

# New Faculty Mentoring at Endicott College

The New Faculty Mentoring Program has been active at Endicott College since fall 2007. It is one of the most popular programs offered through the Center for Teaching Excellence and has proven of benefit to mentors and mentees alike. Some of the key points about the program are:

1. The formal mentors are selected from a pool of faculty applicants and work with the new faculty members on a one-to-one basis.
2. Mentors and mentees are matched across disciplines to give the first year faculty someone to talk to about the College as a whole without worrying about any potential departmental politics. One new faculty member acknowledged that “having someone outside my department was very useful to me” while another added, “The best thing for me was that the mentor was from another department.”

Most mentors also value the cross-disciplinary nature of the matches. “I’m enjoying being exposed to another department,” said one. Another noted that, “I can be more objective about the other discipline because I’m not judgmental about the content.” Another said, “Classroom observation exchanges should remain cross-disciplinary. We already have peer reviewers for disciplinary observation.” Another said, “I was able to give useful feedback to my mentee despite the other discipline being so different.” Another said, “The best part of the program is the relationships you create between departments. I think it would be good to re-connect and see how the progression has been over the semesters and to always encourage an open dialogue. “

3. One-to-one mentoring will be supplemented by occasional group events to help new faculty mentors network. The intent is to expose mentees to a variety of work competencies, and also to create support across gender and ethnicity lines to support a more diverse work force.<sup>1</sup>

Your role as a faculty mentor is very important to the success of our new faculty members. Please remember to:

1. **Help the new faculty member become a part of the Endicott community.** Some faculty members will be completely new to the north shore. Help them feel part of the local community as well. One new faculty member reported that “My mentor took me off-campus to lunch, which was very valuable to me.”
2. **Meet with the new faculty member every week during the fall semester.** Having initial support was wonderful during a time of transition,” said one new faculty member. “I liked the weekly contact,” said another. “Given how busy I was that first semester, I may not have taken the time to seek out my mentor without a structure imposed on the

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Deane Sorcinelli & Jung Yun, “From Mentoring to Mentoring Networks: Mentoring in the New Academy,” *Change* (Nov./Dec. 2007), pp. 58-61.

interaction. I was happy that we made the time to sit down and talk – even when I didn't have something specific in mind to ask/discuss at the start of the conversation." A mentor added, "New faculty members often feel uncomfortable asking for advice. I was a mentee before the current system, and the system now is more comprehensive and supportive. The formal structure helps maintain participation by the new faculty members." By the second semester, you and your mentee may agree to reduce the number of meetings to once every two weeks.

3. **Schedule the weekly meetings ahead of time, and suggest that you both bring some agenda items.** A scheduled meeting time recognizes that the new faculty member's time is valuable, and can help reduce their anxiety about the meetings. One mentor mentioned the agendas: "One important part of the mentoring process was to always have an agenda when meeting. This was easy enough to do, since there was always something on the forefront, but always giving a heads up is very important."
4. **Help the new faculty member understand the needs of Endicott students.** Even if the mentee has taught before, every campus has a different student culture. "My mentor helped me learn about the students here," said one new faculty member, "with tactics and clues as to how to help them learn."
5. **Help the new faculty member understand and master their role as student advisors.** Several new faculty members saw this as vital. One said, "The most valuable part was about registration and preregistration. Negotiating COAST, making sure everyone was registered for Internship, and knowing everything was terrifying."
6. **Attend workshops and events hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence together with your mentee.**
7. **Help the new faculty member find mentors within his/her home department.** Departmental mentors are a great help in negotiating departmental culture.
8. **Help the faculty member learn about the opportunities on campus.** One mentor wrote, "It was helpful to be able to speak to mentees about professional development and how to apply for it; comprehensive evaluation and its associated timelines, and the merit process."