Faculty Mentoring in the College of Engineering

Faculty mentoring is a process by which senior faculty share knowledge, advice and experience for the purpose of helping junior faculty thrive as they develop their careers. The College provides mentoring at the department and college levels. Overall, the belief is that all junior faculty should receive substantive mentoring at the department level, with a light touch of counsel at the college level. The college-level mentoring should provide an additional source of advocacy and support for the junior faculty member. Informal mentoring across department boundaries and even college boundaries is encouraged and can be an additional resource for career development. Successful mentoring relationships will address: department and university operations and policies; field-specific needs and opportunities; topics beyond achieving tenure and promotion; assessment or advice regarding current and future collaborations; and other needs that are specific to the junior faculty member. Successful mentoring is a key element of sustaining a vibrant, collegial, and convergent intellectual culture in the College.

Each department is expected to have a mentoring program for their junior faculty and to recognize proactive mentors’ investment of time and energy as important service to the department. To complement the department programs and ensure that the College’s emphasis on research convergence is a benefit to the junior faculty members’ research programs, the Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development (ADRFD) will serve as an additional mentor. The purpose of the ADRFD in this role is to serve as an impartial facilitator and advocate, not as a judge or informant. As such, the ADRFD should not serve on the college’s Appointment, Promotion and Tenure (APT) Committee nor be engaged in any of the college APT’s discussions. The ADRFD will engage with junior faculty in the following ways:

- The ADRFD will meet with junior faculty at least once in their 2nd or 3rd year, for an open discussion on cross-program collaborations, onboarding experiences, what is working well, what is not working well, etc. The format can be one-on-one or small group. The ADRFD and also the Dean will have an “open door” policy for faculty to set up additional meetings if they wish.
- The ADRFD will use the faculty annual reports (FARs) and other information available about the research foci of the junior faculty member to identify opportunities (e.g., connections of the junior faculty member to other investigators and funding agencies) and any need for additional support.