Towards an Enhanced Faculty Mentoring Program at Austin Peay State University:

Personal growth through professional development, professional development for personal growth

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Faculty Leadership Program: Cohort 2021-2022

Technical Report: Towards an Enhanced Mentoring Program at APSU

Caption

Personal growth through professional development, professional development for personal growth

Culture of care + culture of support > culture of excellence > culture of growth

Rationale for Faculty Mentoring

Mentoring is "a reciprocal learning relationship characterized by trust, respect, and commitment, in which a mentor supports the professional and personal development of another [mentee] by sharing [their] life experiences, influence, and expertise" (Zellers et al., 2008, p. 555). Having mentors for tenure-track and mid-career faculty also promotes the spirit of collaboration and interdisciplinarity.

New faculty often are faced with some daunting challenges, including preparing for their roles of teaching and scholarship, adapting to campus culture, and dealing with the stress of retention, tenure, and promotion (RTP). Faculty mentoring plays a key role in helping new and mid-career faculty better tackle these challenges and succeed in their teaching, advising, scholarship, and service responsibilities. An effective mentoring program, then, is crucial for faculty retention, career development, job satisfaction, and personal and professional accomplishment. Indeed, research shows that there is a strong correlation between faculty mentoring and faculty retention (Houston, 2019). Moreover, faculty retention, and the consequent reduction in faculty turnover, ensure a larger pool of talented workers with a longer institutional memory. A positive culture and community of mentoring helps to increase retention and improve faculty morale.

Mentoring benefits both faculty and their academic institutions in improving teaching and learning quality, increasing research output and collaboration, promoting social networking and collegiality among faculty, improving faculty job satisfaction and morale (Yun et al., 2016), and improving student retention and success by creating a comfortable teaching and learning environment (Houston, 2019). In addition, mentoring offers socio-emotional, personal, and interpersonal support to new faculty (Fountain & Newcomer, 2016); that is, it presents opportunities for a more holistic and formative development to faculty. Besides, effective mentoring is essential in developing future university leaders and helping faculty succeed both in their career discernment and personal growth.

A happy and confident faculty member, satisfied with their work environment, is indeed more inclined to facilitate a culture of collegiality, a positive educational climate, and broad excellence in teaching, research and service. This sort of positive cultural development is especially important as we are recovering from a global pandemic and several faculties are grappling with work-life balance. The Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) in collaboration with MTSU conducted a survey in 2020. Although APSU did not participate in this survey, the key findings were:

- Teaching online is more time consuming than teaching face-to-face.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, all faculty members are working more hours.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic faculty members are spending more time teaching and less time doing research.
- Each summer 9 & 10-month faculty work nearly full-time without summer pay.
- Work related and non-work-related stress is up significantly from 2019 to 2020.

One can see from the above survey findings that the global pandemic significantly disrupted the academic landscape. Hence, a relational structure of knowledge and support would be advantageous, both for faculty members and their universities — one that helps faculty succeed professionally and improves morale within challenging work environments — should unprecedented times come again. Such a relational structure of mentoring can entail both formal and informal relationships between senior, junior, and same-level faculty, both inside and outside the department and college respectively. A well-designed mentoring framework also encourages collaboration and interdisciplinarity across campus. Further, this modality of mentorship aligns well with the new APSU Strategic Planning discussion for Pillar 3: *Every Employee is an Educator*. This pillar's first objective is to "provide opportunities to enable employees to advance their personal and professional development." The second objective is "foster employee development through best practices that promote growth."

Hence, a university-wide culture of mentoring is a best practice that can promote personal and professional growth for the 402 (full-and part-time) APSU faculty. A network of mentors can provide opportunities and share their knowledge base to other faculty from disciplinary, transdisciplinary, and multicultural perspectives. And, this mentoring relationship is not a one-way street. An effective mentor-mentee relationship will facilitate personal growth, trust in colleagues, and career success for the mentee as well as the mentor.

