



University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

**The Current State of Faculty Mentoring
at the University at Buffalo:
A Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis**

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INTRODUCTION

Faculty mentoring has become an increasingly important feature of professional development at colleges and universities throughout the country. However, despite the significant growth of interest in faculty mentoring as well as the emerging science of best mentoring practices, many institutions of higher education fail to live up to the lofty ideals of quality mentoring programs.

☐The characteristics of a highly effective faculty mentoring program includes the following features:

- 1) Program has a clearly stated purpose and goals
- 2) Program has support of faculty and administration
- 3) Program is positioned appropriately within the larger organization
- 4) Program is evaluated
- 5) Program has a clearly stated administrative structure
- 6) Needed program resources are identified and acquired
- 7) Program design, ideally, includes:
 - a. Formal timeline for participation
 - b. Stated qualification for mentors
 - c. Mechanism for matching mentors and mentees
 - d. Development of individualized competencies
 - e. Identified individual or team for each mentee
 - f. Training for mentors
 - g. Recognition for mentors
 - h. Regular meetings between mentor and mentee

This list of criteria sets a high bar for establishing effective mentoring at colleges and universities. It is likely that universities have implemented some but not all of these recommendations.

In 2010, the University of Buffalo's Commission on Academic Excellence and Equity proposed a university-wide faculty mentoring policy and program. The elements of this plan included the following:

- 1) The appointment of an ad hoc Mentoring Advisory Committee to review mentoring policies, standards and assessment criteria for Schools and CAS
- 2) The provision of guidance to develop training and resources for mentoring at all levels
- 3) The implementation of mentoring programs with the following components:
 - a. Implemented for all tenure track and clinical/research faculty and tenured associate professors within the first five years after tenure is granted.
 - b. Development of a mentoring structure that could involve more than one faculty mentor for each mentee. Mentors might involve senior faculty from other institutions in the same field.

- c. A formal program involving written agreements, assessed each year by both mentor and mentee, and their evaluation reported to the chair of the department. The document should include a detailed plan for mentoring in the three areas evaluated for promotion and tenure. The plan should contain desired outcomes of the mentoring priorities in each area. The mentoring plan does not constitute a formal evaluation and should not be conflated with formal performance/supervisory evaluations.
- 4) Chairs are accountable for the effectiveness of the mentor assignments and outcomes of the mentoring plan through assessments by the dean.
- 5) Mentoring training would be available for mentors in each school and CAS through the dean's offices. Each school should have established training programs
- 6) Faculty development programs should be established to support mentoring policies.
- 7) Work-life balance issues must be part of the training for mentors and chairs. Mentors should inform mentees of the opportunities for altering the tenure clock as appropriate.

While the establishment of this policy reflected some of the best practices of effective faculty mentoring, there is considerable uncertainty regarding the degree of unit and departmental compliance with this aspirational policy. This report is designed to gauge how units and departments are performing with respect to the 2010 policy.

METHOD

In order to understand the current state of faculty mentoring practices on campus, a 24 item, web-based survey was distributed to 100 department chairs/directors and 13 associate deans across the University at Buffalo for a sample size of 113 (see appendix A). A total of 59 completed responses were received producing a response rate of 56%. After initial review of the data, 2 surveys were discarded since those units were not covered by the mentoring policy, i.e., Social Science Interdisciplinary Studies and the Humanities Institute. The adjusted response rate for the final sample of 111 is 51%. This is a good response rate for a web-based survey and provides a broad cross-section of the various units on campus. The survey was sent by e-mail on three different occasions over the course of approximately three weeks.

Overall, there was good breadth of participation from across the campus. The College of Arts and Sciences along with the School of Medicine and Biological Sciences had high levels of participation, 21 and 12 respondents respectively, as did the School of Public Health and Health Professions and the School of Dental Medicine each with 5 respondents and the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences returned 4 surveys, a good response rate for each of these units relative to their size or administrative structure. A number of other units without departments

provided responses through their associate deans, most notably, law, nursing, and social work. Approximately half of the Graduate School of Education returned surveys. The School of Management elected to combine their responses from all departments into one survey.

