

**Plan of Governance  
Appendix M**

**Policy on Mentoring of Tenure Track (TTK) and Professional Track (PTK) Faculty and  
Postdoctoral Scholars**

**Approved April 13, 2022**

**I. UMD Faculty Mentoring Policy Fulfillment**

This policy fulfills the requirement that each unit has a mentoring plan that is filed with the Office of the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs based on the Office of Faculty Affairs Faculty Mentoring Guidance (<https://faculty.umd.edu/main/leadership-development/faculty-mentoring>). This policy is specific for ENST Tenure Track (TTK) and Professional Track (PTK) Faculty and Postdoctoral Scholars. The recommended annual timeline for Faculty mentoring is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Recommended ENST Mentoring Timeline for Tenure Track (TTK) and Professional Track (PTK) Faculty**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Mentoring Activity</b>
1st Semester of Appointment	Identify a Mentor and/or Mentoring Committee members with Mentoring Committee Chair in consultation with the Department Chair.
Each Semester	Mentoring Committee meets with the Mentee at least two times per year.
Monthly to Quarterly	It is suggested that the Mentee maintains regular contact (such as monthly to quarterly) with their Mentors.
Annually (April)	Informal feedback from Mentoring Committee and formal feedback from the FRS Committee given to the Department Chair.
Annually (May)	Mentee meets with Department Chair for an informal report of progress.

**II. University of Maryland Mentoring Policy: Tenure-Track (TTK) and Professional Track (PTK) Faculty**

The University of Maryland has established guidelines and policies for faculty mentoring, available at <https://faculty.umd.edu/main/leadership-development/faculty-mentoring>. ENST will provide mentoring of TTK faculty at the ranks of Assistant Professor and each Associate Professor by one or more members of the senior faculty other than the Department Chair. ENST will provide mentoring of PTK faculty by appropriate senior faculty, either TTK or PTK faculty. The ENST Department Chair will independently provide each Assistant Professor, each untenured Associate Professor, and PTK with an informal assessment of the Mentee’s progress annually based on faculty input, including the FRS Committee annual review and the Mentee’s Mentoring Committee informal report. Favorable informal assessments and positive comments by Mentors are purely advisory to the faculty member and do not guarantee a favorable tenure and/or promotion outcome. Mentors and Mentees should review the UMD Mentoring Guidance and other policies, which provide details on the importance of mentoring, as well as mentoring resources, best practices, and UMD policies.

### **III. University of Maryland Mentoring Policy: Postdoctoral Scholars**

A Postdoctoral Scholar generally holds a doctorate in a field of specialization earned within three (3) years of initial appointment to this rank. The Postdoctoral Scholar shall receive direct mentoring under the direction of their faculty mentor/supervisor. The UMD Graduate School has an Individual Development Plan (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/postdocs/mentoring>) that helps Postdoctoral Scholars and their Mentors assess skills, identify short- and long-term goals, and determine a plan for achieving research, professional, and career goals. This document should be used during meetings with faculty Mentors and the Postdoctoral Scholars to foster communication to ensure the Postdoctoral Scholar can articulate their professional development needs and the faculty Mentor can provide feedback on progress and expectations.

### **IV. ENST Core Principles and Importance of Mentoring**

In ENST, we recognize the key role that faculty Mentors can play in facilitating the success and professional fulfillment of early-career faculty and other scholars. A clear and consistently implemented mentoring program is a crucial process that helps faculty understand expectations for promotion, set goals, and build links with others in the department. Although effective mentoring requires a significant amount of time and active committed engagement, it ultimately creates an academic community where all faculty feel valued and supported, leading to greater department success. In ENST, we strive to create a robust culture of mentoring, allowing for multiple Mentors to help create a developmental network for the Mentee.

### **V. Goals of Mentoring**

It can be hard to navigate a large academic community such as the University of Maryland. Early, consistent, and frank mentoring is invaluable in helping the Mentee learn and understand university policies and resources, and most importantly what the expectations for promotion are at the department, college, and university levels. As detailed in the UMD Faculty Mentoring Guidance, structured mentoring is important because 1) a thriving climate of diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect requires well-structured mentoring; 2) social dynamics can be a barrier to getting help for new faculty members; 3) high standards for research productivity on the tenure track and significant expectations for Postdoctoral Scholars add to the need for structured mentoring; 4) PTK faculty members and Adjunct professors teach a significant number of students and conduct substantial research; 5) there is a growing recognition of the need for mentoring for mid-career and beyond, and 6) everyone thrives better in a supportive environment.

