

## **MENTORING FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND MENTORS**

Mentoring of women and underrepresented minorities is inextricably embedded within, and influenced by, the department's climate. Mentoring alone is unlikely to make a significant difference in the successful retention, promotion and professional development of women and faculty of color in a department that does not support and promote faculty diversity and inclusion. Department Chairs are pivotal to establishing the departmental climate.

### **WHAT IS CLIMATE? WHY DOES IT MATTER?**

An organization's climate is reflected in its structures, policies, and practices; the demographics of its membership; the attitudes and values of its members and leaders; and the quality of personal interactions. In studies conducted at other peer institutions in the U.S., women are less satisfied than men with department climate factors of fair treatment, a sense of "fit", and inclusion. The most frequently cited concerns about department climate by university faculty include:

- Lack of respect, consideration, and/or politeness
- Insufficient sense of community or belonging
- Lack of recognition, visibility, and/or value
- Ineffective communication
- Lack of support or inequitable access to professional development opportunities
- Difficulties achieving balance between work and family or personal life
- Demeaning, sexualized, hostile, and condescending language and behaviors
- Retention and/or tenure of women and minority faculty

Climate data collected across the UNC campus during the 2015 – 2017 academic year, including focus group research with both majority and underrepresented minority women faculty, identified similar climate factor difficulties for our faculty members and also inform the recommendations made in this resource.

To assess climate factors in your department, see [Appendix A](#) for example of a department-level climate survey that may be modified to your department's unique structure and needs.

### **HOW TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF WORK-LIFE FLEXIBILITY**

The challenges of balancing a career and family life disproportionately affect women in academic health sciences and medicine, contributing to their slower career advancement and/or their attrition from academia. Career flexibility is a necessary

component to productive academic careers and success for all faculty. The following recommendations

- Dispel myths that associate family caregiving with a lack of seriousness and flexibility policies as special privileges.
- Promote a culture of inclusion. Schedule meetings to accommodate competing needs of work and family; implement teleconferencing as an acceptable means of participating in meetings.
- Actively support and advertise flexible career policies for all faculty. Flexible career policies are increasingly important strategic tools in the recruitment and retention of top talent, both male and female. The most frequently cited reasons for why faculty members do not use these policies is: 1) lack of awareness and; 2) fear of retribution for using them (e.g., being perceived as not serious about one's career; concerns it will negatively impact promotion review). Chairs should be aware that the language used to describe flexible career pathways can have a major impact on the way such choices are perceived within the Department. See [Appendix B](#) for summary of UNC family friendly and flexible career policies. See [UNC HR](#) for a full list of descriptions.
- Chairs must make every effort to see that policy users are not penalized. For faculty that utilize tenure clock extensions or family medical leave, direct both internal and external reviewers to focus on scholarship achieved in the accepted probationary period and not the time since hire.
- Develop a dual-career academic couple hiring protocol. Forty percent of women in academic health sciences and medicine have academic partners, yet men comprise the majority of "first hires" (the first partner hired in a couple recruitment). Thus, the "two-body problem" is a gendered one that can disadvantage women in obtaining tenure track positions.
  - Use dual hiring to increase gender equity
  - Budget funds for dual hiring
  - Make the partner issue easier to raise
  - Avoid using terminology that assigns preferential hiring status to one partner (the "trailing spouse" problem)
  - Negotiate partner positions fully up front
  - Collaborate with neighboring institutions

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MENTORING WOMEN AND FACULTY OF COLOR IN THE ACADEMY**

Because women and faculty of color have fewer role models, fewer opportunities for informal mentoring, less sponsorship, and report greater feelings of isolation than white men, intentional initiatives are necessary to ensure that those underrepresented in the academy have access to equitable mentoring and professional development experiences.

In addition to enforcing general best mentoring practices applicable to all faculty (see [LINK](#)), the following recommendations for mentoring women and/or URM are made:

### **1. Peer Mentoring or Facilitated Peer Mentoring to Supplement Traditional Mentoring**

Women academics value social capital which is developed from networks of people one can turn to for concrete resources, emotional support, and collegial relationships.

Peer mentoring aligns with women's greater likelihood to be motivated by encouragement (vs. challenge), to engage collaboratively (vs. competitively), to view success within the lens of group affiliation (vs. individual achievement).

Recommended Facilitated Peer Mentoring Model (Mayo Clinic Model; see Files et al., 2008; Spector et al., 2010) involving a senior mentor to facilitate and guide a small group of junior women faculty who, in turn, serve as peer mentors.

- Each group possesses shared academic interests
- Groups work collectively within a curriculum to develop academic products
- Groups support each other in attainment of career goals
- One year commitment

Long-term follow-up of this model showed improvement in research and writing skills, career satisfaction, and confidence in finding a good mentor and in achieving promotion (Mayer et al., 2014)

### **2. Facilitate the Identification of Multiple Mentors and the Development of Mentoring Networks**

New models of mentorship have transitioned from the reliance on the dyadic and hierarchical framework to Developmental Networks, which emphasize the importance of relationships with people who can help get the work done, help advance one's career, and/or provide psychosocial support. Women and URM faculty tend to have less "social capital" in that their informal networks are less extensive.

