

Faculty Mentoring—Wildlife Ecology

This goal of the mentoring plan (plan) for new tenure-track faculty members is to help them transition into their new post, to successfully complete annual reviews, and attain promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure. The plan provides guidance on establishing and sustaining a strong research program, developing an effective teaching strategy and engagement of undergraduate and graduate students, and building leadership skills and contributions. Guidance from a well-respected mentor will provide an invaluable supplement to the leadership and assistance provided by the Chair of the Department of Wildlife Ecology. The success of the plan will depend on the new faculty member, their mentor, and the Chair's active role in mentoring. The mentoring process is as follows:

1. **Mentor Assignment** As soon as the new faculty appointment is made, the Chair will assign a mentor. Prior to the new faculty's arrival at the University, the mentor will contact them to discuss the mentor's role and the plan.
2. **Review of the Plan** The Chair will review the plan with the mentor and new faculty member within four weeks of the mentee's arrival. The Chair, the mentor, and the new faculty member will annually discuss professional progress and revise the plan as needed.
3. **Involvement of Other Faculty** As experience and professional interests require, other faculty from the department may mentor the new faculty member. Discussion with faculty with similar interests from other units will be encouraged.
4. **Active Engagement in University-Level Opportunities** Information will be provided to the new faculty member about University-level mentoring programs offered by the University of Maine Advance Rising Tide Center and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Assessment.
5. **Crafting a Realistic and Relevant Plan** The plan will provide short- and long-term goals for achieving tenure, focusing on expectations in areas evaluated for promotion and tenure (research, teaching, service).
 - a. Short-term goals of the plan:
 - i. *Acclimate to campus* Assist new faculty with becoming familiar with the campus and its facilities
 - ii. *Foster networking* Introduce new faculty to other faculty, especially those with similar or complementary research interests
 - iii. *Gain awareness* Provide information about relevant policies and procedures
 - iv. *Foster confidence* Provide a welcoming and supportive work environment where assessments are offered to increase faculty success
 - v. *Prioritize tasks* Develop prioritization of tasks (e.g., budgeting time, balancing research, teaching, and service)
 - vi. *Mentoring guidance* Guide new faculty in mentoring graduate and undergraduate students
 - b. Long-term goals of the plan:
 - i. *Ensure faculty satisfaction* strategize the assumption of diverse and rewarding roles in the University community (e.g., teaching, research, and service)

- ii. *Develop relevant connections* Foster local, state, and global connections with stakeholders and colleagues
- iii. *Develop visibility and prominence* Effectively communicate research to gain recognition within the profession.
- iv. *Achieve career advancement*

6. **Provide Guidance to Frequently Asked Questions:**

- a. How do I establish an appropriate balance between teaching, research and committee work?
 - b. What criteria are used for teaching excellence, how is teaching evaluated?
 - c. What resources are available for teaching enhancement?
 - d. How do I identify and recruit graduate students? How are graduate students supported?
 - e. What should I expect from graduate students? How do I best mentor graduate students?
 - f. What are the criteria for research excellence, how is research evaluated?
 - g. What are funding resources for research?
 - h. How does the merit and promotion process work? Who is involved?
 - i. How should I prioritize service to committees?
 - j. What social events occur in the department?
7. **Meet Regularly** The mentor and new faculty member will meet regularly, at least monthly during the new faculty member's first semester, bi-monthly the second semester, and quarterly thereafter. This formal mentoring relationship ends when the mentee is evaluated for Promotion and Tenure.
8. **Develop a Safe Environment for Frank Discussion** The mentor will treat all interactions and discussions with the new faculty member in confidence.
9. **Provide Constructive Feedback** Mentoring provides supportive guidance and constructive feedback outside of the formal evaluation associated with annual review and promotion and tenure. The mentor and new faculty member should discuss options for resetting the tenure clock as needed.
10. **Recognize the Importance of Mentoring** The mentoring assignment will be considered as part of the workload for faculty and will be incorporated into the annual report of faculty.
11. **Maintain Clear Communication** The new faculty member should inform their mentor of problems and concerns as they arise.
12. **Provide a Secure Path to Changing Mentors** In cases of changing commitments, incompatibility, or where the relationship is not mutually fulfilling, the new faculty member or mentor should seek confidential advice from the Chair. Changes can and should be made without prejudice or fault.
13. **Representation of New Faculty Member** The mentor will serve as an *ad-hoc*, non-voting member of the new faculty member's Promotion and Tenure Peer Committee to represent the new faculty member.