More specifically, mentoring can help to 1) assess and understand the faculty member's professional goals and contractual responsibilities; 2) identify ways in which the faculty member can enhance their performance and productivity; 3) provide emotional support if requested by the faculty member (e.g., act as a sounding board), and 4) connect the faculty member to appropriate resources to solve problems and strengthen skills as well as to individuals and organizations that help broaden the faculty member's professional network. In short, constructive, honest, and supportive mentoring can help ensure that specific, measurable goals and targets are attained as the Mentee progresses toward their career goals. Importantly, favorable informal assessments and positive comments by Mentors are purely advisory to the faculty member and do not guarantee a favorable promotion outcome.

## **VI. Tailoring by Faculty Title**

Given the diverse responsibilities of faculty, mentoring activities need to be tailored to the individual faculty member according to appointment and tier. This is especially true of PTK faculty who often have a greater diversity of job titles and responsibilities. Appendix I of the UMD Mentoring Guidance lists faculty ranks eligible for tenure and those that are not eligible for tenure.

## **VII. Selection of Mentors**

The Department Chair is ultimately responsible for ensuring all faculty in the ENST Department are receiving quality mentoring. Faculty Mentors are critical to the success of faculty. During the first semester of employment, the Department Chair will work with the Mentee to designate a Mentoring Committee Chair consisting of a senior tenured faculty member for TTK faculty and either TTK or PTK faculty for PTK faculty. The Department Chair can work with the Mentee to develop a Mentoring Committee, beyond the Mentor/Mentoring Chair, to assist the incoming faculty member. Mentors of the Mentoring Committee may be from a different unit or outside the University, and faculty are encouraged to seek out multiple Mentors to cover different aspects of career development across the breadth of their responsibilities and career goals. The composition of the Mentoring Committee should be approved by both the Department Chair and the Mentee. It is important to note that the University Mentoring Guidance encourages Mentees to seek multiple Mentors and that the Mentoring Committee composition can change over time.

## **VIII. Evaluating and Changing Mentoring Assignments**

The Department Chair should evaluate the mentoring plan for each faculty member annually, and the composition of the Mentoring Chair or Mentoring Committee may need to change. This is especially true of PTK faculty, who may be more likely than TTK faculty to experience shifts in career preference. Therefore, honest discussions are encouraged with the Department Chair regarding the appropriateness of the Mentor Committee Chair and Mentoring Committee early on, including assessing how well the Mentor-Mentee relationship is working, how often meetings are occurring, and suggesting ways of refining and/or strengthening the relationship. The Mentee or a Mentor may request a change. A Mentee's request for a change of Mentors shall be done at no penalty to the PTK or TTK faculty member, their employment record, or their potential for advancement. Similarly, there shall be no penalty for the replaced Mentor or a Mentor's request for change. According to the UMD Mentoring Guidance, assigned Mentors do not have to be the same person every year and some units have found it beneficial to change them over time.

## **IX. Meetings with Mentors**

At a minimum, a Mentee should schedule a formal meeting with their Mentor or Mentoring Committee once every semester. Monthly to quarterly informal communications are recommended to sustain familiarity with the activities and career progress of the Mentee. During the earlier stages of the Mentor-Mentee relationship, and when the preparation of materials for promotion is occurring, it is reasonable to expect that multiple formal meetings per year might be needed.

## **X. Mentor's Responsibilities**

Mentoring Agreements can be helpful to establish with the Mentoring Committee. Appendix IV of the UMD Mentoring Guidance has a Sample Mentoring Agreement. Additionally, the UMD Mentoring Guidance has the following practical guidance for Mentors, including that: 1) the Mentor is in contact at least once a month with your Mentee; 2) Exchange CVs with your Mentee to stimulate discussions about career paths and possibilities; 3) Assist your Mentee in developing short- and long-term professional plans; 4) Offer to read your Mentee's manuscript drafts, syllabi, and perform peer teaching evaluations, with positive and constructive criticism and feedback; 5) Help your Mentee network in the department, on-campus, and in the discipline at professional meetings; 6) Discuss annual performance reviews, and where applicable, third-year reviews, and volunteer to review drafts of the documents your Mentee must submit for reviews; 7) Improve your skills as a Mentor by attending mentoring workshops, reading about mentoring, and discussing mentorship with colleague; and 8) Direct your Mentee to opportunities for peer mentoring, such as writing and accountability groups, group discussions, and professional development opportunities.

