

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost**

**FACULTY MENTOR GUIDE**

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**Goals**

The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost recognizes the importance of supporting faculty through mentoring. In furtherance of Iowa State University's (ISU) institutional mission and strategic plan, *the primary goal is to cultivate a university community in which all faculty thrive*. Towards this goal, the mentoring program aims to:

1. increase faculty retention and success
2. ensure successful faculty reviews, promotion, tenure, and advancement
3. cultivate belonging and collegiality among faculty

According to Daniel Levinson's Theory of Adult Development, finding a mentor is a key part of occupational advancement *after* choosing an occupation and pursuing a dream (Alderfer, 2014; Levinson, 1986). Further, various institutional [data sources](#) have highlighted the opportunity to strengthen faculty mentoring and enhance mentoring effectiveness. In addition, this information highlights key themes underscored in a broader conversation about faculty mentoring in higher education. As noted in the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER)'s Entering Mentoring program, three points are notable:

1. There is a national focus on mentorship and optimizing mentoring relationships.
2. There is published evidence that mentoring influences the outcomes of faculty across disciplines and career stages.
3. There is a growing peer-reviewed literature that supports using faculty mentors and mentored faculty orientations to improve mentoring relationships.

Therefore, investing in mentoring is significant for advancing faculty success.

*Mentoring faculty is important for the future success of our disciplines, our colleagues, and ourselves. Mentoring faculty provides a rewarding partnership for innovation, networking, communication, mutual trust, and continuous learning for both the mentor and mentored faculty. Through mentoring, we focus on the mentored faculty's goals through shared experiences, expertise, skills, and advice to assist faculty acclimation to the work environment and guidance for their career path. Whether a formal or informal mentor, we need to have current knowledge of university, department, and academic discipline advancement policies and expectations. We are members of a university community to gain knowledge, and mentoring workshops and seminars are important resources for building successful mentoring relationships.*

*—Dr. Claire Andreasen, University Professor, Veterinary Pathology, College of Veterinary Medicine*

## Mentoring Philosophy and Motivations

Faculty mentors play an important role in the satisfaction and professional success of faculty within and outside of their discipline. Faculty mentors' motivations to guide and advise mentored faculty vary. In a survey conducted in spring 2021, ISU faculty mentors described their motivations for serving in this role. Their reasons included—

- Helping other faculty develop their careers and talents
- Navigating pre-tenure/advancement challenges
- Demonstrating support
- Showing appreciation and fondness for their faculty colleagues
- Paying it forward/back
- Building faculty community and collegiality

Therefore, as a first step, faculty mentors may wish to reflect on their motivations for mentoring as well as their mentoring philosophies. Transparency and clarity about beliefs, roles, and expectations

are key to establishing effective mentoring ties. Four guiding questions for a Mentoring Philosophy may include:

1. Who do you mentor?
2. Why do you mentor?
3. How do you mentor?
4. How do you evaluate your mentoring?

### Advancing Mentoring Effectiveness

Faculty mentors play a key role in cultivating mentored faculty's engagement in the department and the broader campus community, affirming their belonging and reinforcing the belief in their own ability to be successful. Thus, faculty mentors are encouraged to strengthen their mentoring, and perhaps attend to ways to enhance their cultural responsiveness. "Culturally responsive mentoring is a learned skill set in which mentors, regardless of their social identities (e.g., race, gender, region), show interest in and value [mentored faculty's] cultural backgrounds and social identities" (The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019). This approach helps faculty mentors to provide the environment that mentored faculty need, as they navigate other environments and networks in the campus community and surrounding areas that can be invalidating. Griffin (2019) also developed mentoring model, which acknowledges the importance of "embracing good mentoring practice and [focuses] on the connection between access and engagement in mentoring relationships, relationship quality and relationship outcomes." Mentoring success depends on: (a) formalizing expectations, (b) incentivizing participation, (c) professionalizing mentoring, (d) identity awareness in professional development for mentors, and (e) assessment, reporting, and accountability (Griffin, 2019).

In addition, faculty mentors can also empower their mentored faculty to achieve a balanced workload. Faculty mentors can provide guidance and best practices related to transparency, clarity, credit, norms, context, and accountability. To learn more about each one of these conditions, access the "Faculty-minded Faculty Workloads: What We Can and Should Do Now" report online (O'Meara, Culpepper, Misra, & Jaeger, 2021).

