

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK'S PLAN FOR FORMAL MENTORING

First, it must be acknowledged that mentoring happens across the university at the College/School and departmental levels. While not all academic units foster formal mentoring relationship among faculty, informal mentoring happens commonly. Having said this, the need for mentoring has been expressed repeatedly and across disciplines. The unit that will be responsible for the university level mentoring support is the newly established P3 Collaboratory. The following description establishes context, including strategic priorities and source recommendations, for mentoring.

THE P3 COLLABORATORY¹

Upon the recommendation of the New Professoriate Action Group and the Chancellor and her leadership team, this document provides recommendations for the implementation of a comprehensive development center, The P³: A Collaboratory for Pedagogy, Professional Development and Publicly-engaged Scholarship, to serve the needs of the existing and emerging professoriate while supporting the mission of the University.

Higher Education Context

If you want to know what American higher education will look like in 20 years, all you have to do is look at RU-N's student body that so richly reflects the complex intersectional landscape of heritage, language, race and ethnicity, class, sexuality, faith traditions, and more. We know that the professoriate of the future will also be more diverse, and in every way possible; ethnically and racially, in their scholarship, and in their faculty lives. The current and future professoriate is made richer from increasing opportunities for people who historically have not sought or been hired for faculty positions. We expect that new members of the professoriate will come from many different kinds of communities, both geographic and intentional, that they will increasingly engage in scholarship with members of those communities and will be better prepared to teach a richly diverse student population. We also expect it to continue to be comprised of non-tenure track faculty (NTTs), part-time lecturers (PTLs) and professors of practice—a diverse faculty of dedicated instructors who often connect the institutional learning experience to the lived work experience outside academia. We expect a growing interest in publicly-engaged scholarship (as institutions across the nation are seeing and embracing) as our many publics continue to ask higher education to contribute high impact scholarship to meet the needs of a challenged world. Those challenges are messy and will require collaboration across disciplines to tackle questions of significant impact. The New Professoriate's teachers and scholars, therefore, are a bridge to more experiences, fuller meanings and new possibilities.

¹ Preliminary Recommendations Report for The P³: A Collaboratory for Pedagogy, Professional Development and Publicly-engaged Scholarship. <http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/preliminary-p3-recommendations-report>

As we grow toward our aspirant selves, it is clear that we need to attend to increasing our excellence through consciously and intentionally diversifying our faculty and graduate students and providing our faculty and students with the supports needed for successful careers in teaching, scholarship and public engagement.

The New Professoriate Action Group and Alignment with the RU-N Strategic Plan

The Rutgers University Newark Strategic Plan² is not so much a detailed set of actionable items, but a call to action guided by a strong commitment to the role of a public university in public life: to be a source of innovation for the public good and to be an engine of social mobility to the residents of the communities in which we are embedded. Generated through a bottom up process of engagement with members of the Rutgers University Newark community, the plan is organized around eight strategic priorities that will produce the change we envision, including:

- Invest in collaboration in academic and research programs
- Invest in our students
- Invest in our faculty, and graduate/professional students
- Value our professional and support staff
- Invest in places and spaces
- Invest in anchor institution collaboration
- Leverage our diversity and build civic dialogue
- Tell the RU-N story more effectively

Many of our signature initiatives, including this one, meet many of our core priorities. In fact, with the possible exceptions of valuing staff and telling our story, every other priority is reflected in this plan. Keeping in mind the mission of our university - student success and high impact scholarship - providing comprehensive supports to faculty and students around teaching, leadership, collaborative publicly engaged scholarship, and personal/career success are an absolute must.

In May 2015, the members of the New Professoriate Action Group submitted a preliminary recommendations report³ to the Chancellor and her leadership team. Among other recommendations, several apply directly to this proposed initiative; thus forming the basis and rationale for the need for a broad-based faculty center, including recommendations for: (1) a mentoring structure to support junior and new faculty (#4); (2) a Faculty Development Office (FDO) to increase research productivity, especially publicly engaged scholarship, leadership skills, and work-life balance across the faculty life cycle (#4); (3) strategies to continue to diversify the faculty and increase leadership roles for faculty of color (#5); (4) a Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation (#7);

² Rutgers University Newark: Where Opportunity Meets Excellence. Strategic Plan 2014. http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/files/rutgers_strategic_plan.pdf

³ First Report and Preliminary Recommendations of The New Professoriate Study Group Rutgers University-Newark. May 2015. http://newark.rutgers.edu/files/newprof_report_spring_15_final.pdf

and (5) a Graduate Office of Career Training to support graduate students' exploration of career paths and successful career advancement (#8).

To support the emerging new professoriate as a whole and its needs, this center, The P³ Collaboratory, will engage in the life of the professoriate from preparation of graduate students for diverse career trajectories, through identification and recruitment of promising scholars, providing the best supports for a successful career from hiring to retirement and beyond. Under a general rubric of faculty and student development, the P³ Collaboratory will provide supports to increase excellence in teaching, scholarship (particularly publicly engaged scholarship), leadership, and career success. The P³ Collaboratory is a place for scholars to come together across disciplinary, rank and professional boundaries to engage in critical challenges facing our community and society; to be a part of teaching, scholarship and leadership learning communities; and to join in discussions that are of utmost importance to us as a university community-all in a dynamic, flexible and creative space.