In addition to the survey data, open-ended narratives were received from deans across all units. Deans were asked to report on how the mentoring policy was working in each of the units and what, if any, challenges were being encountered in its implementation. The specificity and depth of these narratives varied widely across units. While some units provided extensive detail on these issues, others, by contrast, provided very little. Most units on campus fall somewhere between these extremes. Only one unit, the School of Management, provided a copy of their mentoring policy.

FINDINGS

We have organized the findings into four separate sections. In the first section we review the current state of mentoring activities across the various units at UB. In this section, we will outline the characteristics and content of the mentoring activities at UB. In section two, we explore the administration of the mentoring programs across the colleges, specifically, the resources available to support mentoring, how mentoring is integrated within the culture of departments, and the degree of training available for mentors. Section three discusses the extent to which units engage in assessment of the effectiveness of their mentoring practices. Finally, section four explores the challenges and concerns raised by survey respondents and deans.

1) Mentoring Activities

The overwhelming majority (82%) of departments and units report that they currently have a mentoring program for their faculty. For the rest of this report, unless otherwise stated, percentages of respondents refer to the fraction of those that have a mentoring program.

The majority of these programs have been in place for some time. Over 65% of the survey respondents indicate that their mentoring program has been functioning for more than five years, while nearly 20% report having a mentoring program for 3-5 years. There does not appear to be consensus across the campus on the use of formal or informal practices with regard to mentoring. For instance, one unit dean specifically described having a formal mentoring program for all junior faculty and associate professors within 5 years of their promotion to tenure. This dean characterized the formal program in the following way:

All untenured TT faculty, and all tenured Associate Professors within five years of their tenure decision, will have a formally designated mentor. The mentor/mentee pairing must be mutually acceptable to both parties. The

Chair will coordinate that appointment process. The names of the mentors and mentees will be forwarded to the Senior Associate Dean.

This particular formal policy also establishes expected performance markers including the minimum amount of time a mentor and mentee should meet, the reporting responsibilities of the mentor, and the content of mentoring practice.

In other cases across the university, the degree of formality is quite varied. One dean described their mentoring program in the following way:

We have a structured mentoring program for tenure track faculty through our Associate Dean. This associate dean meets monthly with assistant professors, guides their early pilot work and helps them to develop direction for their funding proposals. She shares feedback with the department chairs annually.... In terms of the tenured faculty, we restructured our administrative roles in 2014 and the two new department chairs have taken up the mentoring role for these faculty... I have asked the Chairs to further develop our mentoring process and make it more structured.

In this case, there is a mix of formal and informal practices with an evolving structure around mentoring in place but with additional formalized practices, as identified by the dean, in need of development.

Another dean described having elements of a formal plan in his unit:

An agreed upon written mentoring plan is not a part of the process per se. The mentee provides the committee with his/her own written plan for their current of future activities, and this forms a basis for the mentoring discussion. Progress on the future plan is assessed at each subsequent annual Mentoring Committee Meeting with the faculty member, although no one officially "signs-off" on the plan.

This same dean further notes that, while most of the unit departments have a mentoring process, there is nevertheless considerable variability in the degree of formality across departments:

A written plan is used in 5 departments. Three departments report that they have a policy defining roles/responsibilities for mentors and mentees. While most departments have instituted a mentoring mechanism, there is a lack of uniformity as to how this is undertaken. However, teaching, research and service are addressed in most, if not all, mentoring sessions. The more formal aspects of mentoring, such as written individual development plans or policies defining roles of mentors and mentees, have received the least amount of compliance with the university policy.

By contrast, one dean provided little information on the mentoring program but offered information that suggested having an informal program without much specificity. In reflecting on the challenges to mentoring in this unit, the comment below indicates a highly informal and decentralized program:

It's been impossible to find faculty in the unit to mentor (other faculty). I've asked multiple people, and worked through the chairs. Currently, I'm mentoring (junior faculty member) which is fine with him and with me, but the idea is to have somebody other than the chair do it... It strikes me that the (UB) policy is rather cumbersome requiring formal plans and assessment seems to demand excessive administrative oversight and reporting.

The second part of the comment implies frustration with or perhaps even resistance to any formal expectations around such things as mentoring assignments, mentoring content, time commitments, or reports.

From the accounts provided by the deans, most units trend towards having formalized practices, though as the comments above reveal, some units are much more formalized in their policy and practices than others.

However, the survey results suggest that the degree of formality on the ground may not comply with best practices of mentoring or with the stated UB policy. Of those who responded to this question, nearly 70% percent of respondents indicate to have at least one of the various components of a formal program.