Faculty mentors may desire to review other relevant resources for strengthening mentoring practices and strategies including:

- Brondyk, S., & Searby, L. (2013). [Best practices in mentoring: Complexities and possibilities](#). *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education* [Journal Article]
- Flaherty, C. (2021). [Illusion of Inclusion](#). *Inside Higher Education*. [Online Resource]
- Goerisch, D., Basiliere, J., Rosener, A., McKee, K., Hunt, J., & Parker, T. M. (2019). [Mentoring with: reimagining mentoring across the university](#). *Gender, Place & Culture*, 26(12), 1740-1758. [Journal Article]

- [International Mentoring Association](#)
- Michigan State University (2021). [Academic Advancement Mentoring Mentor Models](#) [Online Resource]
- [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity: Rethinking Mentoring](#) [Online Resource]
- Nick, J. M., Delahoyde, T. M., Del Prato, D., Mitchell, C., Ortiz, J., Ottley, C., ... & Siktberg, L. (2012). [Best practices in academic mentoring: A model for excellence](#). *Nursing research and practice*, 2012. [Journal Article]
- Stoeger, H., Balestrini, D. P., & Ziegler, A. (2021). [Key issues in professionalizing mentoring practices](#). *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1483, 5-18.
- [The Chronicle of Evidence-based Mentoring](#) [Online Resource]

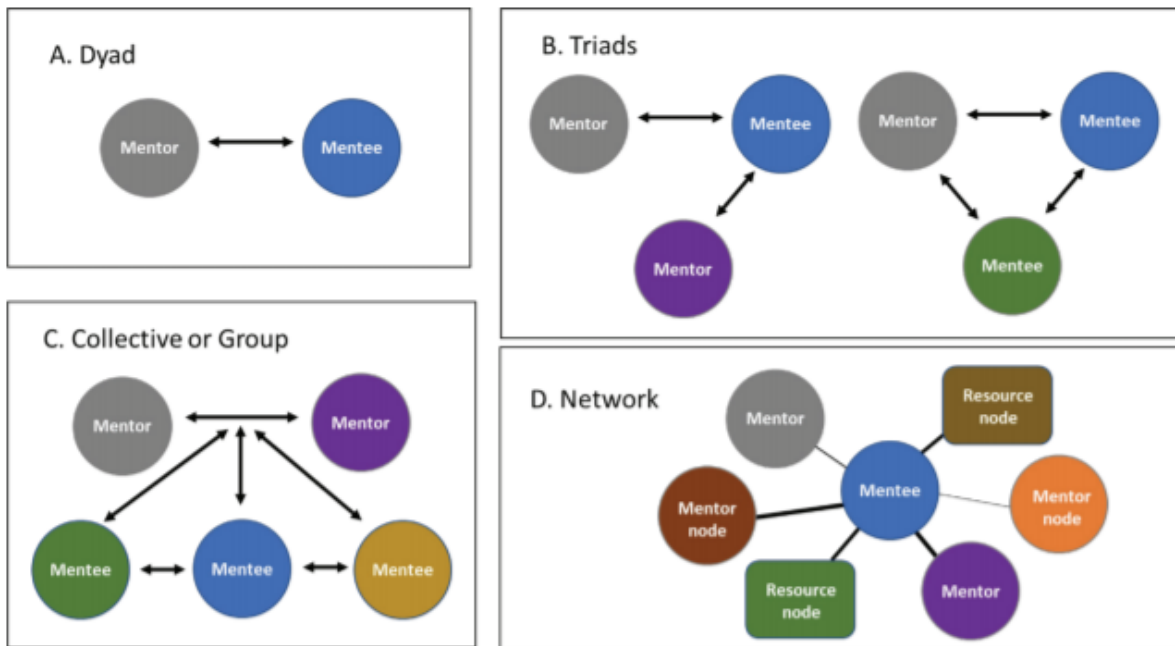
Other resources include personality tests (e.g., DiSC Assessment) and relationship inventories (e.g., StrengthsFinder).

### Mentoring Relationships and Models

Mentoring works in various ways. Mentoring models differ depending upon the faculty member, department/school, and context. A meaningful way to meet faculty's needs is to encourage different mentoring relationship orientations. Examples of mentoring relationship networks include—

- Mentoring Dyads (faculty mentor – mentored faculty)
- Mentoring Circles (such as one faculty mentor paired with one or more mentored faculty or multiple faculty mentors supporting one or more mentored faculty)

Some faculty mentors and mentored faculty have found triads or collective groups to be more effective and rewarding than the traditional dyadic style of mentoring. The following figure from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2020) visually depicts different mentoring configurations and provides a description of each type.



