Mentoring 101: How to Get What You Need To Thrive in the Academy

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Today’s Facilitator: Mindi Thompson

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- Registered Health Service Psychologist
- Faculty Success Program Director of Coach Training
Today’s Workshop

PART I: Mentoring Challenges
PART II: Mentoring Mistakes
PART III: Rethinking Mentoring
PART IV: Your Mentoring Network
PART I: MENTORING CHALLENGES
The tenure-track is stressful for ALL faculty due to:

- Varying degrees of preparation for ALL aspects of the job
- Minimal feedback and support
- Unclear criteria for promotion & tenure
- Ever-escalating expectations for research and funding
- Need to front-load research portfolio
- Long probationary period (6 years) followed by a series of high-stakes, yet anonymous votes
Additionally, under-represented faculty commonly describe:

- Struggling to find time for research given diversity requests
- Experiencing emotional exhaustion from differential classroom dynamics
- Managing visibility, invisibility and belonging
- Lack of collegial acceptance (mentors but not sponsors)
All of these challenges can lead to...

- A negative impact on productivity during the transitions
- Engaging in *self-isolation* as a protective defense mechanism
- Emotional exhaustion and anxiety
- Stress-related illness
- Strained relationships
- Thoughts of leaving the Academy
PART II: MENTORING MISTAKES
1. You Don’t Understand THE GAME

The Structural Challenge of Academic Work:

- We tend to prioritize based on accountability

- The things that matter the MOST to marketability, tenure, promotion, scholarly reputation, mobility, and long-term success have the LEAST *built-in accountability*. 
Biggest Mistakes

Your Time Is NOT Aligned With Your Evaluation Criteria

Criteria for Tenure & Promotion
- Research: 70%
- Teaching: 20%
- Service: 10%

Typical New Faculty Member
- Research: 70%
- Teaching: 28%
- Service: 2%
New Skill: Daily Writing

Write Every Day

30-60 minutes

First thing in the morning

Academics often imagine they must have long unbroken stretches of time to write, but the demands of an academic career seldom allow this luxury.

Daily writing leads to steady productivity and fewer feelings of anxiety over failure to meet expectations for productivity.

**Mental shift:** writing is the most important part of my long term success, therefore it's my top priority.

**Behavior shift:** I write every day and create a way to be accountable that works for me.
### Biggest Mistakes

#### 2. You Have *Limiting Beliefs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mistake</th>
<th>Belief</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differentiating the ideal from what’s real</td>
<td>“It’s really all about the work, so if I just do great work I’ll be successful.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reactive vs. proactive stance</td>
<td>“Everyone’s so busy, I don’t want to bother anyone with ____________…”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyper-individualism</td>
<td>“I can figure everything out myself.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>“I hold on to work until it’s perfect…”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staying Safe/Playing Small</td>
<td>“I only connect with people in my department that I like.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Super _____ Syndrome</td>
<td>“I take care of everyone else’s needs.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(while ignoring or neglecting my own).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Taking care of my needs is selfish”.</td>
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PART III: RE-THINKING MENTORING
## RE-THINKING MENTORING

### CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

- Mentoring is *really* important!
- Mentoring = magical relationship between faculty
- Faculty have the time, energy, and desire to serve as mentors
- Once tenured, faculty no longer need mentoring
- What worked in the past, should work today

### WHAT’S MISSING

- "Mentoring" means different things to different people
- Identifying faculty needs & getting them met
- Mentoring is time-intensive, invisible, & unrewarded labor
- Every transition requires new skills & support
- Expectations today are far greater than the past
Each step on the academic ladder is a new game with new rules (written and unwritten), new questions, and new challenges …

The most efficient way to make a transition is to build a network of mentors, sponsors, and collaborators that meet new rank-appropriate needs.
Re-Think Mentoring

- Substantive Feedback
- Emotional Support
- Access to Opportunities
- Intellectual Community
- Sponsorship
- Role Models
- Accountability for what REALLY Matters
- Professional Development

Re-Think Mentoring
Ask: What do I need? How can I get it?