Reported Aspects of Formal Programs Percent

Mentoring Partnership Agreements	17
Formal Work Plans	26
Goal Setting	53
Mentoring Evaluation	38
Written feedback to Mentee	53
Written feedback by Mentee	9
On-line Documentation	6

The primary audience for mentoring services is overwhelmingly junior faculty. There is 100% consensus with all survey respondents that probationary assistant professors are the prime audience for mentoring. For almost half of the respondents, tenured associate professors are another primary group for mentoring. A significant number of respondents, 26%, indicate that clinical faculty are another primary group for whom mentoring service are provided. There is currently very little mentoring provided to part-time adjunct faculty or other non-ladder instructional faculty, 4% in both cases.

There is evidence from the respondents that some faculty groups are in need of additional mentoring services. This is especially true for tenured associate

professors. According to the survey, this group is seen as being in greatest need for additional mentoring. However, there are a significant number of respondents who believe mentoring services require expansion into other faculty categories as well, including temporary adjunct faculty.

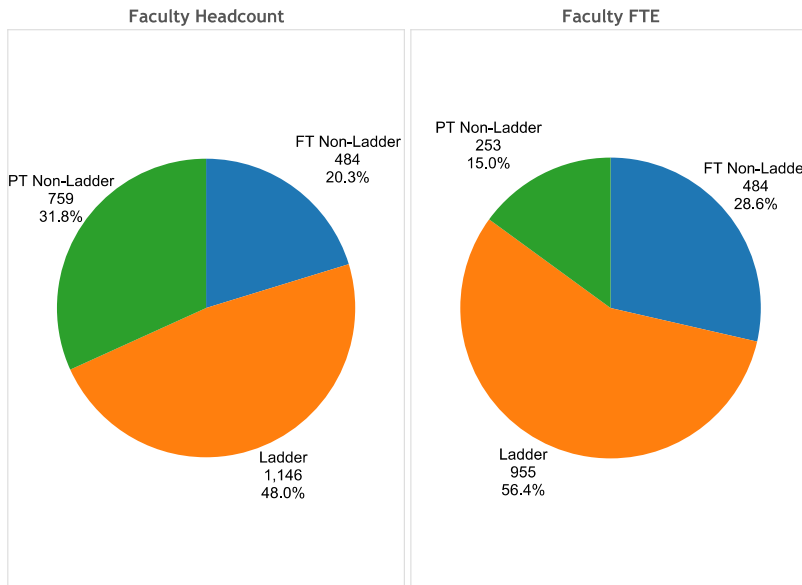
<u>Need Additional Mentoring Services</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Probationary Tenure Track	20
Tenured Associate Professors	51
Tenured Full Professors	14
Non-ladder Instructors	12
Clinical Faculty	37
Part-time/Adjunct Faculty	18
Postdocs	16

The need for additional mentoring for associate professors is also expressed in the narratives offered by deans of the various units. As one dean comments:

While I feel the (unit) has successfully implemented the policies for tenure track assistant professors, we could do better with associate professor mentoring where we provide feedback on the benchmarks and expectations for achieving full professor rank.

Another dean simply stated that, “We have not provided mentoring to associate professors or to full professors.” While some units and departments provide mentoring services for associate professors, the majority of survey respondents and several deans indicate a strong need for expanding efforts in this area.

In addition to increased mentoring services for associate professors, a number of respondents indicate a need to increase opportunities for clinical and adjunct faculty, 37% and 18%, respectively. While the mentoring needs might differ somewhat across each of the groups of faculty, they both undoubtedly would benefit from mentoring around issues of teaching and instructional technologies. In light of the fact that slightly more than 50% of all UB faculty members occupy non-ladder positions (see headcount chart below), the need for mentoring of these faculty members may be substantial.



Source: IPEDS Human Resources, Fall 2013
 Notes: State faculty only, excluding librarians. Includes EOC and adjunct titles.

Departments also use a variety of organizational approaches, with various combinations of one-to-one and group formats. Some departments use different structures for faculty at different stages of their careers (e.g., probationary faculty versus associate professors), or due to the different needs or interests of the junior faculty member.