Higher education institutions have long realized the importance of attracting and retaining qualified faculty in achieving their core mission and vision (Columbia University. 2016) An effective faculty mentoring program plays a crucial role in retaining talented faculty. On the other hand, financial and academic costs (e.g., the monetary cost of hiring a replacement faculty as well as faculty time diverted to the hiring process and teaching extra courses) may accrue from the lack of effective faculty mentoring may result in low faculty morale and low retention rate. New and mid-career faculty, especially, often feel isolated and unsupported if they do not have proper mentoring (Houston, 2016). Possible topics for discussion in mentoring partnerships could range from clarifying expectations for retention, tenure and promotion, improve productivity how to be better teachers and/or researchers, and provide guidance for mid-career faculty to sustain their vitality after tenure.

For a faculty mentoring program to be successful, active and committed engagement is required from both mentors and mentees (Columbia University, 2016). Similarly, a successful faculty mentoring program always needs full commitment from the university's senior leadership. Barriers to effective faculty mentoring include the lack of institutional support for mentoring programs, lack of training for mentors, lack of resources (Foxcroft, 2018), time restraints, lack of clear goals

and expectations of mentoring, and lack of incentives — in whatever form they may take — for mentors (Fountain & Newcomer, 2016).

As universities and colleges in the U.S. are currently focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in response to a growing diverse student population (Abdul-Raheem, 2016), an effective faculty mentoring program is important specifically to hire and retain diverse faculty from underrepresented marginalized groups. In addition to attracting and retaining diverse faculty, faculty mentoring can help minority faculty overcome the cultural, social, and emotional loneliness in a majority atmosphere. Moreover, it can help academic institutions to become truly diverse in both faculty and student population (Abdul-Raheem, 2016).

One of the stated strategic goals of APSU is to recruit and retain diverse faculty from underrepresented minority groups, as this process is essential for continued success of the University to achieve its core mission, vision, and values. According to Abdul-Raheem (2016), the increase in diverse faculty will lead to increased student success and a more diverse student body. We believe that a more robust faculty mentoring program at Austin Peay State University will greatly contribute to achieving this crucial strategic goal and will bring the above-mentioned mutual benefits to the faculty, students, and university as a whole.

An effective mentoring network can facilitate a space for underrepresented faculty from various marginalized groups, including international faculty, faculty of color, and LBGTQIA+ faculty. These diverse groups of faculties may face unique challenges which can include mainstreaming, isolation, bias — related to race, gender, accent, etc. —, and being held to a higher standard than faculty from other groups. Having mentors from similar ethnic and cultural groups as colleagues can inspire junior faculty of color in finding a role model. This kind of connection can help with such faculty retention and reducing minority faculty turnover. As an example of what could happen without such a program, a study conducted at MIT reveals that 45% of underrepresented faculty left the latter institution without promotion compared to 23% of white faculty (Whittaker et al., 2015).

Problem Statement

The existing APSU first year faculty mentoring program has benefited new faculty in adapting to the campus culture and their new roles. The program is intended to provide guidance to new faculty in their first year during which experienced faculty members assist new faculty in adjusting to their roles of teaching, advising, scholarship, service, and campus culture (APSU Faculty Mentoring Program Guidelines, rev. June 2020). However, the scope of this existing faculty mentoring program is presently limited to mentoring only first year faculty. As shown above, the most impactful mentoring should go beyond the current first year faculty mentoring initiatives, which mostly focus on the RTP process. Thus, in addition to the current first year faculty programs, there is a need for a more robust and enhanced faculty mentoring program at APSU that will offer effective mentoring to all tenure-track faculty until they attain tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, and beyond.

The main goal of the faculty mentoring program proposed in this paper is to support and promote the professional and personal development of all faculty throughout their careers at APSU. This

goal, likewise, aligns with the goals of the University's strategic plans — both the current 2015-2022 strategic plan and the draft 2022-2027 strategic plan. Thus, implementing the proposed faculty mentoring program at APSU will greatly contribute towards achieving these strategic goals specifically: Goals 1 & 2 of Pillar 3: Employee Experience and Priority 4.2 of Goal 4: Diversity. The two goals of Pillar 3 are stated as: (Goal 1) APSU will empower employees to meet their learning and development objectives and (Goal 2) APSU will support a campus culture where all employees can grow and flourish (Draft: 2022 2027 Strategic Plan). Priority 4.2 under Goal 4 of the current strategic plan states recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty and staff as an emphasis (2015-2022 Strategic Plan). In addition, APSU's current value statements, which include academic excellence, integrity, community, personal growth, life-long engagement, and collaboration are very relevant to the proposed faculty mentoring program and can be achieved by implementing it.

