A Guide to Mentoring

"We know how to be professionals, but we don't know how to be professors." 1

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¹ Comment made by a recently-tenured faculty member in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, made during a focus group discussion of mentoring, Fall 2006.

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Introduction: Background to the Mentoring Handbook

This handbook originated in spring 2006, when the CLAHS Faculty Association met to discuss ways to improve the climate in the College for individuals from diverse backgrounds and orientations. From this meeting a series of proposals emerged, outlining specific changes to promote faculty development. Based on that list, Associate Dean Valerie Hardcastle and Associate Professor of History Kathleen Jones applied for and were awarded a grant from AdvanceVT to follow up on these proposals, and in particular to investigate mentoring practices for new faculty in CLAHS. Laura Agnich, graduate student in the Department of Sociology, served as the research assistant for this project.

Along with a review of existing literature about faculty mentoring programs, the investigation included focus-group meetings with pre-tenure faculty and with those recently tenured in CLAHS. Meetings were held in Blacksburg and at the Northern Virginia campus. In addition, the mentoring practices of four departments – English, History, Political Science and Human Development -- were examined. The guide draws on recommendations from all these sources.

The first part of this handbook discusses philosophies of mentoring and the benefits and pitfalls of mentoring programs in general. The second part is specific to Virginia Tech; it includes descriptions of the four department mentoring programs and recommendations to help departments and the college extend and improve mentoring opportunities.

A Philosophy of Mentoring

Mentoring is a "slippery concept," a "complex" task that includes "many facets," and the process of mentoring is expected to serve many functions. [Goodwin and Stevens, 1998) Mentoring can be a guide to department services provided to new faculty, or it can be a college-wide meeting to convey information. Mentoring can be as informal as a casual inquiry about the how a new colleague is settling in and an answer to a practical question about how to purchase oil, or mentoring can be a formal meeting about "progress toward tenure." It might be a conversation about coping with the competing demands of career and family, or shared advice a teaching problem. Mentoring sometimes takes the form of an informal weekly meeting with a group of peers to compare research strategies and sometimes it involves a pair of faculty members, one junior and one senior. Mentoring is all these things, and all of them help to build satisfaction among new faculty and contribute to their success. Mentoring, however, and should be much more; it also offers an opportunity to create a new departmental and college culture.

Mentoring has been called a "philosophy about people and how important they are to an organization." [Luna & Cullen, 1995]. Put another way, if "we educate and train, but don't nurture . . . we are wasting talent." [Wright and Wright, 1987] To create a mentoring program is to acknowledge the value of all members of the faculty, new hires and those who have had long careers at Virginia Tech. Mentoring is a practice with a long corporate history but a much shorter past in the academy. Only recently has mentoring become the currency of university discourse, a program many hope will help the university attract and retain a new and diverse faculty by providing support, guidance about university expectations, and most importantly, socialization into faculty life.

In its least complex and most traditional form, the mentoring relationship is a hierarchical one between a senior member of an organization and a junior colleague, a "nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person . . . teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. " [Colwell, 1998] The senior colleague is defined as a person of "superior rank, special achievements, and prestige." The work of mentoring includes "modeling, maintaining tradition, offering a map . . . and providing a mirror." [Luna & Cullen, 1995]

Although serviceable in some venues, this model of mentoring, sometimes called "grooming" mentoring or "functional" mentoring, has significant limitations and it has been critiqued from many perspectives. This mentoring model is built on the assumption that all change will be on the part of the mentee and that adaptation will be good for the mentee. [Powell, 1999] The culture work of such traditional mentoring interactions is to reproduce existing power relationships and maintain the institutional status quo. Thus, if the goal of a mentoring program is to promote changes in the institutional culture, a traditional model of mentoring will ill serve the community. Those who seek a more collaborative, less change-averse environment believe that traditional mentoring fails to empower junior faculty and fails to acknowledge and learn from the strengths that new faculty bring to an institution. Those who see mentoring as a tool to make the university

more inclusive of women and minority faculty also criticize this model of mentoring as "patriarchal," as one scholar called it, a "tool" of the master. [Powell, 1999] Critics have found that it ignores the ways that inequalities of race, class, and gender impact success in the academy and privileges the belief that those who succeed do so on their own efforts alone. [Darwin, 2000]

In contrast to the traditional model of mentoring, the ideal relationship aspired to in these critiques is a reciprocal one; learning flows in both directions and mentor as well as mentee acknowledge that there is something to be learned from the other. Such synergy is a source of empowerment for pre-tenure faculty, who will find their knowledge validated and their suggestions respected. Senior faculty can also empower their junior colleagues by establishing an "environment that promotes trust, respect, and risk-taking." [Luna & Cullen, 1995] Empowering, but not disrespectful – a synergistic mentoring relationship can train young faculty to recognize the strengths of senior members of the academic community. Mentoring, from this perspective is defined as "co-learning," an "interdependent activity – which encourages authentic dialogue and power sharing across cultures, genders, and hierarchical levels." [Darwin, 2000] Sometimes called "network mentoring," or "strategic collaboration," this model implicitly assumes that "each person . . . may sometimes serve as a mentor to others and may sometimes receive benefits as a protégé." [Wasburn, 2004/2005]

Critics of traditional mentoring object not only to its hierarchical structure, but also to its singular focus on career development often to the exclusion of the psychosocial needs of new faculty. K. Kram, an early researcher on mentoring, identified four psychosocial functions of the mentor: role modeling, giving counsel, providing acceptance and confirmation, and offering friendship. [Kram, 1986] Helping junior colleagues achieve confidence and a clear sense of professional identity, providing a confidential forum to explore personal and professional dilemmas, offering caring and intimacy that extends beyond the requirements of daily work, and sharing experiences outside the work setting – these are responsibilities that that transcend the model of mentoring focused solely on publishing expectations, grant-writing, and other elements of career development. Both are necessary components of a balanced and effective mentoring program for new faculty.