<u>Mentoring Program Format</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Group	43
One-on-one	79
Peer Mentor	16
Senior Mentor	65
External Mentor	14

These data suggest that the dominant mentoring format across the campus is the one-on-one mentoring with senior mentors. There appear to be a number of departments/units that employ a group format exclusively or in concert with one-on-one mentoring.

The content of mentoring appears to fall into the primary categories highlighted in the UB policy statement; research, teaching, and service. As the table below indicates, very few mentoring relationships focus on areas that might be considered “quality of life” issues; work/life balance, departmental culture, time management, or community engagement.

Content of Mentoring Programs **Percent**

Teaching	80
Research progress	96
Service	31
Tenure and Promotion process	88
Working with graduate students	6
Writing/Grant writing	33
Publications	65
Faculty relationships	10
Department climate	12
Work/Life balance	12
Time management	22
Community engagement	0
Building networks	14

As the above data demonstrate, mentoring services are mostly directed to guiding faculty in the areas related to research. In fact, the three areas of mentoring specifically identified in the UB policy - research, teaching, and service - are largely being addressed. While this is certainly a critical dimension of mentoring, departments need to ensure that mentoring is not simply evaluative. The heavy emphasis on tenure and promotion (88%) and research progress (96) may suggest that much of what passes for mentoring is actually a proxy for administrative review of a faculty member’s progress toward promotion. The fact that 90% of respondents report that mentoring starts within the first year of hire and extends through their probationary period (50%) may provide further evidence that much of mentoring is focused on tenure and promotion. Less than half of respondents indicate that mentoring extends through the first five years as an associate professor or more.

It is evident that mentors are not spending much time with their mentees. A minority of respondents indicate mentoring meetings occurring several times a year.

Frequency of Mentors and Mentees Meetings **Percent**

Several times per semester	14
Once per semester	24
Once per year	24
As needed	32

Almost half of respondents indicate meetings between mentor and mentee occurring once or twice a year. Only a very small percentage of respondents are spending any significant amounts of time mentoring faculty. Again, this might suggest that mentoring, when it is done, is primarily focused on tenure and promotion issues that are probably the easiest and quickest form of mentoring, especially if such “mentoring” is simply a form of evaluation review or yearly check-up on one’s path to tenure and promotion. A comment by one dean reflects this

concern: “Successful mentoring does not necessarily equal tenure and promotion... Mentoring should include genuine career-track advice.”

This raises important questions regarding the purpose of mentoring. For many, mentoring seems to be equated mostly with success in tenure and promotion, suggesting that it is an “evaluative” process only.

2) Administration of the mentoring programs

What does the administration of mentoring programs look like on the ground? This section is designed to help understand the *process* through which mentoring occurs throughout the campus including training, available resources, workload expectations, recognition, etc. Many of these areas have been identified in the literature as consisting of some of faculty mentoring best practices.

While the UB policy and the literature on best practices emphasize the importance of mentor training opportunities, a unanimous number of respondents indicate that mentors receive no training at all. While not shocking, this is a disturbing finding considering that the UB policy specifically directs departments and units to provide training opportunities to help facilitate effective mentoring services. Not a single respondent indicated that formal mentorship training is available.

Comments from deans reflect this dearth of mentor training. In the dean comments, there was only one dean that specifically indicated the availability of training designed to help faculty become better mentors. While several units offer faculty development opportunities related to the nuances in the field as well as related to promotion and tenure processes, the majority of units offer no training for mentors. Even units that have more structured mentoring programs like law, management, dental, and medicine, training opportunities for mentors are of little priority.

The lack of training may be in part related to the availability of resources to help support effective mentoring practices. The overwhelming majority of survey respondents, 82%, indicate having no resources available to support effective mentoring practice. Most rely on faculty chairs and office staff to coordinate mentoring without any additional resources. One unit, Nursing, stands out as being the exception. The School of Nursing offers the Mecca Cranley Mentoring Award to support faculty mentoring. This is a competitive annual award that allows faculty members to provide an honorarium to external mentors. This fund is also being innovatively expanded to allow a small group of faculty working in a similar area to reach out to an external mentor. There have been occasions when individual chairs provided faculty with the resources to work with an external mentor, but these practices are not uniform, are idiosyncratic to specific chairs, and may depend on resources. The previous chair of the sociology department, for instance, provided junior faculty members the opportunity to work with external mentors by providing small grants to faculty that could be used for this purpose. However, the resources for this did not come through the standard departmental funding protocols, but

rather, were generated through that department's participation in the Singapore initiative that brought additional resources to the department.

