

Mentoring Plan for ASU's SGSUP

January 2017

The School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning (SGSUP) has had a long-standing tradition of supporting junior faculty by not overburdening them with service, among other measures. One approach used to enhance the success of junior, tenure-track faculty has been to assign each Assistant Professor with a dedicated mentor with whom they can meet regularly to talk through any challenges or questions they might have about research, teaching, and service duties as well as the tenure and promotion process. Although the unit has never had a formal mentoring plan, the process has typically involved the Director appointing a mentor for each faculty. At present, Professor Kelli Larson is serving as the mentor for junior faculty in the School.

With several changes in leadership in recent years, the consistency of the mentoring program has fluctuated. To ensure the uniform application of a mentoring program, SGSUP will implement a standard plan for mentoring tenure-track Assistant Professors and lecturers. This plan will involve assigning a tenured faculty member—in collaboration with the junior faculty member—to serve in this capacity.

The expectations of the mentors follow:

- Reach out to their mentee at least one time per semester to discuss their progress and any challenges they may be facing.
- Meet with the mentee at their request (likely no more than once per month).
- Provide input on the annual evaluation reports, progress-toward-tenure reviews, and other key evaluation materials including the dossier for tenure and promotion.
- Refer them to other faculty, resources, etc. that can help them overcome challenges and be successful at ASU.

The expectations of the mentees are to:

- Reach out to their mentor as needed.
- Provide their mentor with review materials for annual evaluations, progress-toward-tenure reviews, and other review periods.
- Ask their mentor or others with questions, requests, etc.

Suggestions for selecting mentor include:

- Consider relatively newly tenured professors as mentors, since they have gone through the tenure-and-promotion (T&P) process more recently. Also prioritize faculty who have served on the CLAS or University-level T&P committee.
- Aim to match disciplines, fields, and/or interests among mentor and mentee, such that the expectations for certain areas of expertise are shared.
- Potentially assign two mentors—one for T&P process at ASU and another for assistance in faculty member's field of study.

In addition to assigning mentors, once or twice a year all untenured faculty will be invited to a meeting with a senior faculty member to discuss the expectations of tenure. Such meeting will provide an opportunity for untenured faculty to understand expectations, but will also provide an opportunity for senior faculty to become familiar with the diversity of our transdisciplinary junior faculty.

When possible, we will seek mentorship from outside experts. For example, when established senior faculty visit our school for colloquia or research, we will invite them to join a discussion with junior faculty on career progress. This is especially important in areas where SGSUP lacks senior faculty to provide mentorship.