Critics of traditional mentoring also draw attention to the limitations of a single-mentor model for mentoring: the mentor might not represent the best, most current practices of the university; the mentee might not agree with the mentor's goals; the single-mentor model restricts the mentee's network of contacts; and a flawed pairing might undermine the mentee's confidence instead of shoring it up. [Wasburn, 2005] The alternative to one-on-one mentoring, however, is not a model of self-reliance. Rather, good mentoring should encompass a constellation of relationships and a range of mentoring experiences --from formal arrangements with assigned individual mentors or mentoring teams, to informal mentoring by senior colleagues, to opportunities for peer mentoring. The most effective mentoring programs will provide multiple opportunities for mentoring; such programs will require the collaboration of departments and college administration.

Mentoring is an elusive concept, and clearly it is one whose components in the university setting are in transition. Faculty expectations and department practices at Virginia Tech reflect the multiple and transitional meanings of mentoring.

Benefits of Mentoring

Benefits for Mentees

Studies suggest that mentoring leads to greater career satisfaction, although mentoring will not alone solve the university's faculty retention problems. Mentoring can foster an environment of collegiality and a sense of belonging, both of which contribute to productivity and ease the process of socialization for pre-tenure faculty. Mentors can integrate mentees into professional circles and provide opportunities for career advancement. Mentoring has been associated also with improved teaching evaluations.

In focus-group discussions, pre-tenure faculty in CLAHS made clear that they regard mentoring as an essential factor in their level of satisfaction and their ability to negotiate the demands of teaching, research, and service. Assistant professors from departments that lack structured, formal mentoring programs envy their colleagues who are closely mentored.

Benefits for Mentors

Good mentoring can create a climate that promotes trust and respect between junior and senior faculty. As a contributing factor in professional development mentoring can establish new relationships for research and publishing opportunities. [For example, Few, Piercy & Stremmel, in press] A mentoring program can help to establish standards of excellence for the department. And, it can foster and support change within departments and within the broader university community.

Mentoring can also be a source of personal satisfaction for mentors. Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson and psychologist Daniel J. Levinson, who have traced the stages of a man's life, find that mentoring fulfills an important function at a particular point in the life cycle. During the stage of generativity, when individuals turn from personal development and family life to concern with making the world a better place for other young adults, mentoring a junior colleague can help to accomplish this important life task.

Benefits to mentors are not necessarily self-evident, however. To encourage faculty to undertake mentoring activities, both the college and the departments must find ways to convey the benefits of mentoring to potential mentors and to reward mentors for the time and energy needed to design successful mentoring programs and serve as effective mentors.

Who Needs Mentoring?

Who Needs Mentoring? Everyone, if the mentoring model is one based on reciprocity. In general practice, however, mentoring is usually something done to and for pre-tenure faculty members, especially those who have recently joined the professoriate. Does

every one of these new faculty members require a mentor? That question is still being studied, but self-nomination by mentees helps to ensure that individuals who participate in mentoring are receptive to feedback and coaching. [Luna & Cullen, 1995]

Mentoring needs do not remain static, however. The discussions with pre-tenure faculty brought up the different needs of individuals at different points in the pre-tenure years; a first-year assistant professor wants to know where the copy machine is and where to get a car serviced; a third-year assistant professor needs greater clarity about the requirements for tenure and how to fulfill those requirements. Mentees will benefit most from flexible programs designed to address the changing needs.

Discussions with recently tenured faculty indicated that mentoring needs also do not end with tenure. Departments must consider how to develop leadership skills among associate professors and how to best help them accomplish the requirements for promotion to the rank of full professor.

While all pre-tenure faculty share some of the same mentoring needs, women and minority faculty members often face unique challenges. Often committed to social activism, sometimes concerned about finding a balance between family and career, and always facing race and gender inequities, these faculty members have mentoring needs not shared by their white, male colleagues. An article written by three members of Virginia Tech's Department of Human Development describes one effort meet these challenges. April Few, recently tenured in the department, and her mentors discuss the tensions confronting Professor Few (an African American female) as she worked to balance the publication requirements of her department and the pulls on her time from students and her commitment to racial justice. [Few, Piercy & Stremmel, in press] Other departments must be prepared to confront the specific concerns and adapt mentoring programs to meet the needs of a diverse junior faculty cohort.

Who Should Mentor?

Good mentoring offers benefits to both mentee and mentor. Bad mentoring, however, is worse than no mentoring at all. [Ragins, Cotton & Miller, 2000] And, not everyone makes a good mentor. This is an axiom of mentoring research.

Mentors "must see benefit in contributing to another person's development and must be at a [career] stage . . . where collegial development is a high priority." [Campbell, 1992; quoted in Luna & Cullen, 1995]. Individuals cannot be compelled to perform mentoring duties. Although some programs make mentoring assignments, the successful mentor will be one who volunteers for the assignment.

"A mentor is only as good as the ethics and concepts he or she imparts," writes Tenner in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* [2004]. Researchers agree that successful mentors share certain personal qualities, including honesty, reliability, sharing, giving, patience, and strong interpersonal skills. [See Kram, 1986] Successful mentors will also know the university well, understand what it takes to advance a career within the university, and be

willing to take steps to foster the advancement of another. Those who see advancement as a zero-sum game do not make good mentors.

In one-on-one mentoring programs, the mentor need not necessarily come from the same department as the mentee. Researchers have found that mentoring relationships were at times more compatible and more productive when the individuals were not members of the same department. [Ragins, Cotton & Miller, 2000] Mentors will understand that certain expectations of faculty life cross department boundaries. Moreover, mentees often felt freer to raise questions with individuals not in position to evaluate or "judge" them.

Mentors and mentees must respect each other professionally. Some research suggests that mentees will benefit from mentoring even by someone they do not like personally. However, the most successful relationships are those demonstrating both personal and professional compatibility. [Luna & Cullen, 1995]

Mentors must be prepared to tell the truth, to confront mentees with negative assessments and sharp critiques when warranted. This requirement is perhaps one of the most difficult for mentors, who might prefer to think of themselves as nurturing, supportive, cheerleaders. Effective mentoring, however, demands an honest appraisal from the mentor.

While mentors need to be at a career and life stage that appreciates the importance of nurturing others, mentoring should not be thought of as an intuitive skill. Even the most conscientious MENTORS NEED TRAINING, to avoid the pitfalls that mar the mentoring process. A mentoring program, one team of researchers determined, is "only as good as the mentor it produces." [Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000]

Robert Chalmers, writing about the benefits of mentoring new faculty in the *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, offers a succinct discussion of three "principles of mentoring" and ten "effective mentoring practices." [1992]

Pitfalls of Mentoring

As many as two out of three individual mentoring relationships fail [Powell, 1999] and mentoring programs often do not have a long shelf-life at the college level. More than personality conflict is at fault when mentoring fails.