The development of effective mentoring practices in departments and units is also hampered by the manner in which mentoring assignments are distributed. Nearly two thirds, 61%, of the survey respondents indicate that mentoring is not part of the workload assignment for faculty. In units and departments where there are mentoring expectations associated with faculty roles, assignments are made in different ways. In some cases, all senior faculty are expected to serve as mentors and are assigned mentees. In other cases, faculty serving on a mentoring committee within a department are expected to take on the lion's share of the mentoring work. In all these cases the department chair coordinates the assignment of mentors to mentees. However, for the majority of respondents and several deans, there is no uniformity in the assignment of faculty mentors. In fact, this appears to be one of the greatest challenges associated with the current mentoring practices at UB. In many units, senior faculty seem unwilling to serve as mentors, or there are too few senior faculty members to assign as mentors. As one dean comments:

With the size of our faculty, we don't have the luxury of a number of faculty who can serve as mentors. Right before I came, a number of senior researchers retired.

In some cases, senior faculty members resist serving as a mentor to lower ranked faculty. One unit, for instance, uses committees to serve as mentors. Members on these committees are typically senior faculty members who are responsible to meet with junior faculty as a group as well as work with tenure track faculty on an individual basis. While this model seems to work well, not all senior faculty are willing to serve. As the dean in this unit reports,

The (unit) has struggled to fully staff mentoring committees. At times, some senior faculty members have declined to serve on mentoring committees.

Even when there is an expectation that mentoring should be considered part of the workload expectations of faculty there is resistance. Some faculty believe the formal requirements of a mentoring program are a bureaucratic burden, requires too much paperwork, or is counterproductive to conversations that are essential to effective mentoring. Others indicate that increasing resources to mentoring services could lead to greater enthusiasm to participate. As one dean wrote:

I do not believe (unit) is successful in considering mentoring assignments as part of the workload for senior faculty. If there could be more incentives for mentoring then I think there would be more buy-in by senior faculty (other than chairs) to become more engaged with junior faculty.

More will be said about these issues in the section on challenges to implementation of effective mentoring practices. Suffice it to say, there does not appear to be any

uniformity with regard to the expectations that mentoring should be part of a faculty member's workload.

Related to this workload issue, and perhaps providing further insight into some faculty resistance, very few survey respondents indicate that mentoring services are formally recognized in their departments. Less than 15% of the survey respondents report offering any recognition for mentors. However, even among those respondents who report having a mechanism of recognition, it is often simply verbal acknowledgment at faculty meetings or to the dean's office. Only one respondent indicated having a tradition in the department/unit of providing awards to recognize faculty mentors.

3) Assessment and Evaluation

To what extent do current mentoring practices have positive impacts on faculty lives and what mechanisms are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of mentoring efforts? This next section addresses these questions.

Overall, survey respondents report substantial benefits to mentoring and attribute a variety of positive outcomes to mentoring. A large percentage of respondents believe there are significant outcomes due to mentoring.

<u>Positive Effects of Mentoring</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Retention	57
Promotion and Tenure	85
Success of Women and Minorities	52
Departmental Climate	59
Faculty Satisfaction	59

However, despite the high levels of belief about the positive impact of mentoring, few programs have any formal mechanisms to assess its impact. While 33% of survey respondents indicate having mechanisms in place to assess the impact of mentoring, most "mechanisms" seem to be based on distal attributions and anecdotal evidence. Several survey respondents reported that the mechanism of assessment was based on success rate in achieving tenure and promotion. In some cases, a chair or vice dean will reach out to mentors to discuss the process with mentors, but in most cases there is little systematic attempt to assess the impact of mentoring.

Many of the deans' comments suggest similar trends. One dean identifies success as being:

Based on tenure and promotion success, as well as anecdotal feedback from faculty, though no formal assessment has been conducted. The metric is promotion success... We have not prepared formal reports of the effectiveness

of the mentor assignments but do routinely report the success or failure to achieve tenure and promotion as appropriate as the core measure.

Another dean referred to these distal measures of success in the following way:

We have not established measures of mentoring effectiveness, but generally talk about well-accepted metrics in research, education, and service. The outcomes of all review meetings are not shared with all faculty members, but the overall assessments are certainly shared when appropriate.