**FIGURE 4-1** Example mentorship configurations. (A) Dyadic pairing between and one mentor and one mentee with bidirectional engagement. (B) Two examples of triads, one open triad with two mentors and one mentee (co-mentorship) and one closed triad with one mentor and two mentees; both with all bidirectional engagement. (C) An example of a collective or group mentorship configuration with two mentors and three mentees and bidirectional engagement. (D) An example of a mentorship network for a mentee with two mentors, two mentorship nodes (i.e., a group of peer mentors), and two resource nodes (i.e., a mentorship-intensive social media forum).

**NOTES:** Lines indicate ties or interactions between individuals or resources, arrowheads indicate whether interactions and resource and information sharing are primarily unidirectional or bidirectional, and weight of the lines indicates the strength of the relationship in terms of its duration or frequency or intensity of interaction. Colors indicate that different mentors and mentees bring distinct perspectives, information, and access to resources to the mentoring relationship, and the shapes indicate the nature of the mentor or mentorship resource, whether it is a person (i.e., mentor) or group of persons (i.e., a mentor node, such as professional colleagues of mentors) or a resource node, such as a website, program, or social media presence that offers access to trusted, dynamic, tailored information that mentees use. The number of shapes and ties indicates how many mentors and mentees may be interacting in a mentoring relationship.

Assorted mentoring configurations can help to overcome an unrealistic expectation that faculty mentors are the only resource that mentored faculty may wish to consult for guidance and advice about their development, growth, and trajectory. Faculty mentors may feel empowered to introduce their mentored faculty to other colleagues and sources of support when they do not have the required expertise (e.g., building community).

In addition, faculty mentors and mentored faculty may work toward building a transactional mentoring relationship. In this mentoring approach, both faculty mentors and mentored faculty contribute to and benefit from the mentoring relationship. This may include, but is not limited to, co-learning about teaching philosophies and instructional strategies, research methods and training, and innovations in scholarship and discovery. This approach is also referred to as mutual mentoring (Blanco, & Qualters, 2020; Sorcinelli, Yun, & Baldi, 2016; University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 2021; Yun, Baldi, & Sorcinelli, 2016). Similarly, faculty mentors and mentored faculty may embrace Mentoring Up, “a concept that empowers mentees to be active participants in their mentoring relationships by shifting the emphasis from the mentors’ responsibilities in the mentor-mentee relationship to equal emphasis on the mentees’ contributions” (Lee, McGee, Pfund, & Branchaw, 2015, p. 135).

### Mentoring Stages

Mentoring relationships often can and will change over time. All mentoring relationships experience different seasons. They change as the career needs of the mentored faculty evolve and availability of the faculty mentor changes. Along these lines, faculty mentors and mentored faculty are reminded of four mentoring stages, as described in the next Figure (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2020).

1. **Initiation**, when mentors and mentees form expectations and get to know one another
2. **Cultivation**, when the relationship matures and mentors typically provide the greatest degree of psychosocial and career support
3. **Separation**, when mentees seek autonomy and more independence from mentors
4. **Redefinition**, when mentors and mentees transition into a different form of relationship characterized by more peer-like interactions or terminate the relationship

Knowledge and understanding of these four mentoring stages may help to cultivate mutually satisfying mentoring relationships. A successful, mentored faculty member often becomes less dependent of the faculty mentor. This can lead to faculty mentor disappointment.

## Mentoring Agreements

Discussions between faculty mentors and mentored faculty may begin with a [mentoring agreement](#) designed to support the mentored faculty member establishing themselves in the department and larger campus community and set the faculty member on a trajectory for a successful review. The mentoring agreement may depend upon departmental structure and the faculty member's areas of position responsibility, career goals, and objectives for each semester or academic year. Faculty mentors and mentored faculty may desire to outline their goals and responsibilities and establish a plan for achieving their objectives. For example, faculty mentors may desire to ask mentored faculty to set the agenda for mentoring meetings and then summarize the guidance offered to confirm a shared understanding about tasks and future steps. Faculty mentors and mentored faculty may find the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's (2020) resource on mentor behaviors and competencies, which is depicted in the next Box, helpful in ensuring that mentoring time is effective and useful.

