

Informal Mentoring Programs in Cornell's College of Engineering

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Outline

- What we are supplementing
- Why we are doing it
- How we are doing it
- Outcomes and success metrics

Formal Mentoring at Cornell's College of Engineering

- Mentoring for junior faculty is officially the responsibility of the departments.
- Most departments have a “formal” program in place. Multiple approaches:
 - Single-mentor, within department.
 - Two mentors (teaching and research), within department.
- Current ongoing effort to formalize a uniform approach across departments.
 - Two mentors, internal teaching/research and external.
 - Two-year terms.

Challenges

- Mentor/protege pairing has variable success.
- Mentor and protege training is not institutionalized.
- Non-uniformity of the mentoring experience across junior faculty leaves some junior faculty behind.
- Non-type-A personalities can still get left behind.
- Our challenge — what to do for junior faculty for whom the departmental program is not all it can be?

Two Approaches to Supplement Existing Mentoring

- Peer mentoring lunches for assistant professors.
 - Begun in Fall 2004 after Mentoring for Engineering Academia (I) (my initiative).
 - Started with an NSF grant and now institutionalized by the College.
- Senior women faculty mentors.
 - Begun in Spring 2006.
 - A group effort — created by the tenured women faculty in the college.

Peer Mentoring Lunches for Junior Faculty

- Monthly lunches in a private dining room.
- Organization has been taken over (from me) by the Associate Dean for Faculty Development.
- Speakers at the request of the junior faculty:
 - Preparing for the 3-year review
 - Teaching and TA Management for the Large Class
 - Balancing Service with Teaching and Research
 - Time management
 - Graduate student development and advising
 - Grantsmanship strategies

Positive Outcomes

- Junior faculty who are singletons in their departments develop a group of peers.
- Women junior faculty who do not come to “women faculty events” come to these lunches.
- Junior faculty with little or no mentoring gain important information to which they may otherwise have no access.
- The Associate Dean interacts regularly with junior faculty and therefore their issues and concerns are directly heard in the administration.

Women Faculty in the College of Engineering

- Women faculty in the College of Engineering in Spring 2006:
 - Approximately 25 at the time.
 - Gathered regularly.
 - Very proactive, organized group (spearheaded university parental leave policy; proposed & administer Term Chair Awards for Women in Science and Engineering — \$250K start-up awards).
- A feature of this group has always been mentoring, but it required *action* on the part of the junior faculty.
 - Example — some junior women asked senior women to critique their 3-year and tenure dossiers.

A New Program: Senior Women Faculty Mentors

- Senior women initiative in Spring 2006: an active mentoring program.
- All junior women were asked to select a senior woman outside of their departments as a mentor.
- Mentor responsibilities:
 - Preparation of 3-year review dossier.
 - Detailed discussion of 3-year review, including developing a response strategy and timeline.
 - Preparation of tenure dossier.

Outcomes

- Two promotions to full professor.
- Two promotions to associate professor.
- New women faculty have had an automatic mechanism to get drawn into the group.