

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Policy on Faculty Mentoring

Sponsor: Sheila Kannappan and the Diversity Committee; Department Chair: Christian Iliadis; Approved by Department on 09 July, 2020.

- I. Mentoring will be optional for all faculty except assistant professors (both tenure-stream and fixed-term), who should have at least one formal, more senior mentor who is expert in the mentee's subfield. If declining official mentorship within the department, assistant professors must document having a professionally aligned mentor externally and meeting with them as described in VI.
- II. All faculty at all levels may select any or all of the following mentoring options in the department:
 - a. A formal one-on-one mentor in their subfield or otherwise closely professionally aligned.
 - b. A formal mentoring committee with 2-3 mentors in or out of their subfield.
 - c. An informal peer mentoring group of up to 6 faculty with similar goals for mutual mentoring; the group may be of mixed seniority, but cannot satisfy the formal mentoring requirement in I.
- III. In consultation with the Chair, the Associate Chair for Diversity and Mentoring (ACDM) will help mentees select their own mentors by soliciting and suggesting names and determining availability. The Executive Assistant to the Chair (EAC) will provide reminders and scheduling assistance for mentoring meetings twice per year. Assistant professor mentees will be expected to respond explicitly to both opportunities, but they may decline one of them based on personal preference.
- IV. An orientation will be organized by the ACDM and EAC each August that includes three ~half-hour sessions: (i) a meet-and-greet for all departmental faculty, (ii) a broadly useful mentorship skills session with a new focus topic each year, and (iii) a Q&A on a variety of annually updated documents (e.g., *from the Chair*: promotion/tenure timelines & requirements, research/teaching/service expectations; *from the ACDM*: mentor/mentee best practices, outside training/mentoring opportunities). A post-orientation faculty survey will be used to arrange any new mentoring matches or peer groups by September.
- V. New faculty will be given this policy on arrival and the ACDM will assist with immediate mentoring options, which may be supplemented/revisited at the time of the next orientation.
- VI. Formal mentors are expected to meet with their mentees twice per year (or once per year based on mentee preference, see III) in dedicated meetings to discuss progress toward career goals (e.g., tenure/promotion/leadership advancement), strategies to address challenges and problems, and ways the mentor can provide additional help (advocacy, information, networking, etc.). Additional/informal meetings are encouraged, particularly for feedback on promotion materials or other timely help requested by the mentee.
- VII. Peer mentoring groups will be matched based on desired meeting frequency among other criteria, with an expectation of at least one meeting per semester. Each semester at least

- one relevant workshop, offered either within the department or by the university (e.g., by the Center for Faculty Excellence/TEAM ADVANCE), will be advertised as a recommended but optional discussion topic for peer mentoring groups.
- VIII. The only required reporting will be verification to the ACDM and EAC that the meetings happened and who was there. However, mentee preparation for meetings is strongly encouraged and some resources to enable that will be provided at the annual orientation.
 - IX. Mentoring will be decoupled from performance review and treated as confidential by default, unless the mentee requests broader sharing or university policies mandate reporting. The Department Chair will independently meet with all assistant professors at least once per year and will also seek to meet with them informally to monitor their welfare, including satisfaction with mentoring.
 - X. Mentees may ask the ACDM to make changes to their mentoring arrangements at any time.
 - XI. An annual, confidential survey will collect statistics on mentoring frequency and quality as well as suggestions for improving this plan. The ACDM and the Department Chair will monitor effectiveness and make changes as appropriate. In addition, any formal mentors who fail to provide the minimum one dedicated meeting per year for their mentees will be replaced.