

<b>Faculty Mentoring Policy</b> <b>College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR)</b>
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### **Introduction**

CANR is committed to the professional development and successful advancement of its faculty members. Toward that end, steps need to be taken to ensure that faculty reviews are conducted annually at the unit level (to include written assessments given to faculty members) and that faculty members are informed about the measures and indicators that will be used to evaluate their performance.

In addition, the College believes that effective faculty mentoring is an important component that contributes to successful professional development. Effective mentoring involves activities undertaken at the university, college, and unit levels. University policy requires that all colleges have a formal and substantive mentoring program for pre-tenure, tenure-stream faculty.

### **Department/School Obligations**

CANR recognizes the central role that academic units play in enabling faculty development and it also respects the variation in disciplines-professions and missions across academic units in the College. With those points in mind, academic units will play the primary role in establishing formal and substantive mentoring for pre-tenure, tenure stream faculty members; and this mentoring will continue through the time of advancement to the rank of professor. Mentoring will also be available to fixed-term faculty members who hold the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor; and academic specialists who are appointed in the Continuing System, but who have not as yet earned Continuing Status.

The goals of department/school mentoring may vary by academic unit, but at a minimum should:

- Support faculty excellence across the mission by helping faculty establish and sustain a leading research program; effective teaching and engagement of undergraduate and graduate students; and an effective and high-impact extension, outreach, and engagement program.
- Encourage faculty involvement in professional activities, nationally and internationally.
- Help faculty strengthen their institutional and disciplinary-professional leadership skills.

The mentoring approach may vary among academic units, but must include the following elements:

1. There will be a written document incorporated into the unit bylaws and actively implemented, which identifies and communicates policies, goals, and expectations for mentor(s) and those being mentored.
  - a. There will be a description of the process to select mentors and a mechanism allowing for changes in assignment of mentors as appropriate for the junior faculty member's needs, and an alternative provision for faculty members to choose not to have mentors. One or more senior faculty members (not including the academic unit administrator) should be assigned as mentors. Selection of mentors is not limited to the academic home of the junior faculty member.
  - b. For faculty members with joint appointments, there will be a single mentoring plan coordinated across units—with leadership provided by the lead unit.
  - c. There will be a description of expected mentoring activities with elements addressing research,

- teaching, extension and outreach, engagement, and leadership development.
- d. There will be clarity regarding the roles of mentor(s) and the faculty member being mentored; expectations for confidentiality; the role of mentor(s), if any, in the annual evaluation and RPT process; and who (including the mentee) does/does not see written mentoring reports, if such reports are prepared.
  - e. There will be a description of how mentoring activities will be reported and evaluated as a portion of an individual's service to the unit.
2. There will be support and leadership from the chair/director in integrating mentoring into departmental activities. Recognition of mentoring as a formal component of faculty service to the department and college should be incorporated into annual faculty evaluations for individuals who serve as mentors.
  3. There will be sensitivity in the academic units and mentors to potentially different challenges faced by diverse faculty.

### **College Obligations**

Support for mentoring CANR faculty members will be provided under the leadership and direction of the CANR Director of Faculty Development (DFD), who will also be responsible for the development and regular review of the policy. The DFD will also have responsibility for ensuring that all faculty members are informed about faculty development programs in CANR and at MSU. This support will include:

1. Provision of sources of information/link to available university resources concerning good mentoring practices and information about CANR unit policies;
2. Organization of workshops and faculty development programs (either by the College or in conjunction with the university, through such units as the Office of Faculty and Organizational Development);
3. Assistance for units (through the respective chair's or director's office) to create and maintain a central repository for information about mentoring policies; and
4. Provision of information to prepare new faculty (e.g., resources, expectations) as part of annual college orientation;

The DFD will also serve as a confidential source available to all CANR faculty members—to serve as a resource (by identifying appropriate individuals with relevant expertise for advice/consultation for professional development) and/or by discussing sensitive issues with CANR faculty members at the faculty members' invitation.

### **Review and Evaluation**

The effectiveness of the college and unit mentoring programs will be assessed at an interval not to exceed 5 years.