Therefore, the purpose of this Faculty Leadership Program technical report is to identify and propose ways to extend faculty mentoring to all faculty beyond the first year of the tenure-track, as well as mid-career faculty at APSU, by benchmarking faculty mentoring programs at other similar institutions and applying faculty mentoring best practices.

Best Practices

An effective faculty mentoring program provides faculty with professional and social networking opportunities that foster inclusion, support research productivity, nurture collaboration between diverse faculty members and disciplines, and enhance teaching skills (Phillips & Dennison, 2015). Moreover, institutional needs such as faculty retention efforts, preservation of the mission and culture, and student recruitment and retention are addressed by having an effective faculty mentoring program. Further, faculty mentoring programs are more closely associated with job satisfaction, greater academic productivity and a stronger likelihood of remaining at a particular university for mentored faculty than un-mentored (Cartwright, 2008). We acknowledge, of course, that the best mentoring happens when mentors and mentees are prepared and develop strong and healthy relationships. Creating an environment that fosters such strong relationships is important to:

I.   **Assess and build communication and listening skills**

The skills of effective communication and active listening, indeed, cut across all mentor relationships. Such skills must be developed to build trust and a productive relationship. At a bare minimum, effective communication skills involve:

- Listening in a way one would talk and talking in a way one would listen.
- Maintaining full attention when communicating
- Giving constructive, fair-minded feedback, including both criticism and praise
- Offering complete and precise comments and explanations
- Clarifying mutual expectations for the relationship

II.   **Build productive mentor/mentee relationships**

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Mentoring relationships are, by nature, unique and should be founded in a mentor's strengths and skills and in the mentee's needs. No mentoring approach is or should be one-size-fits-all. No single mentor can nor should meet all of a mentee's needs. To help build durable and meaningful relationships, it is best to:

- Discuss confidentiality and the extent to which confidentiality can and will be secured
- Clarify the mentee's expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship and their needs related to various career development issues
- Establish clear, shared expectations for the relationship including time commitment, meeting schedule, and ground rules
- Negotiate and document short-term and long-term goals and outcomes
- Refer mentees to appropriate colleagues for expertise outside a mentor's purview
- Recommend and facilitate ways to build on the mentor/mentee relationship with other career development resources and opportunities
- Develop a mentoring plan that includes multiple "mentors" from different parts of the university
- Follow up regularly to help mentee keep on track
- Elicit and secure feedback from both the mentor and mentee and modify the relationship, expectations, and strategies as needed