Unrealistic Expectations for Mentoring Programs

Universities committed to achieving faculty diversity often see mentoring as a means to promote both hiring and retention of women and minorities. To be sure, mentoring is a vital component of retention programs. However, the expectation that mentoring alone, without a change in institutional culture, will resolve retention problems is unrealistic. [Powell, 1999] Mentoring will help to solve the problems associated with diversifying the professoriate, but mentoring programs cannot bear that burden alone.

Unique Problems Facing Women and Minority Mentors

Tenured women and minority faculty are often assigned the tasks of mentoring new women and minority hires. These pairings can benefit mentees by providing mentors who "seek to discover their similarities rather than focus on differences" and "exhibit cultural sensitivity." [Luna and Cullen, 1995] Women and minority mentors and mentees also face a unique set of problems. One might be called the "service" dilemma. A philosophical commitment to improving the quality of life for new minority and women faculty often results in a small group of women and minority faculty members burdened with unrealistic service commitments. One group of researchers has suggested that samegender and same-race mentoring replicates power inequalities on campus. As VT researchers Smith, Smith, and Markham assert, "Combining the limited power frequently associated with diverse protégés and mentors as well as deliberate impression management to overcome perceptions of incompetence, mentors in same-race and same gender relationships may provide fewer career functions for their life protégés." [Smith, Smith, and Markham, 2000]

Because of persistent negative stereotypes of women and minorities and inequitable distribution of power in the academy, women and minority mentees and mentors will both benefit from programs that provide access to multiple mentors. Stanley and Lincoln [2005] provide an anecdotal discussion of how they developed and maintained a cross-race mentoring relationship.

Ill-defined Goals and Guidelines for Mentoring

Department mentoring programs face serious challenges when the goals or expectations for mentoring are not clearly identified and agreed to by the participants. Individual mentoring of the "grooming" variety is easily confused with patronage and apprenticeship. Neither term models the kind of reciprocity and empowerment that is sought in the individual mentoring relationship. Nor is the mentee to be confused with a disciple (a confusion perhaps more apparent in graduate student-advisor relationships, thought not unknown in faculty mentoring situations). [Tenner, 2004] And, mentees, new to the university and without a local social network, must resist the temptation to view the mentor as a new best friend. Better to conceptualize the mentor as an "advocate" for the mentee. Better yet, to see the mentoring relationship as a non-hierarchical one in which each partner contributes to the growth and development of the other.

On the one hand, mentees who do not understand the expectations for mentoring will sometimes develop unrealistic expectations of what a mentor can do. They may have inappropriate expectations for rescue or intervention and overestimate a mentor's power to influence department decisions. [Powell, 1999] On the other hand, mentors often do not know what is expected of them when they are designated as "mentor" for a new faculty member. The default setting is that of "cloning," or attempting to recreate the new faculty member in one's own image. Reverting to one's own pre-tenure and tenuring experience can be problematic; such mentors can provide out-of-date advice that does not reflect current expectations.

Clear guidelines for mentoring and well-articulated goals are essential; departments, in planning a mentoring program, should give thought to what it is they hope to accomplish through mentoring and who is best suited to the mentoring role.

Escaping a Flawed Mentoring Relationship

The tenure decision provides mentoring relationships with a natural, built-in end point. But, what to do when a mentoring relationship is not working before that point? This is a pitfall identified in discussions with the pre-tenure faculty who raised concerns about how to get out of a mentoring situation that is not useful or even harmful. It is recommended that departments build escape mechanisms in to their mentoring programs, particularly if the mentoring strategy is one that pairs individual mentors and mentees. One suggested mechanism would set times to renegotiate a mentoring "contract;" another is to utilize a mentoring "team" to dilute the intensity of individual mentoring relationships.

The Social Darwinian Critique

Perceptions of mentoring as a "remedial" service also contribute to the failure of programs and individual relationships. In an academic culture that values self-reliance and individual initiative, the need for mentoring might easily be interpreted as a sign of weakness and inability to thrive in the "real" world. In such a setting, mentees are justified in assuming that weaknesses admitted to the mentor might be used later for purposes of evaluating new faculty performance. [Boyle and Boice, 1998]

Department Chair as Mentor

The concern that mentoring will elide into evaluation is particularly justified when the department chair takes on the role of mentor. To be sure, department chairs bear a significant responsibility for integrating new faculty into department life. However, that responsibility should not extend to formal mentoring. Successful mentoring requires of mentees a willingness to admit to weaknesses and openness to advice and guidance. If such unguarded expressions are not valued at the department level or if the roles of evaluator and mentor are blurred, pre-tenure faculty may avoid seeking help.

The Line between Mentoring and Sexual Harassment

Finally, in establishing individual mentoring relationships for pre-tenure faculty, departments are well advised to provide both mentors and mentees with information about the university's sexual harassment policy.

Mentoring Practices at VT: Some Current and Some Recommended

At the Department Level

Comments from the pre-tenure and recently tenured faculty who participated in the Fall 2006 focus groups demonstrated how much mentoring practices vary across the departments in CLAHS.

Some departments have formal mentoring structures in place, while others, according to recently hired assistant professors, offer no formal mentoring at the department level.

The four programs described below are representative of the range of mentoring options at Virginia Tech; they are not intended as a comprehensive list of programs.

In the Department of English, each new faculty member is assigned a "team" of mentors with one person serving as "chief." The stated purpose of the team is to "help assistant professors succeed in achieving tenure and promotion and in becoming part of the department and the university communities." The team provides advice and counsel on all aspects of the academic position, but the primary focus is on the pre-tenure research agenda. Regular meetings are scheduled (usually one each semester) and the mentee is asked to bring a list of research activities and a schedule of goals to each meeting. Depending on the mentor and mentee, personal relationships might develop that go beyond the professional context. Although as of fall 2006 the department had no written document listing specific expectations for tenure, the purpose of the mentoring team is to make sure everyone understands the requirements. A copy of the mentoring guide is appended to this report.

