

# Mentoring Policy

## Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

March 6, 2011

The BMB mentoring policy is designed to provide help and support to faculty at multiple levels of formality. Each assistant and associate professor in BMB is formally assigned a mentor of higher rank. The selection of mentor is made in consultation with the mentee and can be changed at any point by discussion with the department chair. The mentee may also decline to participate in a formal mentoring relationship.

The mentor is expected to meet with the mentee frequently enough to be able to provide information, advice, and feedback. Important times to meet include in preparation for submission of Academic Performance reports and before grant deadlines. The mentor acts as an advocate and should help the mentee sort out priorities, understand expectations, and present their academic performance in the most positive light.

Formal assessment is provided by letter prepared according to the BMB Faculty Performance Expectations and Evaluations Policy. A document is drafted by a professor who is not the mentor. This draft is based on the academic performance report and other documentation as required. Separation of the functions of drafting the assessment document and mentoring is designed to allow the mentee to explore sensitive issues and concerns with their mentor in a confidential setting. The assessment document is read aloud and discussed by the FAC, then again by the whole faculty. This results in all faculty of higher rank be aware of progress and successes of junior faculty. This is designed to help all faculty serve as informal mentors when appropriate occasions arise. Assigned mentors are encouraged to help mentees understand the written assessment provided by the department each year. The chair of the department meets with each professor each year to review the assessment document.

In addition to the formally assigned mentor, all professors are strongly encouraged to establish multiple informal mentoring relationships. These are typically based on shared interests (for example research area), shared duties (for example team teaching in a course), or other situation. In many cases these people may be peers. In addition, professors are encouraged to take advantage of programs and seminars hosted by the Office of Faculty Organizational Development.

All faculty are strongly encouraged to participate in various functions of the department including the seminar series, the monthly faculty meetings, the occasional faculty retreats etc. Participating in the intellectual life of the department is an important way for junior faculty to become aware of expectations and to allow other faculty to participate in informal mentoring networks that can provide a multilayered web of support.

The goal of this mentoring policy is to ensure that junior faculty have multiple avenues of support. Junior professors should feel that the department and university cares about their success and provides many mechanisms for support.

Amended August 23, 2011 TDS