As an example of how an effective mentoring program can use such best practices, The National League for Nurses recommends a multipronged approach based on four pillars of excellence (see figure 1).
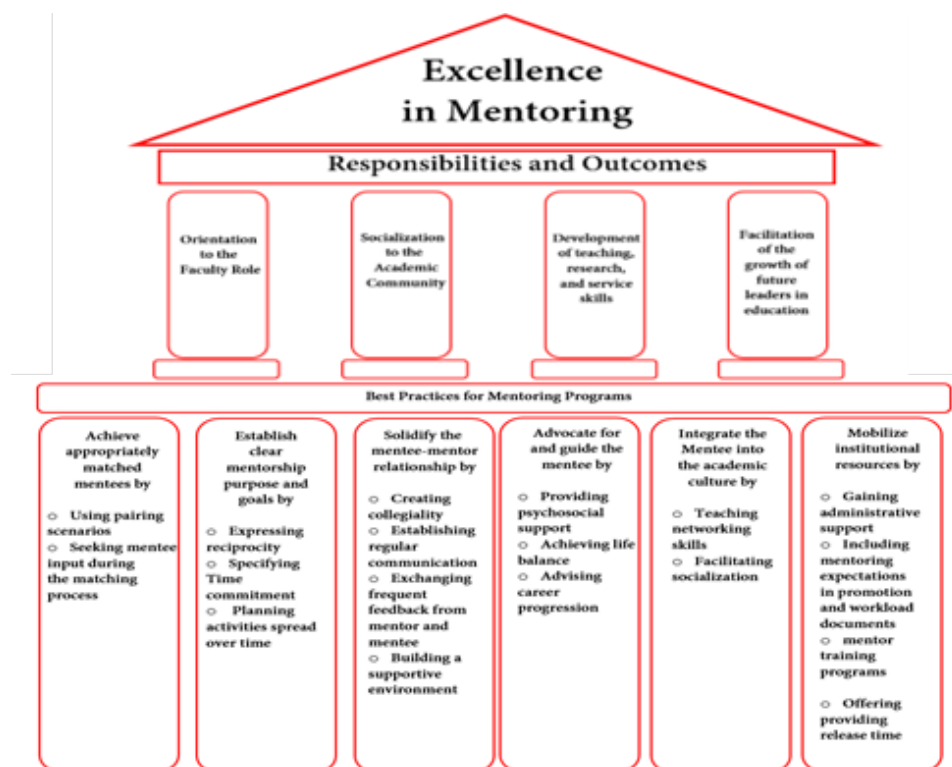
Figure 1 Best Practices in Academic Mentoring: A Model for Excellence (Nick et al, 2012)

Current System of Mentoring at Austin Peay State University

Current and previous administrations at Austin Peay State University have demonstrated an interest in the benefits of mentoring programs. The current *Faculty Mentoring Program Guidelines (rev. June 2020)* (FMPG) show a task force level commitment since at least 2015. As such, there are currently four discernible training programs, construable as "mentoring:" The First-Year Mentorship program (FYM), The First-Year Faculty Program (FYFP), The Faculty Leadership Program (FLP), and the Chair's Leadership Program (CLP). The two first-year faculty groups, FYM and FYFP, are formal requirements for all first-year faculty, FLP is a small-cohort program, and the CLP is an optional support group for department-level Chairpersons. This section will lay out the basic contours of each program and offer advantages and disadvantages of each, based on current mentoring best practices.

1. *The First-Year Faculty Mentoring Program*:

According to the FMPG, the intent of this program is to offer "guidance to new faculty in their first year for their success as valued members of the APSU community" (2). Each new faculty member is assigned a senior faculty member as a "mentor" for the term of one year, during which the junior faculty member meets with the senior mentor to ensure a system of feedback and helpful ideas relating to teaching, scholarship, service, general campus culture, and work-life balance issues. According to mentoring best practices, this program is based on the Senior-Junior Dyad model. As incentive for this program, $300 is set aside for the dyad's use for professional development expenses. The FMPG outlines all expectations of both mentor and mentee and

presents numerous topics for discussion and learning (3-9). At the start of the relationship, both the mentor and the mentee are expected to sign a letter of intent (for the mentor) and letter of acceptance of mentor (for the mentee) (see FMPG, *Appendices A and B*).

Advantages:

The largest advantage this program offers is the wisdom that a well-chosen senior mentor can offer a first-year faculty member. This benefit is especially meaningful if APSU is the first-year faculty member's first tenure-track job. Careful advice on proven teaching and research tactics at APSU combined with gentle guidance can offer a junior faculty member clarity on how to spend their precious time in developing their skill as a professor.

Disadvantages:

As shown in most research on mentoring best practices, the Senior-Junior Dyad model can have disadvantages for the university and the mentee. First, the length of time that the FYM is meant to last is quite short. While the first year is crucial to the grounding of a successful faculty career, the need for guidance and support does not end there. Second, the performance and success of the mentorship across departments, colleges, and the university at-large is widely divergent; some mentors work closely with their mentee, others take an "as needed" approach — often with little discussion of expectations or goals with the mentee. Third, research on mentoring best practices argues that every mentee needs multiple mentors from different disciplinary perspectives in the university. The multiple viewpoints and strengths offered by different mentors can present the mentee with the most fulfilling and thorough support for success. Fourth, the mentor chosen for the first-year faculty member is likely within the same department and thus has assessment responsibilities over the mentee, which could lead to a chilling effect on formative guidance. An additional mentor, outside of evaluative structures, can help to avoid this issue. Fifth, there is currently no training for mentors in the FYM, beyond some guidance bullet points in the FMPG. Mentoring best practices show that "mentoring the mentors" is critical for a successful and informed mentoring program. Sixth, there is currently no structure for assessment or performative measures to assess the effectiveness of the FYM program. Thus, while this program fulfills some of the basic needs of first-year faculty, we cannot be sure of its effectiveness in supporting them fully or be attuned to avenues for improvement.