The History Department has formulated a mentoring policy, presented to new faculty as part of a department "new faculty handbook," written specifically to convey information needed by assistant professors during their first year at Virginia Tech. According to the department's mentoring policy "each new faculty member has two mentors during his or her probationary period. The Department Chair serves as one mentor; the other is chosen by the new faculty member sometime during his or her first semester at Tech." Mentors and mentees are expected to have regular meetings, although the policy does not provide specific numbers. The policy also encourages mentees to look beyond the department for mentoring opportunities. Mentoring is defined as a "collegial relationship to smooth a new faculty member's entry into the university and the profession" and mentors are "expected to assume a non-judgmental stance in their interactions with mentees."

The Political Science Department provides new faculty with a detailed document titled "Standards for Evaluation of Research for Purposes of Tenure and Promotion." This document is presented to candidates when they interview and one grateful pre-tenure faculty member termed it her "Bible." The department chair serves as mentor for new faculty and expects all senior faculty members to provide informal mentoring. Mentees are particularly encouraged to consult with the tenured faculty who serve on the department's executive committee. However, the department does not have a formal mentoring policy. Annual evaluations and third-year reviews provide mentees with performance evaluations. The "Standards for Evaluation" is appended.

The Department of Human Development has both an established mentoring program for new faculty and a formal schedule of expectations at different points in the pre-tenure career, described as "Productivity Indicators." As in Political Science, HD makes the document available to candidates during the job

interview. The chair of HD designates, in consultation with the new faculty member, a "crew" or team of three mentors to serve as guides. It is then up to the mentors and mentee to determine how formal or informal the mentoring process will be. The department recommends that expectations or guidelines for the relationship be established at the first meeting. A copy of the "Productivity Indicators" is appended.

All four mentoring programs use a traditional mentoring model. Each focuses on instrumental mentoring, on meeting the requirements for tenure, particularly in the area of research. The History Department's new faculty handbook offers a concise description of how the department operates. Several pre-tenure faculty specifically mentioned the Faculty Activities Report as a component of the job about which they wished they'd had more mentoring! The History handbook specifically addresses this concern.

The psychosocial elements of mentoring are left largely unaddressed in the policies of these departments. That, however, does not mean these needs necessarily go unmet; informal mentoring could be filling this gap. Departments should be encouraged to supplement formal mentoring programs with informal mentoring of new faculty. Mentoring must be the responsibility of all members of the department, even when some individuals are designated official "mentors" for new faculty. Women in the focus groups, in particular, noted the disparity in informal mentoring – they sensed that they received fewer invitations to lunch or dinner than their pre-tenure male colleagues.

Mentoring related to teaching is also not well integrated into these four mentoring programs. Rather, evaluation of teaching exists as a separate component of the periodic pre-tenure reviews, with peer-reviews of teaching a factor in the overall evaluation. [Boice, 1992, describes a mentoring program focused on teaching rather than research.]

None of the departments have attempted to institute a philosophy of network mentoring.

In these policies, mentoring is viewed as something of use primarily to faculty prior to tenure. None of these departments has developed a mentoring program for associate professors who want to rise to full, although the Department of Human Development's Productivity Indicators include requirements for promotion to the rank of full professor. Nor have these departments included in their policies mentoring strategies to develop administrative and leadership skills.

The formal, written guide to research expectations is a component of some department policies for which the pre-tenure faculty expressed great appreciation. And envy would be a good description of the emotion expressed by those from departments without such documents. Making similar documents available in all departments would be one step toward the goal of creating a common pre-tenure experience across CLAHS departments.

Formal mentoring has been found to be most successful if mentor and mentee have regularly scheduled meeting times, and if they set goals for their mentoring meetings at

the first meeting. [Boice, 1992] Mentoring policies need to apprise both mentors and mentees of this observation.

Pre-tenure faculty would like mentors to be more assertive in making contact with mentees. A passing "How's it going?" comment in the hallway, the only contact with the mentor, led one mentee to assume that she was not to bother the mentor with specific questions. No doubt the mentee's failure to seek counsel led this mentor to assume that things were as "fine" as the mentee's response suggested. It seems clear that in addition to providing mentees with documents of expectations or establishing policies for appointing mentors and formulating a meeting schedule, departments and the college need to train mentors in the art of mentoring. (See below, recommendations for the college.)

Multiple Mentors, Multiple Strategies

Mentoring Teams

Pre-tenure and recently tenured faculty agree that they are best served by access to multiple mentors and by access to varieties of mentoring strategies. Multiple mentors also provide multiple models for reaching the goal of promotion and tenure. Mentoring teams also alleviate some of the pitfalls inherent in the one-on-one traditional mentoring relationship, and in particular, a policy based on the idea of a mentoring team will help to resolve the "escape from a bad relationship" problem.

Cross-Department Mentoring

Having a mentor from a department other than that of the faculty member is one way to alleviate concerns new faculty have that mentoring will be used "against them" as a tool for evaluation. Developing formal cross-department mentoring relationships for faculty new to the university will take coordination at the college level.

Peer Mentoring

Several recently tenured faculty members participated in peer mentoring groups, an experience they found as helpful if not more helpful than traditional mentoring relationships. Peer-mentoring (or mutual mentoring, or co-mentoring) connects individuals at the same level who support each other, encourage each other to set and meet goals, and seek solutions to problems shared by all. [Angelique, Kyle & Taylor, 2002] "By providing co-mentoring support rather than expert guidance," one co-mentoring pair wrote, "our relationship . . . became a safe and free space for us to explore personal and academic dilemmas." [McGuire & Reger, 2003]

The "Women and Science Publication Support Group," a mutual mentoring group created at Virginia Tech in the early 1990s, models this strategy. [Lederman, LaBerge, & Zallen, 1994; also see Green & King, 2001]. While mutual mentoring relationships can develop spontaneously as did the "Women and Science" group, two recent peer-mentoring workshops sponsored by the Organization of Women Faculty and the Office of the Provost (2001; 2007), taught the principles of peer mentoring and helped to establish cross-department groups for pre-tenure women faculty.

