

MENTORING PROGRAM FOR PROBATIONARY FACULTY IN HISPANIC STUDIES-1

Department of Hispanic Studies

University of Kentucky

Approved by the Faculty in August 2008
Approved by the Office of the Dean in September 2009

The purposes of mentoring. The goal of mentoring is to help faculty acclimate to their new environment and to the culture of the Department, provide them with professional guidance as they launch their research agendas, facilitate access to the appropriate levels and types of institutional and professional service, and help adapt to the instructional context of UK.

Mentoring in the Department of Hispanic Studies. In Fall 2007 the Department of Hispanic Studies implemented a pilot mentoring model which was reported to the Office of the Dean. This model has been refined to incorporate elements from (a) a departmental self-evaluation conducted in Spring 2008 and (b) the new College regulations regarding “Formative Classroom Visits for Probationary faculty Attendant to Mentoring.” Following these guidelines, faculty mentors and their probationary faculty are encouraged to “engage in an informal, on-going dialogue on teaching. This discussion should be amplified by the mentor attending two to three of the probationary faculty member’s classes per year. In doing so, the mentor will be able to provide formative advice and feedback regarding a probationary faculty member’s teaching. No formal evaluation of the classroom visits should be written or included in the probationary member’s FMER, second-, third-, or fourth-year reviews, or promotion and tenure dossier. However, the department chair should ensure that these observations take place and are discussed with the probationary faculty member.” (Reg. IX, Approved Winter 2008).

In the Department of Hispanic Studies the mentoring process relies on: (a) an assigned mentor; (b) the Chair; and (c) the entire faculty.

- a. The Chair, after consultation with the Department’s Executive Committee and the incoming professor, appoints a mentor from among the tenured faculty for the incoming professor. Given the cross-disciplinary nature of our faculty’s research, a mentor or co-mentor may be housed in a department outside Hispanic Studies.
- b. As with all faculty, the Chair schedules a formal meeting with each assistant professor in the Spring semester to discuss his/her FMER rating and evaluation. In addition, several informal meetings with the Chair take place for assistant professors.
- c. The entire faculty assists in providing guidance in addition to that provided by the chair and the assigned mentor. Assistant professors are also encouraged to talk to other professors in or outside Hispanic Studies, especially if their area of expertise happens to be of an interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary nature.

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Responsibilities:

The mentor

- meets two or three times a semester with the probationary faculty member to provide (1) general direction with respect to research, teaching, and service in the university, which includes discussing current and future research plans, as well as issues related to professional matters; and (2) specific guidance pertaining to teaching, research and publication, service, tenure and promotion, departmental protocol, departmental infrastructure and funding resources. For instance, in terms of guidance, the mentor advises on submission of research manuscripts and provides feedback when necessary, advises on conference attendance and professional associations, discusses ideas for teaching, advises and monitors the mentee's service commitments outside the Department
- advises on how to articulate FMER materials
- observes two-three classes per year and meets with the mentee to provide informal feedback on his/her class performance
- alerts the Chair and the mentee of problems that may arise with regard to research, teaching or service
- reports at the second, third, and fourth yearly review and at the tenure review of the mentee

The chair

- appoints an appropriate mentor in consultation with the Executive Committee and the mentee to ensure that there is a comfortable, working relationship between them
- explains to the mentee the departmental, College, and university guidelines with regard to research, teaching, and service
- informs the mentee of workshops or open sessions that provide reinforcement of expectations, guidelines, regulations, procedures, etc.
- monitors the service commitment of the mentee and the institution's adherence to the terms of the hiring contract in order to protect the research time of the assistant professor
- has one formal meeting per year with the assistant professor to discuss his/her FMER ratings and evaluation, and holds non-scheduled discussions to provide additional viewpoints, second opinions, corroboration of factual data, and confirmation of ideas and suggestions from the mentor

The mentee

- is responsible for seeking the advice of the Chair, the mentor, and other faculty members
- takes advantage of the workshops that the university offers to ensure broad exposure to information and to have the ability to double-check the information and ideas from different sources
- reports to the chair any problems regarding mentoring and makes suggestions that might benefit or better support the Department's mentoring process and the careers of our faculty.