### BOX 5-2 Effective Mentor Behaviors Adapted from *Entering Mentoring*

*Entering Mentoring* describes the following set of mentor competencies or behaviors:

- **Align expectations:** Mentors make expectations explicit and create a safe space for mentees to make their expectations explicit. Together they engage in negotiations to ensure that expectations of all parties can be met.
- **Assess understanding:** Mentors work with mentees to understand what the mentees know and are capable of and consider what the mentees can do to further develop and achieve success.
- **Communicate effectively:** Mentors engage in active listening with mentees, provide timely and constructive feedback, recognize that communication styles differ, and work with mentees to accommodate their personal communication styles.
- **Address equity and inclusion:** Mentors reflect on and account for the biases and assumptions they may bring to a mentoring relationship and acknowledge and account for how their background might differ from the background of their mentees.
- **Foster independence:** Mentors work to motivate mentees, build their confidence, stimulate their creativity, acknowledge their contributions, and navigate their path toward independence.
- **Promote professional development:** Mentors help mentees to set career goals, develop and refine plans related to career goals, develop a professional network, and access resources that will be helpful in their professional development. Mentors also recognize the influence they have as a professional role model.

## Things to Do With Your Mentored Faculty: Practical and Effective Strategies (Phillips-Jones, 2003)

1. Focus on building the relationship, while you also begin to develop a strategy to support the mentored faculty's goals and objectives. Consider these questions:
  - What brought them to Iowa State? What keeps them at Iowa State?
  - What expertise do they have? Can you collaborate on a project or activity?
  - What is something you need to know about them?
  - What do they hope to gain from the mentoring relationship? What kind of mentoring experiences have they had?
  - What is their preferred method and frequency of communication?
  - What else is important to note about their scholarly interests, short- and long-term goals, and strengths and growth opportunities?
  - What are your needs right now? What can I provide?
  
2. Teach your mentored faculty how to get the most from you:
  - What brought you to Iowa State? What keeps you at Iowa State?
  - What expertise do you have?
  - What is something they need to know about you?
  - Why are you mentoring them?
  - What kind of mentoring experiences have you had? What have you learned?
  - What is your preferred method and frequency of communication?
  - What else is important to note about your background and interests?
  
3. Invite the mentored faculty to your key meetings (e.g., research opportunity, lab check-in, student mentoring/advising meetings, thesis/dissertation meeting) to observe how you connect and support collaborators, students, and postdoctoral fellows. Teach by example how you obtain buy-in from others. Clearly communicate the process you utilize and your reasons for this approach.
  
4. Recommend key colleagues and campus leaders for your mentored faculty to meet.
  
5. Offer to travel to events and activities together and engage in meaningful discussions while you are en route. Phillips-Jones (2003) referred to these informal, yet effective mentoring conversations as Windshield University.
  
6. Respond to your mentored faculty within 24 hours, even if it is simply to acknowledge, "I got your message and will get back to you."
  
7. Offer to review, critique, and edit their portfolio materials, proposals, and presentations. Provide specific suggestions and examples for any recommended changes.



8. Show support at events that they are participating in or being recognized.
9. Give them one-on-one sincere, frequent, specific praise. State at least four praises for every correction you offer.
10. Create an environment that says: *"I believe in you and know you're very able."*
11. Explain the unwritten rules that have contributed to your success in the department, college, or university
12. Link up with other faculty mentors and mentored faculty for a meal, a professional development workshop or activity (e.g., [institutional and external resources for enhancing department culture](#)), campus walk, a discussion about a book or an article, or volunteer together.
13. Ask the mentored faculty if they are experiencing any challenges or uncertainties. Encourage them to ask. Find out if you can intervene with people and situations that may be difficult for them.
14. Collaborate on a scholarly project or committee.

### Promotion, Tenure, and Advancement

In a survey conducted in spring 2021, ISU faculty mentors noted considerable variability in the resources that they utilized to ensure their mentoring and guidance was accurate and effective. Responses ranged from none to only Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost resources. These data highlight a critical opportunity to equip faculty mentors with current information and encourage college- and department-level conversations, the local context in which faculty advance through the ranks and thrive.

Notable institutional resources about promotion, tenure, and advancement include:

- The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost
  - [Faculty Advancement and Review](#)
  - Resources for newly-appointed [onboarding](#) faculty
  - [Faculty Development](#)
  - [Honors and Awards](#)
- Faculty governance documents, including the [Faculty Handbook](#) as well as your college and governance documents, are key tools for ensuring faculty mentors and mentored faculty are aware of current policies, procedures, and practices.
- ISU ADVANCE [Promotion and Tenure Committee Training Resources](#)

- Department chair/school director
- College administrator
- Ombuds Office

## Honors, Awards, and Recognition

Contributed by [Kirsten Abel](#), Honors and Awards Coordinator.