College-Hosted Mentoring Workshops

Pre-tenure faculty also commented on the usefulness of the "New Faculty Breakfasts" sponsored in the college and organized (2006-2007) by Associate Dean Valerie Hardcastle. They found these "nuts and bolts" meetings especially useful for getting to know the university bureaucracy and for meeting faculty from other departments. These breakfasts were first held as a pilot project aimed at improving campus climate to support faculty diversity and retention [Piercy, et.al, 2005]

The pre-tenure focus group members recommended that department chairs encourage new faculty to attend these breakfasts. They also recommended the creation of a new faculty "Information Sheet" with basic information about issues as simple as where to get keys for classroom AV boxes and the meanings of the many VT-specific acronyms!

Pre-tenure faculty at the NOVA campuses would like to participate in these breakfasts, but time and distance prevented them from attending most of the sessions. If the breakfasts continue, some accommodation to the schedules of the NOVA faculty would be much appreciated by this group.

At the College Level

As tools for helping new faculty adapt to the culture of Virginia Tech, peer mentoring workshops and new faculty breakfasts are beyond the scope of the departments. They are, however, programs that department chairs can recommend to the college and support by encouraging new faculty to participate. Several additional recommendations for college-level programs emerged from this investigation of mentoring. They are included in hopes that the department chairs will press the college to continue to direct resources to the development of mentoring

Rewards for Mentoring

"Providing incentives turns mentoring into an important activity and a priority in the workplace." [Luna & Cullen, 1995] If mentoring is to be valued by Virginia Tech faculty, it should not go unrewarded. Good mentoring requires a significant time commitment on the part of both mentor and mentee. Although a commitment to university citizenship might be sufficient to induce senior faculty members to participate in mentoring programs, good mentoring deserves to be recognized for its contribution to the recruitment and retention of an excellent and diverse new faculty, and rewarded appropriately.

Some suggested ways of acknowledging the contributions to the welfare of the VT community include:

Report mentoring activities on the annual Faculty Activities Report. More important, department evaluations must acknowledge mentoring work when rewarding faculty for service to the department, the college, and the university. Both pre-tenure and tenured faculty should be encouraged to report on mentoring activities.

Establish an award for mentoring excellence at the college or the university level, either for departments or for individuals.[See Hochschild, 1993]

Consider offering course and service reductions for mentors and mentees. At Kean University, new faculty who participate in mentoring programs receive a one-course teaching reduction during their first semester at the university. [Sorcinelli, 2000].

Mentoring the Mentors

Create a mentoring council at the college level, with appointment to the council dependent on evidence of mentoring excellence. (Use as a model, the Academy of Teaching Excellence.)

Implement an annual college-wide training program for mentors. Assign to this council the task of "mentoring the mentors," as well as designing college-level programs for new faculty. Mentor training should include diversity training, and it should emphasize the value of non-hierarchical, democratic mentoring relationships for both mentors and mentees. Brad W. Johnson's *On Being a Mentor: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty* (2006) would be a useful resource for such a training program.

Mentoring for Different Career Stages

Support the Organization of Women Faculty in their efforts to offer workshops for tenure and promotion and workshops for promotion to full professor, and provide help with dossiers.

Develop college-level mentoring programs that address the needs of new faculty after they have survived the first year.

Acknowledge the mentoring needs of associate professors and work with departments to develop programs addressing those needs.

Conclusion

Departments are facing an influx of new faculty members over the next decade as a generation of associate and full professors reaches retirement age. This situation offers the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences many opportunities for growth and change. The creation of effective mentoring programs for the new professoriate will help the college take advantage of these opportunities.

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DRAFT: Fall 2007

Some Guidelines for Mentoring in English

Three-person mentoring teams were established in 2003 for untenured assistant professors in order to help assistant professors succeed in achieving tenure and promotion and in becoming part of the department and university communities. The department has not, however, established any written policies regarding the mentoring teams and how they should work. The guidelines below represent an attempt to set down in writing a description of what the teams do and some of the ways in which they *might* work. Each team will obviously work somewhat differently because of the particular individuals involved.

Purposes

The mentoring teams are designed to help the untenured assistant professor in all aspects of the academic position. The team may counsel the assistant professor about what kinds of and how many committees to be on, what other kinds of service and/or outreach activities would be good, etc. In addition, the primary mentor will visit the assistant professor's classes at some point during the first academic year; the general rule is to attend a week's worth of classes for all classes being taught. The primary mentor writes a report of these visits for the department chair, but this report does *not* constitute a formal peer review. Its purpose is advisory: it may help to prepare the assistant professor for the formal teaching reviews that begin in the second year. The assistant professor may also want to consult with other members of the team about his or her teaching. As the assistant professor progresses beyond the first year, the team will help remind him or her of the mandatory peer reviews, since the assignment of these can sometimes fall through administrative cracks.

Research will probably be the most important help the team offers the assistant professor. In the formal meetings, the team will try to help the assistant professor think about his or her research projects and make good decisions about publishing strategies, grants, and other activities related to research. At other times during the year, however, the primary mentor as well as the others if they are willing, will offer to read drafts of the assistant professor's work and to review grant proposals.

Meetings

Generally, the teams will have one formal meeting each semester. This meeting is organized by the primary mentor, who also writes a brief summary of it and forwards the summary to the assistant professor, other members of the mentoring team, and the department chair. There may be, and probably should be, many additional conversations throughout the semester between members of the team and the untenured assistant professor.

The assistant professor should bring to each formal meeting with the mentoring team a current c.v. and a sketch of his or her professional goals for the months and years ahead.

The formal mentoring meetings may sometimes provide a space for the assistant professor to raise questions about expectations for tenure, etc. Sometimes, however, the assistant professor may be more comfortable having those discussions with individual members of the team. The degree of trust and safety experienced by the assistant professor will vary greatly from one person to the next; although the most effective mentoring perhaps occurs when such trust and safety seem to exist, there is no formula for creating or maintaining it.

Mentoring Teams and Formal University Procedures

The mentoring team will help the assistant professor interpret and understand his or her contract renewals (in the second and fourth years) and annual evaluations, provided the assistant professor is comfortable sharing these documents.

The mentoring team will stay abreast of the most recent iterations of the university's promotion and tenure guidelines. The mentoring team is *not* a personnel committee; unlike the personnel committee, which must make evaluations of and judgments about the assistant professor's work, the mentoring team provides support, encouragement, and advice, based on informed understanding of the expectations for tenure and promotion.

