

Johns Hopkins University/ School of Medicine

Mentorship Best Practices

Report of the Mentorship Best Practices Leadership Committee

Committee Members

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Mentorship Best Practices- Executive Summary

Mentorship and other career guidance relationships (see definitions below) are well recognized to promote professional success and job satisfaction. Surveys of faculty of the Johns Hopkins University (COACHE survey) and those within the School of Medicine (Joy of Medicine, Faculty Satisfaction) consistently identify mentorship as an area of concern to the faculty and a high priority for improvement. Approximately 20% of the faculty in the SOM self-report having no mentor, which is similar to the proportions without mentorship in other divisions of JHU. In January of 2019, leadership of JHU requested each division within the university develop a school-wide mentoring plan. In the spring of 2019, the SOM Faculty Senate identified mentorship as a high priority area for development of recommendations for improvement.

In response to this need, the Office of Faculty Development convened a work group of faculty development leaders from across the SOM to develop best practices around the topic of mentorship. Participation was solicited from all 30 departments and there was robust engagement from both basic science and clinical departments. The group began by sharing their current mentoring practices focusing on seven domains (see Appendix 1) and, during a series of meetings over a nine month period, developed recommendations to improve mentoring along those domains. In addition, the group identified tools and resources needed to improve mentoring practices, and where possible, developed those tools or found publicly available resources to meet those needs. These tools are included in the appendices of this report (see Appendices 2-6).

Committee Recommendations:

1. One or more mentors should be identified for each faculty member prior to the start of each new hire's employment at Hopkins.
2. Each faculty member should be encouraged to connect to multiple mentors/advisors. Processes and infra-structure needed to facilitate the connection of mentees to multiple mentors, and to change/add mentors as needed throughout a faculty member's career, should be developed within departments, SOM, and/or JHU.
3. The SOM, individual departments, and/or groups of departments should develop and support processes that enhance access of faculty to internal reviewers of their intellectual products, including, but not limited to, grant applications, manuscripts, course curricula, oral presentations, etc.
4. Each department should develop, and make public to its faculty, processes to formally recognize mentoring activities.
5. The following processes that promote accountability for successful mentoring relationships should be developed:
 - A. Tools should be made accessible to faculty that facilitate accountability of individual mentors and mentees to each other.
 - B. Each department should develop standardized processes and procedures to assess the quantity/quality of mentorship for each faculty member at least annually (e.g. during mandatory annual review).
 - C. Departmental leaders should report to SOM leadership on their mentoring/advising programs, including metrics of engagement and effectiveness; and, SOM leadership should provide feedback to department leaders of aggregated data on metrics of mentoring effectiveness/engagement across the SOM.
6. Programs to train mentors and mentees should be made more readily available to the faculty and mentoring resources/tools be made available via a public repository.

7. To facilitate resolution of conflict between mentors and mentees, each department should develop, and make public to its faculty, processes that allow a mentee to seek assistance from an impartial mediator.
8. Existing IT infrastructure and other resources within and across departments of the SOM and JHU should be used to develop and deploy tools to meet the mentoring needs of all faculty, to monitor the effectiveness of these relationships, and to report on mentoring engagement and effectiveness.

Brief summary of committee findings and recommendations for best practices:

1. Effective mentorship is important to all faculty members at every career stage, and individuals who can provide effective career guidance should be readily accessible to all faculty members from the start to the end of professional life. The committee recommends that one or more mentors be identified for each faculty member prior to the start of each new hire's employment at Hopkins, and that processes be in place, within departments and across SOM/JHU, that facilitate the ability of faculty members to add and/or change mentors as needed throughout a faculty member's employment at Hopkins.
2. Recognizing that there are numerous advantages to having multiple mentors, including conflict avoidance/resolution, access to process and content expertise, and access to advising, coaching, sponsoring, and other career and work-life balance guidance, the committee recommends that each faculty member be encouraged to connect to multiple mentors/advisors. Options include, but are not limited to, formal mentoring committees, designated departmental/divisional faculty development advisors, peer mentoring, alumni (Johns Hopkins Academy) and/or other mentors/advisors external to a faculty member's home department. Furthermore, the committee recommends that processes and infra-structure needed to facilitate the connection of mentees to multiple mentors be developed within departments, SOM, and/or JHU.
3. Although primary mentors commonly review a mentee's intellectual products, the committee believes that this method of internal review may not be sufficient to meet the needs of all faculty. The committee recommends that the SOM, individual departments, and/or groups of departments develop and support processes that enhance access of faculty to internal reviewers of their intellectual products, including, but not limited to, grant applications, manuscripts, course curricula, oral presentations, etc. Options include, but are not limited to, development of formal review committees within or across departments, organization of faculty into teams with common interests who can provide internal review of shared academic projects, and contractual arrangements with external reviewers.
4. The committee acknowledges that mentoring is a time consuming activity that has value to individual mentors and mentees as well as the institution, and that too few mentors are available to meet the needs of a large faculty body. To engage more faculty in mentoring/advising activities, the committee recommends that each department develop, and make public to its faculty, processes to formally recognize mentoring activities, including indirect payments (e.g. through incentive/bonus pay), direct payments (fee for service), access to departmental resources (e.g. internal research funding), attainment of promotional criteria (i.e. citizenship requirement), mentoring awards, and/or other incentives.
5. Accountability for success of mentoring/advising relationships is shared by individual mentors and mentees and by institutional leaders at departmental and SOM levels. As such, each party has a responsibility to monitor metrics of mentoring success (process and/or outcomes) and report on these metrics. The committee recommends that a) tools be made accessible to faculty that facilitate accountability of individual mentors and mentees to each other (see Appendix 2); b) each department develop standardized processes and procedures to assess the quantity/quality of mentorship for each faculty member at least annually (e.g. during mandatory annual review);

and, c) departmental leaders report to SOM leadership on their mentoring/advising programs, including metrics of engagement and effectiveness. The committee further recommends that SOM leadership provide feedback to department leaders of aggregated data on metrics of mentoring effectiveness/engagement across the SOM.

6. Monitoring mentorship should be followed up with specific action plans tailored to the needs of individual mentors, mentees, and mentoring programs; individual departments are better positioned than the SOM to remediate the specific challenges encountered. To assist departmental leaders in this effort, the committee recommends that programs to train mentors and mentees be made more readily available to the faculty (see Appendix 3) and mentoring resources/tools be made available via public repository (see Appendix 2).
7. The committee recognizes that conflict between mentors and mentees may occur and that a power asymmetry inherent to these relationships presents a challenge to reporting and resolution. To facilitate resolution of conflict between mentors and mentees, the committee recommends that each department develop, and make public to its faculty, processes that allow a mentee to seek assistance from an impartial mediator. Options include, but are not limited to, designated Vice-Chair for Faculty, departmental ombudsman, or standing mentoring committee.
8. The committee acknowledges that the resources required to optimally pair mentees to multiple mentors/advisors, to monitor the effectiveness of these relationships, and to report on mentoring engagement and effectiveness may be substantive, and that these activities may pose a burden on individual faculty members and departments. Standardized electronic tools can make these processes easier, more efficient, and precise and have been developed (or are in development) by individual departments within the SOM and JHU. The committee recommends leveraging existing IT infrastructure within and across departments of the SOM and JHU (e.g. JHU/SOM faculty data warehouses, mentoring tools developed within Anesthesiology and Oncology) to develop and deploy tools to meet the mentoring needs of all faculty, which is critical to maintaining a world-class and productive faculty body at the SOM.