A third dean relies on informal evidence to assess the impact of mentoring:

The informal feedback is generally positive. There is certainly instances where more senior faculty are providing very useful professional coaching and mentoring. I haven't heard any criticism of the program, but at the same time I don't think it has represented any kind of sea change in the school's culture or life of the junior faculty. Stated otherwise, most of us thought that our practice was already consistent with the policy.

While distal metrics such as tenure and promotion outcomes are certainly reasonable sources of evidence, there has been no systematic attempt to link those outcomes with mentoring activities. In fact, in the present climate, there is no way of knowing if tenure and promotion rates would be significantly different in the complete absence of formal or informal mentoring. The ability to link distal outcomes with more proximal mentoring activities is certainly challenging, but based on these data, it is fair to say that there is little systematic attempt to evaluate the impact of faculty mentoring.

It is also interesting to note that survey responses seem to indicate that mentoring is the cure for all potential problems including improving departmental climate, attending to the often unique needs women and faculty of color, or even faculty satisfaction. Well over half of the survey respondents indicate that current mentoring practices adequately accomplish these goals, yet there is no evidence of any attempt to purposefully evaluate these claims. Without clear mechanisms to assess mentoring, we have no way of knowing what impact any mentoring activity is having within a department or unit. The mere existence of some form of mentoring is serving as a proxy for its success across various dimensions of faculty life.

4) Challenges and Concerns

Both the survey format and dean narratives sought to uncover challenges to mentoring at UB. Below is a brief discussion of the major barriers respondents identified.

a. Engagement by Faculty

As mentioned earlier in this report, there does not appear to be uniform support for mentoring service, particularly among some senior faculty. One survey respondent wrote that; *“Mentoring falls on the shoulders of a few faculty; workload is not accounted for as faculty load.”* Another wrote that there is *“senior faculty reticence with written agreements”* while another respondent claimed that, *“The primary challenge is that full professors in the department do not want to change the program in a way that would require more work of them or establish a less subjective basis for measuring progress”*. These concerns are also reflected in some dean statements. As one dean commented, *“Senior faculty members “pushed back” when presented with the need to put the Mentoring Agreement in writing.”* To address this problem, this dean asked the unit Personnel Committee to develop a *“simple template (vs. contract) for the Mentoring Agreement.”* Perhaps another kind of disinterest among some senior faculty is contained in the statement by a dean regarding the differences between chairs. In his words, *“The specific challenges we’ve encountered center on the chairs seeing mentoring as part of their responsibilities. Some take it more seriously than others.”*

b. Too Bureaucratic

Some survey respondents and dean comments indicate that, among some faculty, there is a belief that formal policies/programs are incompatible with effective mentoring. As one survey respondent stated, *“The biggest challenge is semantic; mentoring is not administrative reporting, and it is not advocacy the minute it becomes too formalized because time is wasted on paperwork and reporting rather than on the conversations essential to successful mentoring.”* Interestingly, this respondent seems committed to being an effective mentor but is perhaps unaware that “best practices” in mentoring trend towards more formalized, rather than informal, subjective and highly arbitrary practices. Some dean narratives reflect similar concerns. One dean commented that faculty see the process as consisting of *“too much paperwork and the process makes informal process formal.”* According to this dean, some faculty see mentoring as simply, *“another administrative headache and not really about the junior faculty member.”* Another dean reports that, *“the policy is cumbersome, requiring formal plans, and assessment seems to demand excessive administration oversight and reporting.”*

c. Evaluation

Survey responses and dean comments reflect a common view that what passes for evaluation is the attributed connection between mentoring and tenure/promotion success rates. One survey respondent discusses the success of mentoring in the following way: *“Our program is successful because we prepare our faculty well for promotion and tenure. The program starts on day one. We work on their CV and all aspects involved to get the best and more complete dossier.”* Another respondent wrote of this challenge in the following way: *“We have had a problem with*