See [Appendix E](#) for a resource to help a junior faculty member identify and develop his or her mentoring network.

### **3. Provide Professional Development and Networking Opportunities**

The UNC climate data mirrors national data in that women faculty at UNC perceive fewer career and leadership development opportunities than men. The following low or no cost activities and initiatives are suggested.

- Annual panel discussion involving departmental and/or SOM leadership on a topic of relevance (e.g., negotiation tactics; work-life balance, institutional priorities (research, clinical, and administrative)).
- Annual networking lunch allowing junior faculty to meet and interact with senior faculty.
- Budget for one or two early career women or faculty of color to attend a national professional development conference.
- Invite a speaker/group with expertise in mentoring of women and faculty of color to conduct a workshop on campus that could facilitate participation of faculty from multiple departments.
- Locate junior faculty in office space that increases the opportunity for them to meet and interact with senior faculty members.

### **4. Encourage Women and Faculty of Color to Participate in Professional Organizations across the UNC campus and Nationally**

Feelings of isolation and lack of integration within one's department are endemic for women faculty, especially those in the sciences, and for faculty of color and contribute to intentions to leave academia. There are several UNC organizations that seek to support the career development of women faculty through mentoring, career development opportunities, information sharing, and psychosocial support.

- [The Association for Professional Women in Medical Sciences \(APWIMS\)](http://apwims.web.unc.edu/)
- [Women in Science Deserve Opportunities and Mentoring \(WISDOM\)](http://wisdom.web.unc.edu/)

Faculty of color often experience isolation, alienation, and microaggression stress – daily verbal or nonverbal slights, snubs, insults that delegitimize an individual based on their group membership (e.g., implying someone has a position because of their race). A community of scholars is integral to the professional development of faculty of color but the chance of developing that community within one's home institution is limited at most U.S. universities. This may necessitate the need for our faculty of color to look outside

of UNC to build the necessary social capital. Relevant Organizations outside of UNC include:

- Sisters of the Academy (SOTA) Institute (<http://www.sistersoftheacademy.org>) addresses the needs of women of color for accessible information centered on the black woman's experience. It provides formal networking and professional development opportunities on a national level and includes writing and research clinics and retreats and intensive grant writing workshops.
- The Nation Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (<http://www.facultydiversity.org>) supports all faculty in increasing writing productivity, managing work-life balance, create broad networks of collegial support and also has a core curriculum dedicated exclusively for faculty of color. UNC holds an institutional membership so that any UNC faculty member can access resources at no charge.

See [Appendix F](#) for other UNC and national resources to support women and faculty of color.

## 5. Meeting the Challenges of Intersectionality

Forming relationships is easiest with those with whom we have a lot in common. Now, early career faculty are a great deal more heterogeneous than existing senior faculty. Intersectionality is how gender, race, class, sexual orientation, religion, age and other social identities overlap or intersect in ways that can magnify any form of difference. These multiple identities (e.g., being both a woman and an underrepresented minority) and life experiences cannot be separated and need to be understood in the context of their historical roots and power dynamics of social institutions. Departmental leaders need to consider the unintended impact of implicit/unconscious bias on their decisions and the climate within their Department. Do not aim to be color or gender blind – be color and gender sensitive. Go to (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>) for the Harvard Implicit Association Test for faculty interested in assessing their implicit bias.

UNC focus group research involving majority and minority women assistant professors as well as senior mentors of these women identified the following needs and mentoring strategies.

### Women Assistant Professors Identified the Following Mentoring Needs:

- A mentor willing to talk about stress.
- A mentor who acknowledges race and protects them from too much service (the "brown tax").
- Female mentors for negotiating politics and validation of priorities (e.g. family).
- Peer mentoring and multiple mentors, including a career mentor distinct from the primary research mentor.

- Male mentors because they continue to be more influential sponsors than female mentors.
- Help with negotiating, advocacy, relationship building.

### **Senior Mentors Identified the Following Effective Mentoring Strategies for Early Career Women Faculty**

- Flexibility is critical – if there is trust in the relationship you can be flexible with the mentee.
- Work-life balance aligns with values. Therefore, it looks different for everyone.
- Lay out expectations but not priorities. It is not appropriate for a mentor to tell the mentee what her priorities should be.
- Peer mentoring and multiple mentors are valuable.
- You should provide a safe enough space that the mentee should be able to express her emotions in your meetings.
- Women of color tend to have more caregiving demands. Therefore, do not try to mentor women of color to achieve ‘balance’, but mentor them in addressing the ‘guilt’ they feel and in issues of excessive service (the ‘brown tax’).
- Recommend that early career women of color not serve on committees because they would be vulnerable trying to make their voice heard.
- Mentor faculty of color in how to collaborate. Often, they have gotten to academia on their own ‘steam’ and don’t even recognize that they need a mentor.

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