

MENTORING INSTITUTE PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

The mentoring proposal began as an initiative from Dr. Jeane Breinig, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Alaska Natives and Diversity. That initiative was to set up a campus-wide mentoring program at UAA to encourage diversity and to improve faculty retention. Dr. Toby Widdicombe (who is on FSDC) and Dr. Sudarsan Rangarajan went to the 8th Annual Mentoring Conference (“New Perspectives in Mentoring”) held at the University of New Mexico Albuquerque from October 20-23, 2015 and attended three full days of presentations, workshops, and plenary sessions by academics, business people, and entrepreneurs. From this beginning, a Mentoring Committee within FSDC was created, and Rangarajan and Widdicombe created two PowerPoint presentations (“Mentoring” and “Outline of a Mentoring Program”). These and the thinking behind them were shared at the Annual Faculty Forum and the Diversity Summit as well as in meetings with FSDC, DAC, Chancellor Case, Provost Gingerich, and CAFE. The response was unanimously supportive for creating a campus-wide mentoring program. The program outlined below is, then, the result of much thought, planning, and feedback. It has been created by two faculty members with the institutional wisdom to know that now is the time for such an idea and that we need to overcome any latent institutional inertia.

TIMELINE

<i>Year 1 16/17</i> <i>Groundwork</i>	<i>Year 2 17/18</i> <i>Pilot</i>	<i>Year 3 18/19</i> <i>Program</i>	<i>Year 4 19/20</i> <i>Institute & Conference</i>	<i>Year 5 20/21</i> <i>Viability & Export</i>
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THE MENTORING PROGRAM

This proposal seeks the creation of a Mentoring Institute at UAA to offer a vibrant faculty-mentoring program. Like any new program of this scale, the mentoring program will be created and developed in phases. The program is expected to evolve, and mature over a period of five years.

From the more than twenty presentations and keynote-speaker sessions the authors of this proposal attended at the Mentoring Institute conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico (October 2015), the following points emerged:

- ▶ faculty mentoring is an integral part of institutions of higher learning.
- ▶ mentoring programs evolve and mature over a period of time, just like the mentoring process itself.
- ▶ while there are many basic elements common to all mentoring programs, there is no “one-size-fits-all” paradigm that can be replicated. Each institution should examine and address its specific needs.
- ▶ institutional support is key to the success of mentoring programs.

This proposal is based on these ideas, and the feedback received from the different forums where the ideas were presented. Recruiting qualified and diverse faculty, and retaining them are the two most important needs at UAA. The Mentoring Institute will aim to address them by providing support to new and continuing faculty.

In the short term, we envisage a pilot program beginning Fall 2017 that will run through the academic year 2017-18. Once the proposal is approved, the Mentoring Committee will work on the preparatory steps beginning Fall 2016 and leading up to the launch of the pilot program:

- ▶ Create brochures and a website dedicated to the Mentoring Institute
- ▶ Create a comprehensive database of available resources at UAA
- ▶ Establish a library of reference books on mentoring
- ▶ Liaise with programs and departments that already have formal and informal mentoring
- ▶ Select and train mentors
- ▶ Recruit protégés for the pilot study.

Matching mentors with protégés is one of the most important aspects of any mentoring program.

Therefore, the time spent on selecting and training mentors is critical to the success of the program.

The pilot program (as mentioned earlier) will be offered in the academic year 2017-18.

Besides one-on-one, face-to-face mentoring, the following formats are planned:

- ▶ Group mentoring--workshops conducted by a panel of mentors
- ▶ Web-based anonymous mentoring: In this format, faculty are can post questions

anonymously, and mentors can answer them in the same way. The questions and answers will be beneficial to others.

▶ E(lectronic) and V(ideo) mentoring: Using e-mail and Skype as vehicles, these formats

combine flexible scheduling and effective interaction between mentors and protégés.

The results of the pilot study will be reviewed, and based on the review changes will be made where necessary.

In the medium term, the Mentoring Program is expected to take shape, and the Mentoring Institute will be established. The following phases are planned:

2018-19

- ▶ Secure office space for the Mentoring Program
- ▶ Appoint in-house director(s) of the Mentoring Program
- ▶ Begin Mentoring Program.

2019-20

- ▶ Create Mentoring Institute
- ▶ Organize UAA Mentoring Conference.

In the long term (2020-21), mentoring using a combination of the above formats will be offered based on the feedback received during the short- and medium term. The long-term viability of the Mentoring Institute will be secured, and the Mentoring Institute model will be offered to businesses as a worthwhile strategy for ensuring employee satisfaction and longevity in the workplace.

Unlike new faculty orientation, mentoring will be available throughout the academic year, and cover the gamut of academic life: faculty development (teaching, research and service); tenure and promotion; and faculty get-togethers. The program will be periodically evaluated using surveys

for both mentors and protégés. As the program evolves, revisions based on the feedback and the needs will be implemented.

The authors of the proposal plan to present periodically the model developed and progress made at the UNM Albuquerque Mentoring Conference. The feedback received from the conference will help anticipate and, so, avoid pitfalls.

The Mentoring Institute will be managed by Dr. Toby Widdicombe and Dr. Sudarsan Rangarajan as co-directors, and a committee of diverse faculty under the supervision of the interim Associate Vice-chancellor for Alaska Natives and Diversity, Dr. Jeane Breinig.

As part of the long-term goals, it is proposed that a Mentoring Conference be organized every two years. The conference will attract paper and poster presenters from other UA campuses, major universities on the West Coast, and beyond. Keynote speakers from different areas will provide insights into the current best practices in mentoring. We believe that such a conference will not only benefit the UAA mentoring institute, but enhance UAA's image nationally and internationally. Additionally, we propose to explore the possibility of exporting the mentoring model to medium and large Alaska businesses as a source of income for UAA.

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