2. *The First-Year Faculty Program*:

The FYFP presents first-year tenure-track faculty members with the opportunity to build connections with other first-year faculty, while receiving important information about the university. As the APSU website states, "the First-Year Faculty Program supports the professional success of tenure-track, first-year faculty at Austin Peay State University. Program participants will develop an in-depth understanding of retention, tenure, and promotion criteria through an exploration of teaching, creative or scholarly achievement, service, and advising in predominantly active-learning environments with extensive peer interactions for cohort cohesion and community building."

Faculty Leadership Program: Cohort 2021-2022

Advantages:

The once-a-week frequency allows for these connections with other first-year faculty to be organic and to build up acquaintance over time, all while hearing presentations from experienced, knowledgeable senior faculty and staff around campus. The 3-credit hour course release for each semester also prevents the time commitment of the FYFP from overburdening an already heavily burdened new faculty member. Ultimately, this program offers great value to the cohorts of tenure-track faculty: acquaintance and commiseration with others in the same situation and advice and knowledge from a tenured, experienced faculty facilitator as mentor.

Disadvantages:

Still, there are a few disadvantages to this sort of "mentoring" program, akin to the Team Mentoring model, wherein an experienced, tenured faculty member "mentors" several junior faculty member at once. First, while some might appreciate the weekly frequency of the meetings, others might find such frequency intrusive to their schedules and workloads. Slightly less frequent meetings may work more efficiently. Survey or assessment data collected from participants over time may give insight into an appropriate frequency that highlights the benefits of the meetings without reaching a point of diminishing returns. Second, there is no "handbook" for First-Year Faculty or any fixed curriculum for this program. It is in danger of becoming a parade of visitors with little sense of how each meeting coheres to the others. In a real sense, the program needs to be more obviously intentional. Third, this program's set-up does not often account for the different levels of experience found in a cohort of First-Year Faculty; that is, you may have a new faculty member coming directly from graduate school without teaching experience sitting next to a well-seasoned "new faculty" with more experience. Their needs are different and we should account for this difference. And, finally, the structure of the meetings and curriculum can seem to be merely informational, in purpose. That is, since there is no real deliverable product expected, the drive behind the program can seem trite and the content could be something more efficiently delivered in a handbook.

3. The Faculty Leadership Program:

The FLP is a year-long peer/group mentoring program, facilitated by a tenured and senior faculty member. As the relevant webpage on APSU's website states, "the Faculty Leadership Program fosters the development of a more interconnected, knowledgeable, and adaptable campus community capable of responding quickly and collaboratively to challenges and opportunities." In essence, the FLP is interested in building a "deep bench" of capable and knowledgeable faculty leaders to help accomplish the necessary work of keeping the university on the cutting edge. The average cohort for this program is purposely small, currently seven individuals (2021-2022 cohort) plus the facilitator. The FLP is designed to give the participants an insider's look at various aspects of the university administration and of different sorts of university leadership. This goal is accomplished via "administrator shadowing" days and multiple discussions with senior university leadership. In addition, the cohort is expected to conduct a project, culminating in a technical paper, on a plan, implementable at the university-level, to improve the university. In the past, these

technical papers have ranged from proposals on support for adjuncts to a "clearing house" for research and collaboration to the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer.