Honors and awards are an excellent way to elevate your mentored faculty; this kind of recognitions can be stepping-stones for their career success. Many sources indicate that recognition is a powerful retention tool and can contribute to positive outcomes in the promotion, tenure, and advancement process as well as competitive funding applications. A mentor can have considerable impact on a mentored faculty's success by encouraging:

- Membership and service to professional societies
- Networking and collaboration opportunities
- Research and self-identification of award opportunities
- Development of accessible and current documents for letter writers

While encouraging your mentored faculty to have a self-directed strategy for their recognition is a key component, this is also an opportunity for you as the mentor to demonstrate support and commitment by sharing suitable opportunities with them and nominating them for relevant honors. For additional information, review department, college, and professional awards, as well as the [Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost's Honors and Awards](#) webpage.

## Faculty Well-being and Community

Contributed by [Stephanie Downs](#), Wellness Coordinator; [Andrea Little](#), Associate Director of Human Resources-Employee and Labor Relations; and [Angela Prince](#), Assistant Professor, School of Education.

Consistent with Iowa State University's commitment to improve the quality of life for all Iowans and enhance the institutional climate, it is important to support faculty well-being. More specifically, supporting faculty well-being communicates the importance of "continuing to enhance and cultivate the ISU Experience where faculty, staff, students, and visitors are safe and feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued by the university and each other" (ISU Strategic Plan 2017-2022, Goal 4). Key subgoals and action items in the strategic plan relate to improving employees' well-being and enhancing efforts to recruit, hire, train, and retain employees. Employees include those with varying family responsibilities and relational commitments in their personal lives (Jordan et al., 2021).

Wellness Coordinator Stephanie Downs has also noted, “When faculty and staff are not thriving, they cannot innovate. Further, fostering an engaging culture is key. Thus, it is important to weave health and well-being into everything we do. Well-being drives engagement.”

#### *Relevant Resources*

- [Faculty Work-Life Integration Resources](#)
- Faculty and Staff Associations
- [ISU Well-being](#)
- [Office of Equal Opportunity](#)
- [University Human Resources Time and Absence Information](#)
- [WorkLife & Family Services](#)

#### *Disability*

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits employers from discriminating against employees or applicants with disabilities in all aspects of employment including hiring, pay, promotion, termination, and retaliation.

ADA requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified employees and job applicants with a disability, unless doing so would cause a significant difficulty or expense (undue hardship). A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment to help a person with a disability apply for a job, perform job duties, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. An individual’s specific request for accommodation may not be granted if there are other effective means of achieving the same result.

#### *Covered Employees:*

- A qualified employee who has a disability. If an employee has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, they are protected.
- An employment with a history of impairment. An employer cannot discriminate against an employee based on their previous disability.
- An employee who the employer regards as disabled. This is true if the employer is wrong, and the employee is not actually disabled. If the employer discriminates against an employee

based on an incorrect belief that the employee has a disability, the ADA protects the employee.

A disability for the purposes of the ADA is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

- Basic Tasks: walking, reading, bending, communicating
- Major Bodily Functions: functions of the immune system, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

If an impairment does not significantly limit a person's ability to perform a major life activity, it is not a disability protected by the ADA.

A qualified worker with a disability is someone capable of performing the essential duties of the job, with or without a reasonable accommodation by the employer. Essential duties of the job include tasks that are fundamental to the position. That is, the position would not exist but for those responsibilities. Faculty considerations might include teaching, research, extension/outreach, and service.

An employer must provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee with a disability. Unless the disability is obvious or already known to the employer, the employee must request a reasonable accommodation. The employer must engage in the *interactive process*, which is a dialogue with the employee about accommodations that will meet that person's needs.

Relevant resources:

- [ISU Reasonable Accommodations for Employees and Applicants](#)
- [Office of Equal Opportunity](#)
- [University Human Resources Time and Absence Information](#)
- [University Human Resources Workplace Accommodation](#)

University Human Resources encourages *early engagement* in requesting accommodations for a disability. Employees and applicants may request accommodations at *any time* during the application process or course of employment. Once request and documentation is received, Employee Relations and Labor Relations (ERLR) reviews to determine eligibility. Individual requests may not be granted if there are alternate means of achieving the same result. If eligible, University Human Resources and supervisor will meet to discuss possible accommodations and continue to communicate with the employee.

