

Proposal for a Junior Faculty Mentoring Program in Psychology

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One of Berkeley's greatest strengths is its commitment to "growing our own" distinguished faculty. Berkeley is one of the few premier universities in the world at which each junior faculty member has access to a tenured position, provided that his/her performance in research, teaching, and service meets or exceeds the university's internal high standards. To optimize the advantages of this system, however, it is crucially important for the tenured faculty to maximize career development among the junior faculty. This is the goal of the proposed Junior Faculty Mentoring Program in Psychology.

The Junior Faculty Forum

One piece of the program is already in operation. The Junior Faculty Forum (JFF) is an informal program of meetings that is run by and for the junior faculty members themselves. They decide on the topic of interest, the date, and which senior faculty and/or staff members they would like to invite to speak with them. Several such JFF meetings have already been held on topics such as teaching and research, the Junior Faculty Mentoring Program (see below), and balancing career and family. Thus far, the junior faculty members seem to find them useful and productive. The JFF is completely controlled by the junior faculty. The steering committee for the JFF is currently Tania Lombrozo, Qing Zhou, and Darlene Francis.

The Junior Faculty Mentoring Program

During one of the JFF meetings, the junior faculty discussed whether they thought a Junior Faculty Mentoring Program was necessary (Yes!) and what they would like to see in such a program. They produced the attached document summarizing their views. Based on their recommendations, I suggest that we consider the following guidelines for such a program:

The Head Mentor. The Psychology Department will establish a Junior Faculty Mentoring Program that will be overseen by a senior faculty member (the Head Mentor) who will be responsible for its effective operation. The Head Mentor will be appointed by and report to the Department Chair.

Selecting Mentors. Every junior faculty member will be assigned a senior faculty member as their official departmental "Mentor" during their first semester in residence. The mentee will rank order at least three senior faculty members they would like to have as a mentor, and the Head Mentor will consult with the junior faculty member, the suggested mentors, and the Chair to decide on official Mentor assignments. Mentors will receive credit for their mentoring duties as departmental service in advancement/promotion cases.

Mentoring Responsibilities. The duties of the mentor are generally to provide evaluation and support for career development of the junior faculty member at Berkeley, with special emphasis on his/her progress toward obtaining advancements and tenure. To a large degree, it will be up to the mentor and mentee to decide how often to meet and what topics to discuss, but each dyad will have at least one formal meeting each year to discuss the mentee's progress during the year in teaching, research, and service and his/her goals for the coming year based on the mentee's Biobibliography for that year. The mentor and mentee will write a brief joint report of these issues that will be sent to the Head Mentor, but will not be included in the mentee's official record.

Feedback and Reassignment. Mentoring assignments will be monitored by the Head Mentor, who will report at least once a year to the Department Chair. Assignments are subject to revision at any time at the request of either member of the dyad who feels that the mentoring relation is not working effectively.