Definition of Career Guidance Relationships

Mentor

A trusted, experienced person who engages with a less experienced person in a long-term relationship that is characterized by frequent recurring interactions in which career development guidance is provided, including setting goals, identifying opportunities, facilitating skill development and decision making, motivating growth, making introductions to vital persons, and submitting nominations for awards and offices

Advisor/Counselor

A person who provides guidance to another on a specific issue- e.g. process expertise, content expertise, work-life balance, etc., in single or multiple encounters

Coach

A person who encourages/facilitates decision making by another regarding a specific issue or set of issues for a defined duration

Sponsor

A person, who by virtue of her/his experience or stature, nominates another person for awards, offices, and/or growth opportunities, and facilitates connections to key personnel

Mentorship Best Practices- Full Summary of Committee Findings and Recommendations

1. Mentorship begins with on-boarding of new faculty
 - a. on-boarding should include introduction to all roles expected of a faculty member, which may include clinical, educational, and research activities, and, an introduction to SOM/departmental processes critical to professional advancement
 - b. a vital element to on-boarding is introduction to key personnel, including mentors and/or advisors, who can facilitate career advancement for each faculty member
 - c. on-boarding resources common to faculty across the SOM should be collated and made available through the SOM (see Appendix 4); individual departments should make available to new faculty members additional on-boarding material specific to their domains
 - d. both live sessions and archived/electronic materials should be available to facilitate on-boarding of new faculty because all new faculty members may not be able to attend a limited number of live sessions
2. Mentor-mentee pairing
 - a. The committee recognizes that effective guidance is essential for development and maintenance of a successful and fulfilling professional life, and that faculty members at all levels should have access to effective career counsel
 - b. At least one mentor should be made available to each new faculty member by the time a new faculty member begins work
 - c. The hiring party for each new faculty member should be responsible for identification of this initial mentor. Preferences of the faculty member should be sought and considered in the initial pairing.
 - d. Initial connection to mentors/advisors during onboarding should be followed-up at regular intervals during the first year; initial connection may be with a “permanent” mentor(s) or with a temporary advisor(s) until a permanent relationship with a mentor can be established

- e. Recognizing that there are numerous advantages to having multiple mentors, including conflict avoidance/resolution, access to process and content expertise, and access to advising, coaching, sponsoring, and other career and work-life balance guidance, the committee recommends that each faculty member is provided the opportunity to connect with multiple advisors/mentors
 - f. Each department is encouraged to connect faculty to multiple advisors/mentors through any number of processes including, formal assignment to multiple mentors/advisory committees, establishment of standing departmental mentoring committees, designated senior faculty advisor (e.g. vice-chair of faculty), organization of faculty members into teams with common academic interests and projects, and/or other well-defined departmental processes
 - g. The committee recognizes that peers can provide valuable advice/mentoring for their peers. The committee encourages the SOM and individual departments/divisions to develop processes to connect faculty to promote peer-to-peer mentoring interactions
 - h. Appropriate mentors for each faculty member may reside outside her/his home division/department; the SOM and individual departments are encouraged to develop processes to facilitate these connections (e.g. development of electronic networking tools, interdepartmental seminars, etc.)
 - i. The committee recognizes that emeritus faculty are another potential source of mentors for active faculty. The committee believes there is an opportunity to engage the emeritus faculty, through the newly formed Hopkins Academy, and link them with active faculty. The committee encourages development of these programs
 - j. Faculty members should be provided the opportunity to change or add mentors if and when desired by the faculty member; departments should create processes that facilitate these changes/additions
 - k. The creation of electronic tools that can facilitate connection of faculty members to mentors, advisors, sponsors, etc. is encouraged (e.g. keyword searchable lists of faculty that include content expertise, mentoring experience, funding sources, etc). These resources may be developed at the level of JHU, SOM, or within individual departments
3. Assessing the effectiveness of mentoring activities
- a. Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of mentor-mentee interactions is essential to assure each faculty member has access to mentors/advisors who effectively assist with professional development
 - b. The SOM and individual departments share responsibility for monitoring effectiveness of mentoring activities, and both should maintain processes to monitor mentoring/advising activities on an ongoing basis; individual departments are better positioned than the SOM to remediate challenges encountered by individual mentors and mentees
 - c. At a minimum, each faculty member should be queried at least annually regarding her/his connection(s) to mentors/advisors and the effectiveness of those relationships; it is recommended that this take place during each faculty member's mandatory annual review
 - d. Both process metrics (e.g. frequency of mentor-mentee meetings, effectiveness of mentoring/advising activities) and outcome metrics (e.g. timeliness of promotion, number of papers/grants/talks) have value in assessing effectiveness of mentoring/advising activities; and, ideally, both types of metrics should be used
 - e. The committee recognizes that numerous tools of varying complexity and depth are available to assess effectiveness of mentoring activities; however a specific recommendation for or against any one tool is not made. Access to samples of these instruments (via SOM electronic repository, see Appendix 2) should be made readily