Supervisors should:

- Be mindful of employee needs and concerns.
- Be aware of policies and processes.
- Have a conversation with the employee when changes are observed.
- Reflect observations and ask if there are any factors they may be aware of that are causing changes in their work performance or behavior.
- Thank employees for identifying any barriers or needs and let them know they will be in touch with University Human Resources to assist with next steps.
- Contact directly to the HR Service Delivery Team or [uhrdar@iastate.edu](mailto:uhrdar@iastate.edu) rather than passively referring them to University Human Resources.

Supervisors should not:

- Do nothing.
- Ask or pry for information and/or details about the employee's health condition.
- Contact the employee's health care providers.
- Make promises or deals with individual employees outside the ISU accommodation process.
- Make changes to position description or workload.
- Deny requested/identified job accommodations without engaging in the ISU interactive process.
- Make discriminatory or harassing statements.
- Assume the employee has a health condition or disability that impacts that work performance.

According to 2021 [COACHE](#) data for Iowa State University, of 1,527 respondents, 36 self-identified as a person with a disability for a rate of 2.4%. By comparison, according to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), among the population of employable individuals (age 16-65), 17.9% of individuals identified as disabled in 2020. While this disparity (2.4% versus 17.9%) might be related to the privilege that faculty in higher education may possess, the low rate of reporting disability at ISU may also indicate that some faculty may be unwilling to disclose disability, even on a confidential survey. Relevant questions to consider--

1. To whom might a faculty member with a disability might disclose?
2. Who do disabled faculty members identify as their primary supports?
3. Why might faculty not disclose their disability?

Ableism is commonly defined as discrimination in favor of able-bodied people. The two main forms of ableism are physical and mental. Academic ableism is discrimination against disabled people in

academic spaces. Many people with disabilities have conditions that are not visible: “a mental, cognitive, or physical impairment that is not easily detectable by the observer” (Dolan, 2021, p. 2).

In the contemporary academy, professors who disclose any form of impairment risk raising concerns about their ability to perform their jobs (Price, et al., 2017).

- Faculty are expected to deliver measurable outcomes from their work, building positive reputations among their peers and helping to generate more revenues for their institutions (Wanyenya & Lester-Smith, 2015).
- Scholars have a hesitation to “come out,” because of the academy’s prevailing cultural values reflect the belief that keen intelligence and the ability to reason can only intersect with a “healthy” mind (Price, 2014).
- Brown and Leigh (2018) found that when there is a reduction in tenured positions and a shift toward contract faculty, the tendency to hide one’s impairment increases.
- Early and mid-career faculty may feel pressured to conceal any struggles related to their disabilities because they operate in a scholarly environment that has little tolerance for performers who are deemed incapable of meeting scholarship standards (Garland-Thompson, 2006).

Some examples of academic ableism include from the Veronica with Four Eyes blog:

- Not following disability accommodations
- Providing inaccessible classroom materials
- Using disability as a punchline or mocking people with disabilities
- Talking about a person instead of directly to them, or speaking on their behalf
- Questioning if a person is actually disabled

Stigma occurs when there is deviance from the norm, including issues related to disability. Previous negative experiences with disability disclosure may keep faculty from disclosing their disability to others. According to the COACHE data, if faculty were to disclose their disability, it was to the following individuals or groups:

1. Some departmental colleagues ( $n = 20$ )
2. Department head / chair ( $n = 13$ )
3. All departmental colleagues ( $n = 7$ )
4. Department services office ( $n = 6$ )
5. “I have not disclosed my disability” ( $n = 5$ )
6. Decline to answer ( $n = 3$ )

*Referring to someone with a mental health disorder or other disability as “suffering” is an ableist term that should be avoided. This indicates an “othering” or “less than” concept about the person with the disability.*

Key Resources:

- 5 Ways Bosses Can Reduce the Stigma of Mental Health at Work (O'Brien & Fisher, 2019)

“One in four adults will struggle with a mental health issue. At work, those suffering\* — from clinical conditions or more minor ones — often hide it for fear that they may face discrimination from peers or even bosses. These stigmas can and must be overcome. But it takes empathetic action from managers on the ground. How can managers help employees? By paying attention to language and ensuring that mental health issues are never made light of, rethinking sick days to include mental health breaks, encouraging open and honest conversations, proactively noticing when people seem stressed, and training others to notice and respond.”

- Burnout Is Coming to Campus. Are College Leaders Ready? (McClure, 2020)

“Due to the increased pressure of being a faculty member in higher education during a global pandemic, the rates of burnout are even higher than usual. McClure’s advice for “Making the Academic Workplace More Humane” is to break the silence and stigma around burnout, simplify and reduce work whenever possible, evaluate and improve work conditions, and embrace flexibility.”

