

Guide to Faculty Mentoring in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry Florida Atlantic University

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Introduction

The Faculty of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry are committed to making Florida Atlantic University a supportive environment for Tenure-track Faculty to develop their careers. Assistant professors are appointed to tenure-track positions because they have the potential to excel and advance our missions in research, teaching, and service. Mentoring on all levels is an expression of our core values. As it regards new faculty, it is an important process that assists them in realizing their potential and achieving promotion and tenure through professional development. The purpose of these guidelines is to create a structure that provides tenure-track faculty members with guidance and support regarding expectations for and progress towards promotion and tenure. Mentorship means taking an active interest in new faculty, giving them practical advice, and sharing knowledge and networks with them. This includes a wide range of activities, in many of which the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry faculty members are already engaged. The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry is grateful to all its faculty members for their mentoring efforts.

Roles and Responsibilities

Tenure-Track Faculty Mentee:

- Retains the primary responsibility for meeting criteria for promotion and tenure at FAU.
- Seeks proactively support from an internal mentor.
- Seeks proactively support from an external mentor. External mentor will be assigned if intellectually and professionally advantageous to the Mentee (e.g. in the cases of, but not limited to, joint appointments involving other departments and/or colleges).
- Reads and understands the Department's P&T criteria, the College guidelines for P&T, and FAU Faculty Handbook and other relevant policies and documents.
- Makes the most of development opportunities, such as workshops and seminars.
- Develops an intellectual and professional network.
 - Understanding that a single mentor will not be able to address all aspects of a tenure-track faculty professional development.
 - Using the assigned mentor to help to build a strong and diverse network within and outside of FAU.
 - Taking advantage of opportunities to meet colleagues outside of the Department as early as possible.
- Becomes an active participant in the mentor matching process.
 - Considering issues such as research interests and teaching interests in requesting a mentor.
 - Speaking up to Chair if the match is not productive or if other needs warrant a change.
 - Cultivating open communication by discussing research, teaching and service during meetings with the mentor.
 - Asking specific and guided questions that will likely yield the most specific and concrete answers.

- Knows the available resources and asks mentor and/or Chair of the Department for specific advice about how to best utilize them.
- Knows timelines for 3rd-year review P&T process, and approaches the Department Chair or the Dean with questions or for clarification.
- The Mentee is strongly encouraged to attend workshops offered by the Office of the Provost and/or University P&T Committee specifically designed for faculty applying for P&T in the subsequent year.

Non-Tenure Track Faculty Mentee:

- A Non-Tenure Track Faculty Mentee is a faculty member in the Department at the rank of instructor, research assistant professor and assistant scientist.
- Responsibilities of the Non-Tenure Track Faculty Mentee are the same as for the Tenure-Track Faculty Mentee, excluding the activities related to tenure.

While we encourage mentors to take the initiative to reach out to their mentees, there may be times where the Mentee will need to initiate contact.

The advice given by mentors is not the same as a directive. Most advice will be based on the mentor's own experience and may or may not be the right fit for the Mentee. The Mentee should use her/his own judgment and network (including other tenured faculty in the department) to help assess whether the advice is helpful or not.

Department Chair:

- Supports the faculty member who serves as a principal mentor.
- Provides the Department's P&T criteria, the College guidelines for P&T and other relevant policies and documents to a tenure-track faculty.
- Consults with the tenure-track faculty to determine the best time to use the pre-tenure course release.
- Assists in selecting the Internal Mentor and includes mentorship as part of the mentor's annual assignment and evaluation.
- Identifies an External Mentor in consultation with other Chairs/Directors.
- Assists with the preparation of the third-year review portfolio and explains expectations related to the portfolio and its preparation.
- Ensure that all departmental faculty engage in a conversation about the departmental mentoring plan once per year. This will remind the faculty about the plan and help engender a culture in which mentoring is valued in the department.

Mentor:

- Is a tenured faculty member in the Department.
- Is assigned a mentoring role as part of her or his annual assignment for departmental service.
- Submits a brief, written report detailing mentoring activities (no more than one page) to the Chair at the end of each year so that the Chair can evaluate the Mentor's service.
- Provides informal feedback about a new research project
- Provides feedback more formally about a grant proposal, working paper, research protocol, or book chapter
- Offers advice about which journals would be the best match for an article in preparation
- Helps a tenure-track faculty strategize about his or her teaching assignments

- Advises on how to handle performance issues with a graduate student(s), DIS student, TA, or postdoc
- Nominates the Mentee to serve on an important committee that would allow them exposure and significant engagement with departmental or University issues
- Introduce the Mentee (in person or over email) to a colleague in another department or at another institution.
- Observes the Mentee's teaching and offers a formative assessment at least once in the first three years.
- Helps the Mentee to prepare for third-year review documents.
- Meets with the Mentee a minimum three times per year or more frequently if requested by the Mentee.

External Mentor:

- Is a tenured colleague whose research/academic interests parallel those of a tenure-track faculty.
- Reviews department guidelines for P&T and meets with a tenure-track faculty at least once a year or as requested.
- Provides feedback about grant proposals, working papers, research protocols, or book chapters
- Assists with the review of P&T materials.
- Coordinates mentoring activities with the Departmental Mentor.
- Meets with the Mentee a minimum three times per year or more frequently if requested by the Mentee.

We encourage all tenured faculty members in the department to take an active role in the mentoring and network-building of tenure-track colleagues. It is not the mentor's sole responsibility to meet all the professional development needs of a tenure-track faculty member. However, it is the mentor's responsibility to be a first point of contact for questions and concerns, and then to work with his or her mentee to identify resources (including the CoS and FAU or beyond) that can help the Mentee achieve his or her professional goals. Thus, the mentor is part of a broader network.