The Primary Mentor

The primary mentor has a somewhat larger role to play in mentoring. Primary mentors will try to be in regular contact with the assistant professor. They will try to make sure the new assistant professor meets people and learns about the possibilities in the New River Valley. They may invite the assistant professor to social occasions; they may help the assistant professor find a doctor, a dentist, and the like. The primary mentor will, in other words, try to really get to know the assistant professor. The primary mentor should also be especially available to read drafts of the assistant professor's work in progress .

Reorganizing Mentoring Teams

Usually the same group of three persons will remain on the mentoring team throughout the tenure probation period. However, a mentor may need to withdraw, a faculty member not on the original team may emerge as especially appropriate given the assistant professor's developing research interests, or an assistant professor may feel uncomfortable with one or more mentors. Any of the team members or the assistant professor may approach the department chair with a request for reassignment. Given the purpose of the mentoring program to help the assistant professor succeed, the chair will make a priority of effective mentoring and will try to accommodate suggestions.

Department of Political Science Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

Standards for Evaluation of Research for Purposes of Tenure and Promotion

The Department of Political Science wishes to confirm its commitment to academic excellence and due process in evaluating the progress of junior members of the faculty toward tenure and promotion. What follows represents our efforts to articulate common standards for accommodating the diversity of individual research contributions.

I. Scope and Purpose of the Document

The following represents an effort to express clearly in prospect that which can be really clear only in retrospect. It tries to lay out in as complete and helpful manner as possible the research-related criteria for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech. In doing this, it reflects the consensus judgment of the senior faculty at this time. It speaks only to the research expectation, but should not be taken to imply that only research matters for tenure and promotion.

II. Statement of General Principle

In evaluating Assistant Professors for tenure, the Department seeks to assess whether the candidate (1) has established a significant, independent intellectual profile for her/himself and (2) is developing a national reputation as a scholar in the discipline. All that follows in this document is simply clarification and amplification of these basic criteria. More than any list of particular indicators, quantitative or qualitative, it is the substance of these two criteria that ultimately will inform the tenure decision.

III. Types of Indicators

It is absolutely reasonable and inevitable that Assistant Professors will want to know what they need to do to achieve tenure. It is equally reasonable and inevitable that tenured faculty will be very reluctant to reduce such a complex, inherently subjective judgment to anything like a formula. This document is not an attempt to create such a formula. Instead, it is an effort to outline the major considerations that go into making every tenure decision, and to convey some idea of the weight that these are usually given.

Discussions of "what does it take?" are frequently carried on in quantitative terms. "X books and Y articles, or Z articles" is the usual format for suggested answers. This discourse is not irrelevant, but it is incomplete, often misleadingly so. Considerations of quality are at least as important as considerations of quantity, and both are viewed in the light of evidence of scholarly independence. To state that is not, however, to suggest that evaluations are arbitrary, and thus unpredictable. The evaluation of quality, and of independence, can be approached systematically in accordance with the

criteria outlined below. The Department does not view quantitative criteria as somehow primary, or even necessarily clearer than qualitative ones.

IV. Quantitative Indicators

Quantity of publication is the easiest evaluative dimension to apprehend and to discuss, but even it is sometimes fraught with ambiguity. The most straightforward statement of the quantitative criteria employed by this Department is:

Either a book and 3-5 articles, or 7-10 articles normally constitutes an initially plausible case for tenure.

Some definitions are now in order. An <u>initially plausible case</u> is one in which quantity of publication meets or exceeds the usual norms for tenure in the Department and the College. Failing to meet this standard does not preclude a favorable tenure decision. Meeting this standard does not guarantee a favorable decision. But it certainly can be said that the odds tend to favor those with an initially plausible case, and not to favor those without one.

<u>Book</u> refers to a published volume of original research within one of the various subfields of political science. Ordinarily, a textbook does not count in this regard although, in rare cases, exceptions might be made in instances where the text makes an original contribution to a subfield. Similarly, editing a volume does not normally count significantly toward the research expectations involved in a tenure decision. Close calls, such as scholarly monographs that fall somewhere between an article and a book in length, will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Article refers to a presentation of original research, or a reinterpretation of existing research, normally published either in a refereed academic or professional journal or in a refereed edited volume. To count as an article it must be published, rather than being in the form of, for instance, a convention paper. (Articles -- or books -- devoted to the subject of teaching political science are evaluated as contributions to teaching, not to scholarship in the discipline.)

Scholarly work that does not directly result in books and articles may also strengthen a tenure case, though its impact is not comparable to that of books and articles. The writing of conference papers and grant applications, for instance, is evidence of the active pursuit of a research agenda, and is thus a positive consideration. However, these alone, in the absence of subsequent publication, add very little to a case. Likewise, writing book reviews, editing collections, or engaging in other forms of reviewing and editing are to one's professional credit, but no amount of this sort of activity can substitute for the publication of original scholarship. Indeed, too much concentration on such activity can actually drain away time that should go toward research, and thus become, in effect, a negative indicator.

Co-authored work is certainly countable toward the creation of an initially plausible case, subject to certain caveats (see Section VI, below). However, should a candidate have a relatively large proportion of co-authored pieces she/he would be expected to be at the high end of the quantitative ranges specified above, since the College is known to discount collaborative publications somewhat in its assessment of research productivity.

V. Qualitative Indicators

Final judgments by the Department, both of those who fall within (or even exceed) the quantitative norms and those who fall just short, will be based substantially upon the quality of an individual's scholarship as assessed by the tenured members of the Department. It is not possible to lay out all the criteria used by all evaluators in the assessment of quality. However, certain standard indicators are used by all evaluators. It is possible to discuss both what these are and why they are employed. It must be emphasized, however, that tenured faculty will use these criteria to inform and to supplement their own critical evaluation of a candidate's scholarship, not as a substitute for that judgment.