Advantages:

The benefits of this program are clear. The cohort receives meaningful access to individuals and processes that most of the wider faculty do not, speaking in a more intimate fashion than is usually possible with upper administrators and the senate president about leadership and the workings of the university. Second, the cohort comes to know one another well and make connections and avenues for collaboration that can last for a career, both to their great benefit, but also the benefit of their departments and colleges. Third, this program is an effective example of Mutual Mentoring. FLP participants are generally at similar career stages and this symmetrical, non-hierarchical mentoring offers comradery and a more realistic sense that each group member has something to gain from the interactions. As the Hannover Research report on mentoring says, "[This model] puts the [members of the cohort] in the driver's seat, shifts the dynamic from a dependency model … [thus] empowering [them] to build community" (10).

Disadvantages:

There are, of course, a few disadvantages to the current iteration of the FLP. For example, the small cohort model hinders access to such a positive and empowering mentoring structure to a few lucky individuals, about 7-9 people selected every other year. The other major disadvantage apparent in the FLP's structure is intentional. The program is designed to offer the facilitator and cohort members the ability to structure the program to its own needs. But, at the same time, this design decreases the overall intentionality of the program. With this issue in mind, we are compelled to ask what the exact goals of this program are. Within a single cohort, this structural feature seems a strength; but over the long term, it leaves open the possibility of a wide divergence of results. Further, there are unclear structures and processes for the assessment and evaluation of the program's effectiveness as well as how the graduates of this program will be used in leadership opportunities in the future.

4. *Chair's Leadership Program*:

The Chair's Leadership Program is a voluntary professional development program open to department chairs, led by an experienced current department chair. Meeting about two and a half hours every other week, the program is designed to offer department chairs insights into various aspects of the job, as well as advice and support for issues occurring in the day-to-day operation of their department. This structure does align with mentoring best practices for the Group Mentoring model. It is voluntary and flexible with no set curriculum — leaving topics to be chosen by its members. Yet, this flexibility could be construed as a disadvantage in that it reduces the intentionality and clarity of purpose for the program. In addition, it is currently underutilized, showing that the voluntary modality could reduce the effectiveness by means of low attendance. And lastly, as in most of the programs above, there are no structures or processes for evaluating or assessing the effectiveness of the program.

Faculty Leadership Program: Cohort 2021-2022

Implementation Plans

Pilot Program

As a first step towards testing the feasibility of the program, we propose a pilot program run by members of the 2021-2022 FLP class to begin in the Fall of 2022 with a small group of willing mentors and mentees covering a variety of focused topics. This first step will allow us to compose and test the mentor identification process, the mentor-mentee mixer pairing process, and evaluate any weaknesses in the proposed initiative. We will seek feedback from the pilot group throughout the fall semester so we can adjust the program based on their feedback and ideas for the expectations of mentors and mentees, in the hope of starting our first full mentor-mentee mixers and pairings in the Spring of 2023.

Mission statement

To build a network of engaged faculty professionals, through continuous mentoring, interdisciplinary training, and collaborative commitment, to facilitate all-round development of mentors and mentees at both professional and personal levels.

Vision statement

1. To prepare a network of professionals who will engage in high-impact practices in teaching, scholarship and leadership, and help make APSU the region's university of choice.
2. To foster a culture of care that nurtures APSU faculty professionals into their best selves as teachers and advisors.
3. To support all faculty professionals at APSU in achieving the highest standard of professional growth and their own personal fulfilment.

Goal

1. To engage in evidence-based high-impact practices in peer-to-peer mentorship, to provide continuous support in building a complete individual.
2. To promote a culture of care at APSU that supports all new and existing faculty professionals to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
3. To develop new programs to facilitate cross-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary engagements and collaborations.

Faculty Leadership Program: Cohort 2021-2022

We propose the establishment of a new enhanced faculty mentoring program that will help enrich and elevate the currently existing faculty mentorship programs at APSU.

We propose this program to be housed in the Center for Advancement of Faculty Excellence (CAFÉ).

The program will work with faculty members as program facilitators who will work in tandem with the CAFÉ Director, for program planning, implementation, creation of database, event planning, and evaluation of the program.

