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# New and Pre-Tenured Faculty Mentoring Program and

# New Faculty Academy (NFA) Handbook

*Mars Hill University*

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# **Introduction**

The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) sponsors a year-long new faculty mentoring program and a pre-tenure mentoring program for faculty in their second through fifth years. New faculty members are paired with a tenured colleague. Pre-tenure (second through fifth years) work with a senior faculty member as a cohort that is based on the faculty members start year (second-fifth year).

Mentors and mentees are encouraged to meet throughout the academic year to discuss teaching, research, service, the promotion process, or any other questions and/or concerns. Discussions will be connected to a selected shared reading. The mentor programs benefit not only mentees and mentors, but the wider campus community as well.

The mentor/mentee r~~e~~lationships will be strengthened through shared professional workshops, seminars, social gatherings, and individual meetings.

The goals of both programs are to help junior faculty:

* meet and network with other faculty and staff
* become familiar with university culture and resources
* build teaching pedagogy and engage in discourse about teaching students at MHU
* develop learning outcomes that truly measure student learning

# Two Mentorship Tracks:

## **1. New Faculty Mentorship Program Purpose:**

The New Faculty Mentoring Program facilitates meaningful, personal relationships in the spirit and the practice of collaboration needed for faculty to thrive at Mars Hill University and carry out its strategic plan and vision for the future of the university. This program fosters excellence in teaching and learning by providing resources, enrichment opportunities, faculty development, and strategies that support quality and innovative instruction.

## **2. Pre-Tenure Mentorship Program Purpose:**

The Pre-tenure Mentoring Program is for those faculty who are working on the tenure process. Through a cohort model the program provides mentoring from a senior faculty member who can offer advice and support for the tenure process, such as developing skills and strategies for teaching excellence, ongoing self-reflection of teaching, and access to the resources for the tenure process.

The mentor/mentee r~~e~~lationships will be strengthened through shared professional workshops, seminars, social gatherings, and individual meetings.

## **New Faculty Mentor / Mentee Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Mentor responsibilities**

Mentors attend mentor trainings that focus on the knowledge and skills necessary to give helpful feedback to colleagues on their teaching performance or “teacher artifacts” (materials or resources used in teaching, e.g., syllabi, exams, assignments, websites, etc.). Mentors are selected from outside the new faculty member’s academic program. Faculty development literature suggests that in most cases it is preferable to select a mentor in a field related to the mentee’s discipline, but outside of his/her academic program.

* Respond to colleague’s questions/concerns
* Ensure open lines of communication are always available
* Acquaint mentee with MHU’s culture and norms
* Serve as a role model
* Participate and contribute to CETL programming as relevant

### **Mentor Roles**

* Commit the time, energy, and effort to mentoring
* Make contact with mentee to set up the first meeting
* Share information about your own background and experiences, e.g., sharing CVs is a good introductory activity
* Introduce mentee to other MHU colleagues
* Share contacts and resources
* Meet regularly (once a month) with mentee, the CETL can provide an inviting space for your meetings
* Show mentee how to access university policies other resources
* Discuss work/family balance
* Share your experiences as a member of the Mars Hill Faculty
* Respond in a timely manner to requests from mentee
* Make referrals and/or gather resources, e.g. the CETL
* Support mentee through active listening
* Keep content of conversations confidential
* Evaluate the New Faculty Mentoring Program at the end of the academic year

### **New Mentee Roles and Responsibilities**

Mentees should meet regularly with their mentors to share their professional activities and experiences. Mentees are encouraged to cultivate a circle of advisors that include their mentor and tenure-track faculty from their home department, among others.

### **New Mentee Responsibilities**

* Meet regularly (once a month) with mentor
* Maintain ongoing communication with mentor
* Seek Information or ask clarifying questions
* Work to ensure that open lines of communication are always available
* Participate in the book study
* Participate in the New Faculty Academy (NFA)

### **Mentee Roles**

* Respond to mentor’s invitation for a first meeting
* Share CV
* Meet regularly with mentor, preferably once a month
* Know how to access university policies
* Discuss work/family balance
* Share experiences as a member of the Mars Hill faculty.
* Respond to mentor in a timely manner
* Support mentor by actively listening
* Keep content of conversations confidential
* Evaluate the New Faculty Mentoring Program at the end of the academic year

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## **Pre-tenure Mentor and Mentee Roles and Responsibilities**

Pre-tenure faculty work with a senior faculty member as a cohort that is based on the faculty members start year (second through fifth)

### **Mentor Responsibilities**

* Meet with cohort once or twice in the Fall semester or as needed
* Meet with individual cohort members as needed
* Provide information and guidance on the faculty evaluation system:
  + Faculty Activities Record (yearly for all faculty)
  + Faculty Self-Evaluation (second, fourth, and fifth years)
  + Chair and Dean evaluations
  + Faculty Plans
  + Peer Observation Training
* Respond to mentees in a timely manner
* Keep content of conversations confidential both within the cohort and individual meetings with a cohort member
* Evaluate Faculty Mentoring Program at the end of the academic year.

### **Mentee Responsibilities**

* Meet with cohort and mentor at a designated time
* Maintain ongoing communication with cohort and mentor
* Seek Information or ask clarifying questions
* Work to ensure that open lines of communication are always available
* Meet deadlines set by mentor

# **The Mentor-Mentee Relationship**

**Expectations**

Commitment and shared expectations are critical components of a successful mentoring relationship. Mentors and mentees should determine together:

* Scheduling and logistics of meetings
* Meeting goals and agenda
* Frequency and mode of communication between meetings
* Confidentiality parameters

**Building Trust**

Trust is needed to cultivate an authentic and successful mentor-mentee relationship.