### **XI. Department Chair Responsibilities**

The Department Chair is responsible for making sure that every Assistant Professor and PTK faculty has at least one Mentor and that every Associate Professor is offered a Mentor for the duration of the faculty member's time in rank. The Department Chair will work with the Mentee on altering the Committee Chair or Mentoring Committee members at the request of the Mentee or Mentors but avoid placing the Mentee in a vulnerable position of having to "fire" the original Mentor. For the most inclusive and productive environment, it is suggested to go beyond minimum requirements and create opportunities for Full and Adjunct Professors to be mentored.

### **XII. Annual Mentoring Reports and Meeting with the Chair**

In April of each year, the Department Chair will solicit informal feedback from the Mentor or Mentoring Committee for all PTK, Assistant and Associate Professors with mentoring committees. Feedback could include the following information:

- 1) A bulleted timeline of accomplishments
- 2) Whether the faculty member is making significant progress for promotion
- 3) Strengths of the faculty member
- 4) Improvement Plan for the faculty member
- 5) Peer teaching or advising evaluations, if applicable

Favorable informal assessments and positive comments by the Mentors or Department Chair are purely advisory to the faculty member and do not guarantee a favorable promotion outcome.

### **XIII. Suggested Mentoring Activities for TTK that may be applicable for PTK:**

- i. Scholarly Activity:** Publication is one of the most important metrics for promotion and program advancement for TTK and may be relevant for PTK, depending on their position. If requested, a Mentor should assist the Mentee in manuscript conception, writing, and editing processes in a timely manner, with critical and positive feedback on the process. Having a collaborative Mentor committed to assisting the Mentee through the writing and editing process will ensure that the Mentee has the tools necessary to successfully publish in their field.

- ii. Societies and Conference Participation:** Presentations are the academic products of research and publishing, and participation in conferences and societies provide recognition and exposure within the scientific community. If requested, the Mentor should help the Mentee in abstract submission for conferences, conference interactions with other colleagues, and advice on serving on committees within a society.
- iii. Grantsmanship:** Obtaining extramural funding is paramount to success in many collegiate programs and merit for TTK promotion and may be pertinent to PTK promotion, depending on appointment. The Mentor should support the Mentee in grantsmanship by assisting the Mentee in grant proposal writing and submission, navigating the budgeting process, working with ORA and grant management once obtained, and contacts with agency program directors (external) and/or relevant UMD programs (internal) to get feedback on project ideas. As relevant, the Mentor should also recommend Mentee to agency program directors for serving on grant review panels.
- iv. Teaching:** Mentors should read and provide feedback to syllabi and provide peer evaluations of the Mentee. Mentors should encourage the use of the TLTC resources for creating a successful course and improving teaching delivery. The Mentee can share peer evaluations with the Mentoring Committee to help support the Mentee in teaching success. However, ENST recognizes that student evaluations may not serve as the most effective metric of the Mentee's teaching ability, especially when the student body does not reflect the diversity of the instructor. The Mentee can give access to peer evaluations to the Mentoring Committee to help support the Mentee in teaching success.
- v. Advising:** Academic advising and mentoring of graduate students are critical activities for the Mentee, and the quality and quantity of such activities could be important considerations for promotion and tenure recommendations, depending on the Mentee's appointment. For undergraduate advising, the time and care taken to each advisee should be taken into consideration, with peer evaluation of advising appointments to help in assessing metrics met or exceeded and offering advice to the Mentee. Mentors could support Mentees by offering to serve as a member of their MS and PhD students' graduate committees and by inviting the Mentee to serve as a member of their students' graduate committees, if the research interests or expertise needs align.

#### **XIV. Approvals**

Approved by majority vote of faculty in attendance at ENST faculty meeting held April 13, 2022.