- available to faculty and used at the discretion of individual departments and faculty members
- f. The committee acknowledges that monitoring effectiveness of mentoring activities can pose a financial and time burden on departments and individual faculty members. Standardized electronic tools can make this process easier, more efficient, and precise; development and maintenance of these tools by JHU, SOM, and/or individual departments is encouraged
4. Promoting effective mentoring/advising interactions
 - a. Most mentors have not had formal training in effective mentoring methods, and training has potential to improve quality of mentoring interactions. Some mentorship training programs are offered by SOM (e.g. Office of Faculty Development- Master Mentor) but opportunities for faculty to participate are limited and available programs may not apply to faculty members at all levels of seniority. The committee recommends expanding opportunities for faculty, at all levels, to participate in formal mentorship training programs, emphasizing deployment of on-line training modules (e.g. University of Minnesota certificate program; see Appendix 3); however, the committee recommends against mandatory mentorship training for all faculty
 - b. Formal training for mentees to derive more from their mentoring interactions is provided to SOM faculty 2/year (Office of Faculty Development- Mentee Rules seminar). The committee recommends continuing to offer these programs
 - c. Mentoring contracts can help to clarify responsibilities and deliverables for mentors and mentees. The committee recommends that sample contracts be easily accessible (via SOM electronic repository; see Appendix 2) to faculty for use at discretion of individual mentors/mentees; however, the committee recommends against requiring universal use of these contracts
 - d. Individual development plans (IDPs) have potential to provide clarity of purpose and deliverables in mentor-mentee relations. The committee recommends that sample IDPs be easily accessible (via SOM electronic repository; see Appendix 2) to faculty for use at discretion of individual mentors/mentees; however, the committee recommends against requiring universal use of IDPs in mentor-mentee interactions
 5. Review of intellectual contributions
 - a. The committee recognizes that a critical component of academic advancement is the creation and dissemination of knowledge; and that review of intellectual products by trusted advisors, prior to submission for review or use by external groups, improves the probability of favorable review and impact of the intellectual contribution
 - b. Although primary mentors are commonly engaged in these review functions, the committee believes that this method for review of intellectual products is not sufficient to meet the needs of all faculty, who are at differing levels of experience and engaged in a diverse set of intellectual pursuits
 - c. The committee recommends that the SOM, individual departments, and/or groups of departments develop and support processes that enhance access of faculty to internal reviewers of their intellectual products, including, but not limited to, grant applications, manuscripts, course curricula, oral presentations, etc. An example of an interdepartmental program for grant review is that developed by the Institute for Basic Biological Sciences (IBBS; see Appendix 5 for description); organization of faculty members into teams with common academic interests and projects is another model.
 - d. The committee emphasized the need to expand review of intellectual contributions to educational products and oral presentations. Curriculum development programs are currently available within the SOM (see Appendix 6) and should be expanded; similarly,

