NYU POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
MENTORING PROGRAM FOR ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

Purpose
The purpose of the mentoring committee is to help Assistant Professors to succeed. Specifically, it may help them to:

- Adjust to the university and department culture and norms
- Take advantage of university resources and opportunities
- Build internal and external networks to support their careers
- Build a successful funded research program
- Successfully publish their research in high-impact venues
- Teach and advise students effectively and efficiently
- Balance personal and professional responsibilities
- Develop visibility in the profession.

Responsibilities of Department Chair
(1) Early in the Assistant Professor’s first semester, the Department Chair should create a mentoring committee of 2 or 3 people, keeping in mind the specific needs of the individual and the expectations in terms of research and teaching. The role of the mentoring committee is advisory and not to control or direct the personal research or teaching agenda of the candidate.

The Assistant Professor should be consulted in this process. The committee may include faculty members from outside of the department; this is often helpful to provide a different perspective.

(2) The Department Chair is responsible for mentoring Assistant Professors on the academic personnel process.

(3) The Department Chair should have a scheduled meeting with each Assistant Professor every spring semester, to discuss the Assistant Professor’s research and teaching experience that year and his or her accomplishments and goals for the upcoming year. The meeting should offer helpful advice and should seek to address any issues that emerge.

(4) It is the Department Chair’s responsibility to bring up the Assistant Professors on third year review and review for tenure and promotion, as appropriate.

Responsibilities of Mentors
(1) The mentoring committee may serve multiple purposes: guide, source of information, and confidante. Mentoring committee members should:

- Initiate regular meetings (one on one) with the Assistant Professor and provide opportunities for him or her to raise questions or issues
- Provide constructive suggestions and friendly advice
- Introduce the Assistant Professor to professional network of colleagues whenever appropriate.
(2) Each spring, the mentoring committee should meet with the Assistant Professor to discuss his or her career plan in terms of research, teaching, and service. The career plan should address issues such as how to:

- Provide focus for research
- Obtain research funding
- Effectively disseminate research results and enhance their impact and visibility
- Enhance teaching performance
- Manage time.

(3) The role of the mentoring committee is to assist, coach and support the Assistant Professor and not to evaluate him or her. As much as possible, the mentoring committee members should provide constructive advice and help the Assistant Professor to solve his or her own problems. The mentoring committee should focus on the Assistant Professor’s development: help him or her to sort out priorities, budget time; and make decisions about his or her career.

(4) If the Assistant Professor requests confidentiality in discussion of specific issues, that discussion should be kept confidential.

**Responsibilities of Assistant Professors**

Assistant Professors should reach out regularly to each member of the mentoring committee to discuss questions and concerns; use the members of the mentoring committee as resources to learn about the department and university, the expectations for the job, strategies for success in research and teaching, and available resources to support his or her career development.

Assistant Professors should schedule an annual meeting with the mentoring committee each spring to discuss the career plan.

*These guidelines draw on several model mentoring programs, including guidelines at the College of Engineering at Cornell University; the Junior Faculty mentoring program of the Steinhardt School, NYU; and the Women Faculty Resource Network Mentoring program at the University of Oregon.*