In the case of books, the Department is most impressed by high quality publishers simply because the standards governing what these publishers will and will not accept tend to be the most demanding, thus providing independent evidence of research quality and importance. In particular, the best presses tend to employ the most demanding (and helpful) reviewers, drawn from within the appropriate fields of the discipline. There is, however, no standard list of "best" publishers. Some university presses and trade publishers are so distinguished that one can have great confidence in the quality of almost anything they bring out. However, in particular fields, the most prominent and appropriate publisher may not be one of the generally recognized "heavyweights," but the house with the strongest list in that field. In any case, the most important sources of outside evaluation of books become available after publication: the solicited judgments of evaluators who are familiar with the work and, when available, published reviews.

Articles are judged primarily by their quality and importance as assessed by the tenured members of the Department. In this assessment, the Department is assisted by the degree of confidence it can place in the strength of reviewing and editorial judgment associated with various professional journals. Judgments regarding the standing and standards of journals vary from subfield to subfield. In keeping with this approach, the Department does recognize that not all journals are equally receptive to all legitimate forms of political science scholarship. Those individuals working on subjects and/or with methods not commonly viewed with enthusiasm by general or mainstream publications will not be penalized for publishing their work in the best available places, with the highest relevant standards and the most appropriate audiences. Contributions to journals outside the discipline of political science per se, but in related fields appropriate to an individual's research program, will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

In instances of contributions to edited volumes, the tenured members of the Department will exercise careful scrutiny with regard to quality, given the highly diverse processes of pre-publication refereeing relevant to such collections. In any case, we normally expect that the core of a candidate's publications will be placed in academic and professional journals. As a rule of thumb, the higher the ratio of journal articles to book contributions, the better.

In stating criteria by which we tend to judge some publications to be more important than others, we do not mean to imply that each piece of a candidate's work must be of the highest quality. Not all work is major work. Nor must all published work present original research. Critical review articles are also eligible to be considered as publications. However, the Department's basic expectation is that a successful tenure candidate will present a significant corpus of high-quality, original scholarship.

VI. Scholarly Independence

It is usually the case that an Assistant Professor's first few publications will be derived from her or his doctoral dissertation. The Department understands and encourages this, expecting that roughly the first two years of a faculty member's career are apt to be devoted to this effort. However, a successful tenure candidate must in some way demonstrate a degree of intellectual autonomy and self-sufficiency, moving demonstrably beyond the specific projects that were begun in graduate school, under the supervision of graduate faculty. Thus, simply publishing out of one's dissertation, no matter how much, is not sufficient for tenure. There must be evidence of an independently-constructed line of investigation. This may be, indeed normally will be, related to the concerns of the dissertation. But, since granting tenure largely depends upon an assessment of an individual's career promise, it requires evidence that a scholar has moved beyond his or her mentors' agendas and influence, at least to a degree. Such evidence, to be persuasive, must be in the form of published research.

The other question of scholarly independence that is frequently raised is that of co-authorship. In some subfields of political science, co-authorship is highly unusual, but in others it is commonplace. Moreover, we recognize the diversity of possible co-authorship arrangements, and their different implications for the apportioning of credit. We therefore prefer not to use any mechanical formula for determining the precise value of a co-authored piece (e.g., counting an article with two co-authors as precisely .5 of what a single-authored piece is worth), but rather to evaluate each piece or research project in light of its particulars.

However, consistent with our concern that a tenured faculty member have an identifiable and unique set of scholarly concerns, we would be very concerned should a candidate present a record consisting solely, or almost solely, of co-authored work. There should be a corpus, large enough to evaluate, of work that reflects the agenda, the style, and the skills of the tenure candidate alone. And, we expect that the individually-authored work would be placed in journals, or with book publishers, comparable in quality to those carrying the co-authored work.

VII. Conclusion

The Department encourages its junior faculty in research. Without a record of publication, it is impossible to obtain tenure in this University. It is necessary to stress, however, that tenure is also impossible without a record of good teaching and cooperative service. These must also be documented for Department, College, and University committees.

The Department Chair and other senior faculty members stand ready to consult with Assistant Professors about these standards.

Department of Human Development Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Productivity Indicators Revised September 2006

The Human Development Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Committee of 1999-2000 first developed these guidelines. Periodically, the T&P Committee updates these guidelines in consultation with the department head. The guidelines serve several purposes. First, they represent a general framework that should help new faculty develop their plan of work and prepare them for success when they are evaluated for tenure and promotion to associate professor. Second, this information should provide an equally helpful roadmap for more established faculty as they prepare for promotion to professor and continued scholarly productivity.

While we recognize that professional competence can take several forms, we agree that faculty must show both productivity and quality in core areas. All faculty should have an observable program of research (i.e., a body of work that is integrated and shows progressive development with regard to sophisticated use of research methods, theory, and plans for dissemination). Because Virginia Tech is a land-grant, Carnegie Foundation Research Extensive institution, learning, discovery, and engagement, are the domains in which faculty are to work. In addition, professional service is an expectation for all faculty members. All four domains apply to all faculty in the department.

The "numbers vs. quality" dialectic can be troublesome in our promotion system. The table below contains numbers throughout. However, implicit throughout these guidelines is the principle that faculty must demonstrate quality in their work. For example, supervising a large number of graduate student committees does not speak to how well the faculty member supervised the students. Consequently, faculty must provide evidence of quality performance in addition to the breadth and intensity of participation in activities of the profession. One important indication of quality, for example, is publication in first-tier journals. Another is awards received. Still another is the faculty member's ability to secure funding and to publish from funded work. The quality issue is also addressed in the Virginia Tech T&P guidelines, which state, "Original achievements in conceptual frameworks, conclusions, and methods should be regarded more highly than work making minor variations in or repeating familiar themes in the literature or the candidate's previous work." (See Faculty Handbook at http://www.provost.vt.edu/web-pages/faculty-handbook.pdf.)

The guidelines below are not intended to be markers for "checking squares." Although certain performance numbers might be achieved, in the absence of quality these numbers would not insure a successful reappointment, tenure, or promotion decision. A reasonable interpretation of these indicators is to view them as minimum expectations. Faculty members should have a solid combination of indicators at each stage to increase their success at that stage. Questions one should consider in assessing the quality of one's work include:

- Does the work advance the field?
- Does the work reflect increasing professional competence?
- Does the work reflect standards of excellence in research, theory, teaching, and practice?
- Does one's profession, through its periodicals and other information outlets, recognize the merits of the work?
- Is the work valued by other reputable professionals, as evidenced by peer review, application and/or citation of the work, awards, or other recognitions?