- opportunities to give oral presentations and receive feedback should be expanded (e.g. expansion of JHU/SOM speaker panels)
- e. The committee recognizes that review of intellectual products requires time and effort and that faculty members who engage in these reviews should be incentivized and acknowledged for their efforts. Incentives may include monetary compensation (in the form of bonus or supplemental pay), access to resources, fulfillment of citizenship requirements (for promotion), and/or other methods to acknowledge time and effort
6. Processes to resolve conflict and change/add mentor-mentee pairings
 - a. The committee recognizes that conflicts between mentors and mentees may arise. If these rise to the level of professional or research misconduct by either party, the relevant SOM policy should be followed. More commonly, the committee believes that these conflicts may arise even when both parties are operating in good faith, and that these conflicts arise when the goals of the mentor and mentee are not fully aligned. For example, the amount and/or type of a work product expected by a designated mentor may not be fully aligned with the career goals of a mentee. Such a situation may arise in both clinical and research environments- e.g. supervisor/division director assigns clinical workload to and serves as mentor for a faculty member, research mentor assigns project to mentee outside mentee's area of interest. As such, procedures should focus on unbiased resolution of conflict or removal of parties from the conflicted situation rather than on strategies that emphasize remediation or punishment of one or the other party.
 - b. The committee acknowledges that it is common for a power imbalance to be inherent in a mentor-mentee relationship. As such, mentees may be reluctant to discuss concerns with a mentor with whom they are in conflict. The committee recommends that each department develop and make public to their faculty processes that allow a mentee to discuss her/his concerns with an impartial mediator. Options include a designated departmental ombudsman, Vice-Chair for Faculty, or standing mentoring committee that can receive complaints and facilitate resolution.
 - c. The committee recommends that departmental leaders monitor for conflict between mentors and mentees, at least annually. This could be done at annual review and facilitated by the use of electronic tools that survey responses to mentoring questions.
 - d. In cases where conflict resolution cannot be achieved, processes should be in place to allow pairing, without prejudice, of a faculty member with another mentor as described in section on mentor-mentee pairings (section #2 above). Electronic tools are encouraged to facilitate this process.
 7. Accountability for engagement with and effectiveness of mentorship programs
 - a. Accountability for success of mentoring/advising relationships is shared by individual mentors and mentees and by institutional leaders at departmental and SOM levels. As such, each party has a responsibility to monitor metrics of success (process and/or outcomes) and report on these metrics.
 - b. Tools to guide and monitor success of individual mentor-mentee relationships are available and have been collated as part of this committee's efforts (mentor-mentee contracts; IDPs; mentoring assessment tools- see Appendix 2). Individual mentors and mentees are accountable to and should report to each other regularly and should have the opportunity to report on their relationships to departmental leadership at least annually (as described in #3c above).
 - c. The committee recommends that each department develop standardized processes and procedures that allow individual mentors and mentees to report on their relationships to departmental leaders, and that these processes include mechanisms to celebrate successes, identify opportunities for improvement, and facilitate development of specific action

- plans tailored to the needs of individual mentors and mentees (see #3-#6 above). The committee encourages the use of electronic tools to streamline these processes.
- d. Because faculty career development and job satisfaction are closely associated with mentorship and because the reputation of the SOM is dependent on the success and satisfaction of its faculty, the committee recommends that departmental leaders report to SOM leadership (i.e. the Dean and/or his/her designee) on their mentoring/advising programs, including metrics of engagement and effectiveness. The committee encourages the use of electronic tools to standardize and facilitate this reporting.
 - e. The committee recommends that the SOM collect data from all departments across SOM regarding engagement/effectiveness of departmental mentoring programs and provide feedback to departmental leaders of the aggregated data.
 - f. The committee acknowledges that mentoring is a time consuming activity that has value to individual mentors and mentees as well as the institution. The committee believes that programs/processes that formally recognize faculty for their mentoring efforts will engage more faculty in mentoring activities. Given the importance of mentoring activities and the relative scarcity of available mentors, the committee believes that it is wholly appropriate that faculty who provide mentorship to other faculty be recognized for this important effort. The committee identified numerous ways to recognize mentoring activities and promote faculty engagement, including indirect payment (e.g. through incentive/bonus pay), direct payment (fee for service), access to departmental resources (e.g. research funding), attainment of promotional criteria (i.e. citizenship requirement), mentoring awards, etc, and discussed their pros/cons. The committee recommends that each department develop and make public to its faculty processes to formally recognize mentoring activities using one or more methods.