience this mentoring is often expected to be located at the departmental level, and that makes sense in part. However, mentoring support from beyond the unit would be very welcome.

Mentoring is not in my portfolio, but I am the only representative from my unit here today. Please check in with Carol Paty for a more accurate assessment.

clearly mentoring of students and faculty are very different, the former is often affected by available resources while the latter is affected by available training and time/willingness of senior faculty to do this

Junior new hires need it most. Dept heads need it too, to learn workload balance and support mentorship in the department.

They all need mentors - I think newly hired NTF would go before TTF.

Most mentoring occurs through Department Head and external channels like NCFDD

We don't have nttf

Could use mentoring from outside of units due to small size of some programs

Q9 - How urgent is the need for additional mentoring support for your top-ranked group

(with 10 being most urgent)?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Click and slide	1.00	10.00	6.23	1.95	3.79	31

## Q10 - Is there anything else you would like to tell us about mentorship practices in your department/program?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about mentorship practices...

We are a small program with only .40 FTE (me, coincidentally, and I received no mentoring when I entered as junior faculty). As director, I mentor all-incoming graduate students until they have developed a relationship with a thesis advisor.

I'm an interim dept head from an unrelated dept, and I don't have enough info to say that my answers above are accurate. There might have been robust mentoring in my dept in the past. The biggest barrier to good mentoring is time. The faculty are barely keeping basic processes running like teaching, student advising, admissions etc.

Not relevant currently to my units. There might be potential in the future.

Very early in discussion but we are interested in ways to better mentor undergraduates. Much of this is currently limited to those in research groups where graduate students serve as mentors. Hence when I checked above that undergrads are assigned mentors it is limited. We are also interested in related career development activities

We rely on other department faculty due to different expertise within the department.

We have wonderful professionals who are trained teacher trainers and they bring their experience in AEI, with international populations, and teaching.

Our department head and associate DH assign mentors, so an online resource for best practices would be helpful for those of us making the assignments and for the mentors/mentees

As noted above, we do not have mentors assigned to all Graduate Students. However, the default adviser for all incoming Graduate Students is the DGS. Beyond that, any graduate student who finishes course work and begins pursuing their examination papers (and dissertation) will of necessity need a mentor for that.

New faculty are assigned a departmental mentor. We also have a college wide mentor ship program for drop in sessions with various topics.

Unique faculty structure creates unique mentoring needs / challenges.

we do assign a mentor for junior faculty and specify how mentors should help them but the problem seems to be the willingness and attention of these mentors to the task

It is difficult to deal with and compensate for inconsistencies across potential mentors.

We have had some luck with this, but sometimes effective mentorship means going outside the department.

For students, mentorship and advising overlap. Our program is small, so we give both undergraduates and graduate students a lot of individual attention. For faculty, mentorship depends on faculty interests, and the development of a relationship of trust between a senior faculty member and a junior one.

I have had personality conflicts arise for some of the relationships established and we "DHs" need support for how to manage those conflicts. Bad mentorship can be worse than no mentorship.

This is currently in flux, with many retirements and new faculty. I actually see the greatest need for mentoring for Associate Professors who have been in that rank for a long time and are stuck there

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about mentorship practices...

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There may be more formal mentorship for tenure track faculty in English, but nothing formal or proactive exists for career faculty.

I became a department head and faculty member in March 2021. If I were not in the Leadership Academy, I would have received no mentorship. Luckily I am in the Academy and that provides immense mentorship

We have a small department and currently no junior faculty. Mentoring has been informal and ad hoc this far

We have full time faculty and staff that support and mentor our part time teaching faculty, although it would be great to develop something on going that includes veteran faculty on topic specific mentorship.

## Q8 - What is the name of your department or program?

What is the name of your department or program?

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East Asian Languages and Literatures

Asian Studies

Landscape Architecture

Yamada Language Center / Northwest Indian Language Institute

Chemistry and biochemistry

Interior Architecture

WGSS

AEI

Sociology

Philosophy

Art

Clark Honors College

Mathematics

Computer Science

Psychology

Cinema Studies

Classics

EDST

History

English (but I represent the Composition Program)

Architecture

German and Scandinavian

What is the name of your department or program?

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REL

SOMD

SOJC

HAA

Linguistics

Physics

Physical education & recreation

IRES

Earth sciences

PPPM

Creative Writing

English

**End of Report**