- Mental Health in the Workplace (CDC, 2018)

“Even before COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control reported that nearly one in five adults in the U.S. aged 18 or older reported a mental health disorder in 2016. Poor mental health and stress can negatively impact an employee’s job performance or productivity, engagement in their work, communicating with coworkers, and their physical capability to complete daily tasks.”

- *Negotiating Disability: Disclosure and Higher Education* (Kerschbaum, et al., 2017)

“This collection reveals the pervasiveness of disability issues and considerations within many higher education populations and settings, from classrooms to physical environments to policy impacts on students, faculty, administrators, and staff. While disclosing one's disability and identifying shared experiences can engender moments of solidarity, the situation is always complicated by the intersecting factors of race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. With disability disclosure as a central point of departure, this collection of essays builds

on scholarship that highlights the deeply rhetorical nature of disclosure and embodied movement, emphasizing disability disclosure as a complex calculus in which degrees of perceptibility are dependent on contexts, types of interactions that are unfolding, interlocutors' long- and short-term goals, disabilities, and disability experiences, and many other contingencies.”

- [Recognizing Faculty with Disabilities: Data and Considerations from the Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey](#)
- Why Employers Need To Talk About Mental Illness In The Workplace (Rauch, 2016)

“The workplace is the most important environment to discuss mental health and illness, yet it is the last place we expect to hear about it.” Because there is a stigma related to discussing one’s mental health difficulties, people often feel isolated at work. To create a culture of acceptance, employers can disclose their own mental health needs to their employees, offer presentations about mental well-being, and encourage people to discuss their mental health issues whenever they need to.

- Working Well: Leading a Mentally Healthy Business (NAMI-NYC et al., June 2016)

This toolkit was developed through a collaboration of more than 40 organizations. Its goal is “to build a strong team of working professionals who are cognizant of available support services for mental health and well-being” (p. 3). The authors propose four key principles for driving change: 1. Know the impact. 2. Break the silence. 3. Deliver affordable access. 4. Build a culture of well-being. The section on fostering a culture of health - physical, mental, social, spiritual, and financial - can be found on pages 28-31.

### *Faculty Retention and Respectful Conduct*

*Contributed by Margo Foreman, former Iowa State University employee*

Margo Foreman noted, “Often times, faculty ask the question—Why are people leaving? The real question is, Why are people looking, right? We all receive solicitation emails that say, ‘We think you might be a great person for the next position.’ Most of the time, we read the first few lines and then click delete or send it to a colleague, right? But it’s what makes people look, right? And often, that is about how we are set in a collegial space with one another, a mentoring relationship, or a direct supervision kind of relationship. Whether it’s faculty, students, or staff, it matters how healthy those relationships are.”

In applying public health principles and the triad of disease, consider a host, vector, and an agent. In institutional culture and departments, agents are often some form of hate. Vectors are



discriminatory and prejudicial behaviors, microaggressions, and bullying. The host is what sustains these things and allows it to grow and become infectious, such as culture, climate, and attitudes. To slow the manifestation of such behaviors and possibly eliminate the concern, you must affect the agent, vector, and/or the host.

To begin to address questionable conduct, first ask—

1. Did you like it the first time it happened?
2. Why were you unable to address it the first time it happened? Common responses include:
  - Awareness of power and privilege and fear
  - Lack of knowledge for how to effectively address it (e.g., use a 3 x 5 index card to note three to five triggers, own your legitimate reason for being in the space such as being a part of the discipline, fulfilling your job responsibilities and your Position Responsibility Statement).
  - Fear of having a respectful conversation about one's boundaries (dialogue versus debate) and clarifying what one would like to see moving forward so that we can work together well.

The end goal should be giving the opportunity for people to expand their knowledge and come together with some shared meaning.

Faculty mentors can support mentored faculty being acclimated. First, ensure that you as the faculty mentor are engaged in spaces and connected to people and that your networks are healthy. When these conditions are met, then you are best positioned to bring other people into healthy networks. Of the mentored faculty, dialogue with them about their goals and needs.

### Student Advising and Mentoring

Faculty mentors have a unique opportunity to cultivate best practices for advising and mentoring students among the faculty that they guide and advise. The following include some key points for conversations with mentored faculty. Provide support as they develop strategies for successfully engaging with undergraduate and graduate students outside of the classroom and in other unstructured settings.

#### *Language Matters*

- Graduate students are persons and students first. They are at ISU for an education, training, or other professional development. Focus on their development, goals, and advancement. They are not staff. They are not university employees.
- Graduate students are appointed to assistantships, not hired into an assistantship.
- Graduate students have duties outlined in the letter of intent. Better to focus on duties than performing work for someone.
- Graduate students receive a stipend rather than pay or salary.