1. Program facilitators will be tenured or tenure-track faculty with at least five years of experience in a tenure-track faculty position, three of those years must be in APSU.
a. If a tenured or tenure-track faculty has significant experience of mentoring in an educational institution, but not in mentoring of faculty, they may also be considered to be program facilitators.
2. The program facilitators will serve as volunteers and will be part of the CAFÉ advisory board.
3. The Director will serve a fixed term of five years, with options for extending their time for another term.
4. The Director will serve for another year as ex-officio, to help transition the new Director into the role.
5. Program facilitators will serve a fixed term of three years, with options for extending their time for another term.

Database and Mentorship Activities

Arguably, the most crucial aspects of an effective mentorship relationship is ensuring the mentor is passionate about the connection and content to be discussed and has been trained to use the best mentoring practices with their mentee. Our mentorship initiative will capture this goal by utilizing volunteer mentors within mentorship categories they self-identify as their areas of strength/interest. We will create a database containing lists of willing mentors in the traditional RTP areas of teaching, research, and service, but also additional areas crucial to a mentee's development as a whole person — in and outside of APSU. Additional categories or tags could include: interests in community development/involvement, cultural experiences, state/country of origin, hobbies, their alma mater, kids (of varying age ranges) and no kids, favorite cuisines, or other interests, passions and affinities. Our database will have pictures and short biographies about the mentors, with their self-identified list of strengths, with clear indications on what issues they are willing to provide mentorship. In this way, mentors and mentees alike can develop deeper connections with a broader portion of our faculty community. With this database, prior to agreeing to the mentoring relationship, both parties can learn some basic information about the other and, in conjunction with mixer events to be run by CAFÉ, begin to meet, ideally creating more compatible mentor-mentee pairs. We plan to have mentors from all levels of faculty (assistant, associate, and full) and across all colleges represented in the database. Ultimately, a prospective mentee might hope to find has multiple mentors to choose from in any and all of the categories

(i.e., race, gender, gender expression, etc.). This buffet of choice should help in establishing easy communication and rapport.

The database will be housed on CAFÉ's website and accessible to all interested faculty members. In collaboration with CAFÉ, the current FLP members will also help to market the new initiative through recurring presentations and 'mentorship mixers' within the Pre-semester Calendar timeframe to allow potential mentor-mentee pairs to meet and get acquainted prior to formalizing any mentoring relationship. While those at mid-career and beyond will likely know others on campus and are able to create their own partnerships through the database and/or mixers, we propose an advisory board to assist with pairings for incoming faculty who may be new to APSU or the area and looking for mentorship. The advisory board (or FLP members) would also serve as problem solvers should a mentee have difficulty finding a willing mentor in an area of importance to them. The initial agreement to a mentorship pairing is set at 1 year, after which both members will reevaluate if they want or need the work to continue or if they would prefer to select a new mentor or topic of focus, using a "graceful exit clause."

Mentors will receive training via *Mentoring the Mentor* sessions prior to the first meeting with their new mentee to provide guidance on good communication strategies and how to make the most of their connection with their mentee. We will also develop a handbook with information on how mentors and mentees can set boundaries and expectations and on how to develop mentorship circles or groups if they wish to add a broader element scope of support. Mentorship circles could be attained through a mentor's previous connections around campus or can easily be assisted by the advisory board and FLP members, creating connections between mentoring pairs with similar focuses or goals.

Selection of Mentors

Since our great hope in mentors is a willing and intrinsic motivation for the benefits of mentorship, we will rely initially and solely on those who choose to volunteer. To that end, we would like to provide some small incentive or compensation for their time and energy commitments. First, we believe that mentorship should be recognized and valued within RTP structures. Mostly likely, this sort of recognition will fall into Area 3 in both the mentor's and the mentee's e-dossiers. However, there may be exceptions in which the mentorship is discussed in the area appropriate to the type of mentoring that occurs (i.e., Area 1 for groups focused on teaching expertise or 2 for groups focused on research productivity). Additionally, we propose to redirect the funds currently used for the First-Year Mentorship program to our mentoring initiative, some of which could be used to incentivize mentors and mentees with increases to professional development funds in the amount of $300-500 each. We want to ensure these funds are geared towards the mentorship connection and growing the relationship, so the request for funds would need to clearly delineate how the money will be used towards that endeavor. For mentors who take on multiple mentees at a time, we would support discussions with chairs and deans to flex their ARC time or provide a course release where appropriate. We will provide other incentives such as cool swag (t-shirts, bags, etc.) that can also help to get the word out to others around campus who may be interested. Of course, the director of this mentoring program will look to secure additional funding from grant sources or the budget allocated to CAFE.