If faculty members are not sure about how to assess the quality or the quantity of their work they should discuss this issue with the department head and senior faculty.

Questions often arise how "outstanding" one must be across the domains of learning, discovery, engagement, and professional service. For tenure/promotion to associate professor, candidates must demonstrate **outstanding** accomplishment **in at least one** of the three primary domains (learning, discovery, or engagement), preferably that pertaining to **discovery** or research productivity. For promotion to professor, candidates must demonstrate **outstanding** accomplishment **in at least two** of the three domains, one of which must be **discovery** which includes research, scholarship or creative achievement broadly defined as appropriate to one's disciplines, and reflecting the faculty member's assignment.

Because our university places a high value on scholarly publications, it is worth elaborating how different types of publications are viewed. "Articles" means publications in refereed scientific journals, at least some of which should have high standing in the field (based, for example, on low acceptance rate and high SSCI rankings). Articles in lower-ranked journals and non-refereed book chapters are still valued, but are not equal to those in the top tier. Evaluation of the contribution of textbooks and scholarly books is based on adoptions, reviews, and other evidence of reputation; these do not substitute, however, for refereed articles in high-ranked journals.

Faculty in Human Development are expected to have an ongoing program of research that results in ongoing contributions to refereed periodicals. While we value multiple-authored published articles, in that they indicate one's ability to collaborate with others, it is important that faculty are sole author or senior author on a sufficient number of articles to indicate the ability to play a leadership role. In multiple authored publications, it is also important that faculty working with others clarify their unique contributions, indicating where their work begins and ends *vis a vis* that of their collaborators. This is necessary because the tenure and promotion committee will evaluate each faculty member's unique contributions and scholarly leadership. This expectation is important for all faculty, but is greatest for those moving from associate professor to professor.

The attached table provides multiple productivity criteria that represent reasonable expectations for faculty at each stage of the tenure and promotion ladder. We hope that this narrative and table help Human Development faculty survive and thrive here at Virginia Tech.

Latest Revision: 9-7-06 (by HD Tenure, Promotion and Reappointment Committee with nonsubstantive edits by the Department Head

Area of	Level of Review			
Productivity	2-Year	4-Year	Tenure/Associate	Professor
Learning	 Clear, up to date syllabi Formal student evaluation of every course taught. Peer review of at least one course each semester. Advisor to undergraduate students (or graduate students in Falls Church) Participation in teaching enhancement workshops (e.g., CEUT). 	 Clear, up to date syllabi Formal student evaluation of every course taught. Peer review of at least one course each semester. Advisor to undergraduate students (when possible) Participation in teaching enhancement workshops (e.g., CEUT) Serve on or chair MS/PhD committees Taught courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels (where possible) Evidence of student mentorship 	 Clear, up to date syllabi Formal student evaluation of every course taught. Peer review of at least one course each semester. Advisor to undergraduate students (when possible) Participation in teaching enhancement workshops (e.g., CEUT) Serve on or chair MS/PhD committees Taught courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels (where possible) Evidence of student mentorship Directed graduate projects/theses/dissertations 	 Clear, up to date syllabi Formal student evaluation of every course taught Peer review of at least one course each year. Advisor to undergraduate students (when possible) Participation in teaching enhancement workshops Serve on or chair MS/PHd committees Taught courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels (when possible) Evidence of student mentorship Directed graduate projects/theses/dissertations Leadership in course/curriculum development Accomplishments of former students and advisees (with clear statement about your specific contribution)
Discovery	 Specific plan for a focused research agenda 2 empirical articles under review since VT appointment (including from dissertation) 1 national presentation per year (given or scheduled) Appropriate use of any start-up funds, with evidence of the results (e.g., professional 	1. Evidence of a focused research agenda (e.g., interconnected presentations and publications, presentations and publications related to dimensions of an underlying construct or area of study) 2. 5 articles published/in press 3. 2-4 articles under review 4. 4 national presentations	 Evidence of a focused research agenda 10-15 articles published/in press 3-5 additional articles under review 6 national presentations (given or scheduled) External grant received or second external grant proposal submitted 	 Evidence of a focused research agenda National impact and reputation International reputation 12-15 additional articles published/in press Authored/edited scholarly book 6 additional national presentations

	development activities, research activities) 5. Internal grant proposal submitted.	(given or scheduled) 5. External grant proposal submitted	 6. Indication of your leadership role in multiple authored publications 7. Record of consistency in submitting external grant proposals 8. PI status on externally funded research grant(s)
Engagement	Development of an engagement plan. The plan should include activities such as, the development of community partnership; service on community boards or committees; involvement with student-community initiatives; discovery activities that are responsive to pressing public needs; service to community groups that may involve assistance with evaluation activities or presentations, etc.	 Demonstrated progress in engagement plan. Local/state/regional community involvement Letter of recognition from community organization.\ Cross disciplinary collaboration which might include activities such as working on discovery or professional service activities with colleagues in other disciplines, coteaching in other disciplines, etc. 	 Continued progress and development of engagement plan. Evidence of local/ regional/ or state recognition for engagement activities. Expansion of engagement plan to international activities. Some examples of activities include involvement in developing partnerships with universities around the world, involvement in activities leading to international student learning opportunities, international presentations, etc. Continued progress in engagement activities
Service	Active service on at least 1 department or college committee	 Active service on at least 2 department or college committees Participation in professional organizations (e.g., serve on editorial boards, review abstracts & journal articles; committee membership) 	 Active service on at least 2 department committees Active service on at least 1 college or university committee Participation in professional organizations (e.g., review abstracts & journal articles; committee membership) Active service on at least 2 mentioned Provides guidance for junior faculty Leadership in departmental, college and professional organizations (e.g., chaired committee, held office)

- * The indicators do not provide a minimal list which, if satisfied, ensures tenure or promotion.
- ** For tenure/promotion to associate professor, candidates must demonstrate **outstanding** accomplishment in at least **one** of the three key domains (learning, service, engagement).
- For promotion to professor, candidates must demonstrate **outstanding** accomplishment in at least **two** of the three domains. One of these domains must be discovery.