### *Expectations, Balance, and Scaffolding*

- Review the position responsibility statement to learn more about expectations for teaching, mentoring, and advising students. Use this statement as a guide for setting goals and limits.
- Read FH 5.2.2.2.1 Meaning of Scholarship to identify ways to demonstrate effectiveness in student advising and mentoring in your department/school. Discuss these expectations with your department chair/school director and mentored faculty.
- Use semester and/or annual evaluations to check on progress and make adjustments, as needed. Remember to periodically revisit and check-in on expectations that were set.
- Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising
  - Consider the [Graduate College's Mentoring and Advising Graduate Students webpage](#) as well as the [Student & Major Professor Checklist](#)
  - Plan to observe annual evaluation with graduate students/assistants, where possible
- Undergraduate Student Mentoring and Advising
  - Look through the [Student Employment Center](#) Guidance for Managers and [Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates \(REUs\)](#) to help ensure students are clear about their role, responsibilities, expectations, and career readiness goals.
  - Council on Undergraduate Research. (n.d.). *Mentoring in undergraduate research*. Retrieved on January 20, 2022 from
  - [Mentor ISU Undergraduates](#)

### *Health and Well-being*

- [Partnering for Campus Mental Health Training](#)
- [Supporting Students in Distress](#)

### Overcoming Mentoring Challenges and Pitfalls

#### *Low Commitment*

Rowley (2006) stated eight reasons for a mentored faculty's low level of commitment to the mentoring relationship:

1. Strong desire to be an autonomous professional
2. Fear of being judged inadequate
3. Believes asking for help is a sign of incompetence
4. Unable to accept the mentor's beliefs or behaviors
5. Does not want to be a burden to another [busy] professional
6. Lacks appreciation for the complexity of teaching
7. Judges the mentor to be uncaring

## 8. Low commitment from the mentor

Rowley (2006) also highlighted six faulty faculty mentor beliefs:

1. It's the mentored faculty's responsibility to ask or seek help.
2. Mentored faculty will be a success if they would just follow my advice.
3. Mentoring is institutionalized handholding.
4. Our different personal and professional belief systems make a mentoring relationship impossible, if not difficult.
5. The mentored faculty is highly competent. There is nothing I can do to support them. They are fine without my efforts.
6. The mentored faculty is not committed. I will not invest my time and effort into someone who cares less about what I have to say.

Effective mentoring relationships reflect continual efforts to meet and communicate. Mentoring success is dependent upon the trust that accumulates over time when faculty mentors and mentored faculty become familiar with each other. This trust cultivates psychological safety, which is important to allow the mentored faculty to feel comfortable asking important questions about being effective as a faculty member. Faculty mentors cannot offer support and guidance if they are not aware of the mentored faculty's questions and concerns (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2019).

### Mentoring Evaluation

- Faculty mentors and mentored faculty may desire to utilize the mentoring agreement as a tool to evaluate how well the mentoring relationship is meeting their needs. Key considerations include communication, alignment, and quality of resources and training provided. Faculty mentors and mentored faculty are encouraged to adjust as necessary.
- Faculty mentors and mentored faculty are encouraged to collaborate with their department chairs/school directors to document mentoring effectiveness and impact such as through regular progress updates and annual reviews.
- Faculty mentors and mentored faculty are welcomed to communicate the value and significance of faculty mentoring to their department chairs/school directors. Notable avenues include recognition and credit (e.g., duties outlined in Position Responsibility Statement). Faculty mentors' contributions to the department's success may be recognized and valued as service. It may be helpful to consider faculty mentoring goals within a department/school or college as well.
- Faculty are encouraged to consider whether mentoring could become a part of the departmental governance document and culture, with specific guidelines recommended and/or enhanced.
- The [Exemplary Faculty Mentor Award honors](#) mentoring excellence. Faculty mentors receive recognition for their impact and efforts each spring.

## Reflective Questions

Three guiding questions to may help evaluate your progress. Rowley (2006) proposed:

1. In what ways have you clearly demonstrated that you are *truly committed* to supporting *the person* you are mentoring? *How* do you show up as a mentor?
2. In what ways have you fully and unconditionally accepted your mentored faculty and paused to see the campus community as well as opportunities and challenges through *their* eyes?
3. In what ways have you modeled being a continuous learner who is open to new growth opportunities?

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*Revised July 5, 2024*