Beyond these just-mentioned extrinsic motivators, we also believe there will be a number of intrinsic factors that can motivate both mentors and mentees to participate in our initiative. First, this program creates a situation ripe for collaboration in many areas: publications and creative work, grants, collaborative teaching endeavors, service apprenticeships, leadership avenues and others. Moreover, participating in either the mentor or mentee roles provides individuals with an opportunity to develop new and/or deepen relationships with other faculty around campus. This relationship building will help strengthen their connections to Austin Peay, the Clarksville community and surrounding area, and hopefully lead to greater retention of faculty who are developing and have developed roots in the community. Finally, the program will facilitate the development of both parties as holistic individuals instead of a singular identity (i.e., teacher, scholar, parent, etc.) and, as an attractive benefit, work towards recruiting and retaining well-rounded faculty of excellence.

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Appendix A: The Mentoring Plan and Agreement

The assurance of an effective mentoring relationship depends in great part on intentionality and predetermined goals. The danger of engaging in mentoring without such a structure is a mentorship that does not fulfill anyone's needs, lacks efficiency, and creates disillusionment with the promise of mentoring structures. Thus, best practices show that an agreement between Mentor and Mentee, negotiated before the relationship begins, will help guide the trajectory of the relationship and the prioritization of goals. Intentionality is the byword here. There is an added administrative benefit in such an agreement and plan: the efficiency and effectiveness of the program writ broadly is more easily assessed and improved. Just as in our teaching, when we know what our goals are, it becomes easy to "grade" performances and devise improvements and, thus, universal benefits.

An effective mentor-mentee plan and agreement should fulfill the following points:

- A statement of voluntary entry into the mentor-mentee relationship, with a recognition of mutual benefits. There should be a noted agreement to certain terms and conditions constructed by administrative oversight.
- A list of objectives with enough specificity to motivate and focus achievable and tangible results. For example, an objective to "construct, compose, and submit at least one grant application for x research project" is better than an objective to "work on my research."
- A list of tasks needed to accomplish the objectives listed. This list should present task agenda for both/all members of the dyad/group.
- A recognition of confidentiality and sensitivity regarding various issues that may be involved in a mentor-mentee relationship.
- A logistical statement discussing the frequency of meetings and mechanisms for dealing with unforeseen hindrances to meetings.
- A statement on the expected duration of the mentor-mentee relationship. This statement can be specific (e.g., "for two years") or it can be more loosely stated (e.g., "until we don't want to anymore.")
- A clause detailing a mechanism for a "graceful exit" should one or both partners wish to exit the relationship.

A SAMPLE MENTOR/MENTEE AGREEMENT[1]

We, _____ and _____, voluntarily enter into a mentoring relationship from which we both expect to benefit. This agreement stands as a recognition of our objectives, implementation plans, and terms and conditions that will contribute to our mutual success.

OBJECTIVES:
We recognize that stating our objectives here at the outset will positively guide our interactions and expectations during our time together. Indeed, we have expressed our objectives with specificity to motivate us and help us assess all tangible results.

What we hope to achieve:
1.
2.
3.
4.

To accomplish this, we will:

1.

2.

3.

4.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

1. Frequency of Meetings: We will attempt to meet at least _____ times each month. If we cannot attend a scheduled meeting, we agree to be responsible and considerate and notify our partner.

2. Duration: We have decided that our mentoring relationship will continue for _____ or as long as we feel that it is a benefit to us.

3. Agenda: We will devise agenda for our meetings together.

4. Confidentiality: All sensitive issues that we discuss will be held in the highest confidence between each other. Off-limits issues in this mentoring relationship include: _____.

5. Records of our mentoring meetings will/will not (please circle one) be kept.

6. Graceful Exit Clause: If one of us decides to terminate the mentoring relationship for any reason, we agree to abide by the decision of our partner.

Mentor: _____   Mentee: _____
Date: _____   Date: _____