Faculty Member

- Substantive Feedback
- Access to Opportunities
- Sponsorship
- Professional Development
- Accountability for what REALLY Matters
- Emotional Support
- Intellectual Community
- Role Models

Faculty Member
This is Mentoring

- Substantive Feedback
- Sponsorship
- Access to Opportunities
- Accountability For What REALLY Matters
- Role Models
- Professional Development
- Emotional Support
- Intellectual Community
- Safe Space

1. Department Colleagues
2. Professional Editor
3. Readers (see intellectual community)
4. Internal

1. Senior Department Faculty
2. Internal Mentors
3. Peer Mentors
4. External Mentors

1. Friends
2. Family
3. Other
4. Readers

1. 0-25%
2. 25-50%
3. 50-75%
4. 75-100%
5. 100%
PART IV:
CULTIVATING A THRIVING NETWORK
Cultivating Your Mentoring Network

THE PROCESS:

1. Assess your current network
2. Identify your current needs
3. Ask: How can I get my needs met?
4. Plan to maximize your opportunities
5. Identify your limiting beliefs
6. Commit to ACTION

It requires knowing WHAT you need and ASKING for it!
STEP #1: ASSESS YOUR CURRENT ACADEMIC NETWORK
What do YOU need? How can YOU get it?

- Substantive Feedback
- Access to Opportunities
- Professional Development
- Emotional Support
- Intellectual Community
- Sponsorship
- Accountability for what REALLY Matters
- Role Models

YOU!
STEP #2:
IDENTIFY YOUR CURRENT NEEDS
WHAT’S MISSSING? WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Substantive Feedback
- Department Colleagues
  - Readers (see intellectual community)
- Professional Editor

Sponsorship
- 1. Senior Department Faculty
- Internal Mentors
- External Mentors
- Peer Mentors

Access to Opportunities

Professional Development
- Internal
- External

Emotional Support
- Friends
- Family
- Other

Intellectual Community
- Readers

Accountability For What REALLY Matters

Role Models

Safe Space

YOU
STEP #3: How can YOU move towards getting your needs met?

Missing Piece: _____________________________________

1. _______________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________
4. _______________________________________________
5. _______________________________________________
6. _______________________________________________
### STEP #4: How Can You Maximize Your Opportunities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names:</th>
<th>Your Next Conference?</th>
<th>Who Already Has What You Want?</th>
<th>Who has expressed interest in your work?</th>
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<td>1. _________</td>
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STEP #5: Identify Your Limiting Beliefs

LIMITING BELIEFS:

Who am I to contact _________?

My work isn’t ready to show anyone/good enough.

I may be rejected/embarrassed/humiliated.

I don’t have the resources/time to _________.

Nobody has ever helped me in the past, so nobody will help me now.

I’m afraid of ________________.

I don’t know where to find ________________.
STEP #6:  
Commit to Action

What are THREE actions you can take THIS WEEK to move forward?

1. _______________________________________________________________________

2. _______________________________________________________________________

3. _______________________________________________________________________
The Real Secret to Mentoring:

- Start with a new mentoring model
- Identify what YOU need to thrive
- ASK for it!
Moving Forward
NCFDD Core Curriculum

Strategic Planning
- Every Semester Needs a Plan
- Manage Stress & Rejection
- Develop a Daily Writing Practice

Healthy Relationships
- Engage in Healthy Conflict
- Cultivate a Network of Mentors & Sponsors
- The Art of Saying “No”

Work-Life Balance
- Master Academic Time Management
- Align Your Time with Your Priorities

Explosive Productivity
- Overcome Academic Perfectionism
- Move from Resistance to Writing
NCFDD Membership:

- Monthly core workshops
- Monthly guest expert workshops
- Weekly productivity tips (*Monday Motivator*)
- Private peer-mentoring forum & monthly writing challenges
- Multi-week Facilitated Learning Communities

1. How to Write a Book Proposal
2. How to Write a Grant Proposal
3. Teaching in No Time
4. Academic Job Market
GRADUATE STUDENTS POST-DOCS

Faculty Success Program

NCFDD's signature program, the Faculty Success Program is specifically designed to transform your personal and professional life. It's all about learning the secrets to increasing your research productivity, getting control of your time, and living a full and healthy life beyond your campus.

Read more >