reconciling the support and evaluation functions of the mentors, and monitoring the mentoring committees to ensure consistency of follow through. We address the first by having mentoring committees report to the Vice Dean for Research and Faculty rather than to the P&T committee. We address the second by requesting written annual mentoring reports with a checklist.” In discussing evaluation, one dean writes that: *“The chairs are to meet with each faculty member once a year and review their progress over the past year. For that purpose, we ask the chairs to collect from each faculty member their metrics. We use this data to produce reports on the unit’s metrics for the provost’s office and for each chair to use in their interview with faculty members in their department.* Similar to the survey responses, while there is some attempt to understand the impact of mentoring in this unit, it is largely focused on tenure and promotion and conducted in an unsystematic fashion. A dean from another unit has a similar perspective on formal assessment: *“We have not prepared formal reports of the effectiveness of the mentor assignment but do routinely report the success or failure to achieve tenure and promotion as appropriate as the core measure. Since the policy was put in place there have been no tenure denials in the school.”* The use of mentor reports is not uncommon. One dean, for instance, described evaluation in the following way: *“Each mentor will submit a brief annual report to the chair for each of their mentees. This report summarizes the major issues discussed during the academic year and, where problem areas were discussed, how those were addressed and/or resolved.”* Finally, another dean reports that, *“There is no ‘gold standard’ so it is difficult to know if (the frequency or infrequency of mentoring) is a problem. We have not evaluated satisfaction in the faculty members who are being mentored so we do not have data on whether or not the process is being effective.”* This dean captures the essential point. While there is recognition among several survey respondents and deans of the importance of evaluation, most “evaluation” practices are not systematic, are mostly subjective, and consequently, do not provide clear measures of effectiveness. We do not currently know the impact of any mentoring on campus. One survey respondent sums up the situation succinctly: *“We provide mentoring, but it is impossible to know if it does any good.”*

d. Non-Tenure Track/Tenured Faculty

A number of survey respondents and deans identified challenges associated with mentoring non-tenure track and tenured faculty. As reported above, a large percentage of survey respondents see the need for providing additional mentoring services to tenured associate professors and to clinical/adjunct professors. One survey respondent wrote that, *“Some associate professors refuse to have mentors. They are the ones who are not productive. If the university were to take an interest in mentoring such faculty, the overall productivity of the university might be improved.”* Another commented that, *“We do not have a policy for associate professors, although they can apply for mentoring funding.”* Deans certainly do understand the need for mentoring of tenured faculty and see a difference between mentoring for promotion to associate and mentoring for promotion to full. However, in most cases there is little structure in place to provide mentoring services for associate professors. As one dean wrote: *“there is no formal mentoring for tenured associate professors except*

for annual meetings with the department chair. At the moment, there is not a perceived need in this regard. That said, a system consistent with the university policy for such mentoring will be in place by the end of this semester.” Another dean commented simply that, “We have not provided mentoring to associate professors or to full professors.” Another dean commented that, “While I feel our unit has successfully implemented policies for tenure track assistant professor we could do a better job with associate professor mentoring where we provide feedback on the benchmarks and expectations for achieving full professor rank.”

The general absence of mentoring services for associate professors is also the same for clinical and adjunct professors.

e. Purpose/Content

The data suggest that there is some uncertainty about the purpose and content of mentoring activities. While many, and perhaps most, see mentoring as primarily about tenure and promotion issues, several respondents had a more nuanced understanding of mentoring as involving a broader template of issues. One dean, for instance, drew a comparison between mentor as “evaluator” and mentor as a “friend or coach.” Where one falls in this continuum will greatly affect the content of mentoring services. It also seems that some units offer professional development workshops in areas that could easily be part of a broader mentoring template. However, even these professional workshops seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Finally, some comments suggest a lack of clarity over the confidentiality of mentoring, the potential problem of conflicting and inaccurate mentoring information delivered to mentees, and how to legislate compliance.

f. Resources

Finally, the issue of resources was identified by several survey respondents and deans as an ongoing challenge. The problems of resources came in different forms. In one case, mentoring was seen as a difficult task because of the lack of senior faculty members able or willing to serve as mentors. In other cases, there was the belief that mentoring should be incentivized in some way. In still other cases, some responses point to a need to have access to best practices, web sites on mentoring, or other “resources” that might enhance the mentoring experience. Perhaps the most challenging of these is the issue of incentivizing mentoring. While few respondents sought to identify what incentives might promote greater engagement in mentoring, some respondents did discuss potential incentives such as discretionary salary increases, workload adjustments, criteria to be considered for promotion to full professor, as well as other forms of recognition.