Behaviors to build trust:

* Active listening
* Cooperating
* Openly sharing and being vulnerable
* Being accepting and non-judgmental
* Actively seeking out alternative perspectives
* Encouraging others to succeed
* Being positive
* Honoring and respecting confidentiality

# First Meeting

Mentors and mentees should be ready to discuss their goals for the relationship:

* Why did you want to be a mentor?
* As a mentee, what do you hope to get out of this relationship?

# New Faculty Academy (NFA)

In addition to the mentor-mentee relationships, the CETL offers professional development workshops, seminars, and social events for new (first year) faculty. Pre-tenure faculty may participate in most of the activities.

The New Faculty Academy (NFA) is designed to support new and pre-tenured faculty members in the early stages of their instructional careers as they acclimate to life and work at Mars Hill University. The NFA meets several times each semester to discuss teaching. Faculty who log five (5) meeting hours (per semester) and complete a total five (5) of the exercises will receive a micro-credential and electronic badge. This credential may be placed in the Faculty Activity Records Portfolio of the mentee. Tenured faculty and teaching staff are invited to most of the programming.

The NFA is designed to:

* Create an environment for junior faulty to self-reflect on their teaching
* Promote interdisciplinary dialogue about teaching and related issues
* Develop skills and strategies for teaching excellence and productive and impactful scholarship and service.
* Learn about the resources and programs related to their respective faculty roles.
* Develop a plan toward academic and career goals.
* Learn and grow personally and professionally in a supportive, cohort-based setting.
* Offer one-on-one assistance to improve teaching

## New Faculty Academy (NFA) Goals and Objectives:

When successfully completed, junior faculty will be better able to:

* Diversify instructional methods, activities, assignments, and assessments to create an optimal learning environment for students.
* Apply learning theory and intellectual development models in your courses.
* Develop objectives for your courses, class sessions, activities, and assignments that are appropriate, learner-centered, and measurable.
* Involve students actively at all stages of the learning process.
* Maximize the educational benefits of each class session through careful planning and preparation, utilize effective speaking skills and instructional techniques, and provide opportunities for active learning.
* Create and use technology and media effectively.
* Develop effective assessment and grading tools that fairly evaluate and grade student worrk and appropriately address academic integrity issues.
* Assess your own teaching performance and identify needs, opportunities, and resources for improvement.
* Utilize peer observation, student feedback, campus resources, research literature on teaching and learning, and self-evaluation to improve and expand your teaching skills (i.e., become a reflective practitioner).
* Recognize student problems and needs and be able to refer students to the appropriate resources for help.
* Develop a personal teaching philosophy for an academic career.
* Understand the faculty evaluation system

## NFA Programming Topics

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Topic** |
|  | Introduction and Reception |
|  | University Resources/Supports |
|  | Constructing Syllabi and Learning Objectives: What Do We Want Students to Achieve? |
|  | Matching Assignments and Tests to Objectives (with a focus on transparent assignment design; formative teaching assessments) |
|  | Getting Students to Do the Reading |
|  | Issues in Grading and Giving Feedback / MHU Academic Policies |
|  | Active Learning Approaches |
|  | Avoiding the Sound of Silence: Facilitating Meaningful Discussions |
|  | Fighting Misconceptions and Dealing with Controversial Material |
|  | Managing the Classroom: Dealing with Challenging Student Behaviors |
|  | Helping Students to Write and Think in the Style of One’s Discipline |
|  | Visiting a Course Outside of Your Area of Expertise |
|  | Discussion Forum: Reflections on Visiting Another Course |
|  | Beyond the Course Website: Leveraging Technology for Student Learning |
|  | Becoming a Reflective Teacher (Using feedback and reflection to improve your teaching) |
|  | Tenure and Promotion Process (faculty portfolio and demystifying reappointment, promotion, and tenure) |
|  | CETL Awards Reception |

## Ethical Guidelines for Mentors and Mentees:

**Best effort**

Mentors will make their best effort to provide good and timely advice to mentees. Mentees will actively participate in meetings with mentors and programming activities.

**Confidentiality**

Mentors/mentees will maintain the confidentiality of discussions as required to protect MHU students and faculty.

**Conflict of Interest Statement**

The mentor/mentee should disclose to the CETL program director any potential conflicts that may jeopardize his/her professional relationship. This includes disclosing conflicts such as having a son or daughter in a mentor’s/mentee’s program or classes, family relationships, other relationships that may pose a conflict of interest.

**Transparency**

Mentors and mentees shall make best efforts to keep the CETL program director informed of the status of the mentoring relationship and any changes in that relationship.

\*partially adapted from The Fairfield University Center for Academic Excellence

**Appendix 1 – First Meeting Worksheet**

## **First Meeting Checklist**

Get to Know Each Other

* Share information about your professional and personal life (exchange CVs)
* Learn something new about your mentee/mentor
* Exchange contact information
* When, where, and how frequently will we meet?
* How will we communicate between meetings?
* Establish Guidelines
* Establish written measurable goals
* Will we have a fixed agenda for when we meet?
* How will we use our meeting time together?
* Discuss the importance of confidentiality and establish a mutual understanding
* Before ending your first meeting, set a date and time for your next meeting

# First Meeting Worksheet:

Topics to start the conversations:

* Basic Introductions
* Why did you want to be a mentor?
* As a mentee, what do you hope to get out of this relationship?

**Mentors and mentees should be ready to discuss their goals for the relationship**

What are your goals?

What would you like to accomplish in the short term (this semester)?

What would you like to accomplish in the long term (over the next year?