(from the Preliminary Recommendations Report for The P³: A Collaboratory for Pedagogy, Professional Development and Publicly-engaged Scholarship)

MENTORING ACTIVITIES

As a starting point, the New Professoriate Report's recommendation on mentoring states:

“RU-N should commit to mechanisms for ensuring both internal and external faculty training and resources for development and mentoring.

The faculty is the primary asset for RU-N that deserves continuous investment in development. Most of our peer institutions have dedicated faculty development services that coordinate a variety of resources and trainings for faculty to rely on for learning strategies and obtaining support to be professionally successful (Diaz et al., 2009; McKee, Johnson, Ritchie, & Tew, 2013).

- a. Each school should establish a formal mentoring structure for faculty:
 - i. Assign senior mentors for junior faculty;
 - ii. Organize regular mentor and mentee meetings to provide instruction about how to be mentor and how to be mentored;
 - iii. Evaluate the program regularly for continuous improvement;
 - iv. Help establish peer mentoring networks.
- b. The Provost should lead the establishment of a RU-N Faculty Development Office (FDO) to
 - i. Regularly survey faculty development needs;
 - ii. Manage campus-level faculty development funding and awards;
 - iii. Identify and support off-campus professional/leadership development opportunities for faculty;
 - iv. Develop campus-wide and disciplinary-specific faculty development programs, such as

1. More comprehensive new faculty orientation;
 2. Seminars and workshops on research productivity, effective committee service, administrative leadership development, work-family balance.
- v. Identify national PES and diversity initiatives in which RU-N should pursue membership and leadership on behalf of its faculty.” (p.10-11)

Undergirding these recommendations are several notable principles:

- (1) Mentoring and professional development go hand in hand. Thus, mentoring broadly construed is not solely comprised of one-to-one relationships.
- (2) Mentoring is not necessarily a senior-junior relationship, but one that also includes peer-to-peer relationships.
- (3) Mentoring should cut across all areas of faculty life, including scholarship, teaching, service, community engagement, leadership and work-life balance.
- (4) Communities of learning show great promise in helping new faculty adjustment, retention and productivity.
- (5) Based upon effective practices, many programs are built upon a cohort model.

As a result, and given the existence of disciplinary mentoring, we have chosen to focus our institutional level work on community building. It is also worth noting that we have made a dramatic shift in our valuing and inclusion of various types of faculty. First, Ph.D. students often serve in teaching roles and are actively developing a research agenda, not unlike instructors and assistant professors. It is, therefore, helpful to understand them as the emerging faculty and include them in learning communities as equal, albeit junior, colleagues. Further, the distinctions between tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track and part-time lecturers are problematic and unnecessary in many areas of faculty life. To create more robust conversations and systems of support, we do include all members of our faculty regardless of title or rank.

Existing (AY16-17) Programs and Activities

- (1) New faculty on-boarding

We have substantially redesigned the on-boarding of new faculty. The new design includes some traditional information (how to get...X), and focuses heavily on building rapport among new faculty members, engaging them in deep discussions regarding various topics of interest (such as negotiating the path to tenure, service and expectations for faculty from under-represented groups, etc.), and connecting them to P3 and other resources.

- (2) On-line scholarship and work-life balance supports (NCFDD), including periodic on-site seminars and workshops

As of November 1, we became an institutional member of the National Center on Faculty Development and Diversity. This organization is dedicated to faculty career success through enhancing and supporting scholarship and work/life balance. Individual faculty members and graduate students are eligible to participate. After they have enrolled, they may participate in any program, including single webinars and multi-week short courses. The NCFDD also provides career guidance, a weekly e-newsletter, and has a large library of on-line resources, including all previous webinars. Of particular interest to our RU-N community are the Faculty Success Program and the Dissertation Success Program.

A seminar, Tenure and Time Management, was offered at Rutgers on January 18 for those who wanted to get a taste of the program (n=19). At this time, there are 96 individuals signed up with NCFDD. We will continue to offer these types of workshops.

(3) Teaching excellence program with intentional learning communities

The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) Teaching Excellence for Student Success program is an online course that involves the viewing of modules with weekly meetings of cohorts (online and face to face) to review and support effective practices. The curriculum has 25 modules (27 total with a choice among several for the end total of 25) covering five content areas, including: designing an effective course and class, establishing a productive classroom environment, using active learning techniques, promoting higher order thinking, and assessing to inform instruction and promote learning. The Rutgers ACUE course involves two cohorts (on-line only and face to face) of faculty including Ph.D. students (n=32) who independently view two online modules for the week, try out one or more new techniques, and then meet with other members of their cohort to discuss their experience and refine their techniques. At the end of the course, all participants receive a teaching certificate is nationally recognized (n.b., ACUE's curriculum has been endorsed by the American Council on Education) that serves as a clear marker of commitment to teaching excellence beyond the traditional student evaluations.

A course experience seminar, Engaging Underprepared Students, was offered at Rutgers on October 31 for those who wanted to get a taste of the program (n=33). We will continue to offer periodic seminars. As well as other non-ACUE-related workshops, such as the scheduled Rethinking the Flipped Classroom.

(4) On-site scholarship support

We have instituted two on-going workshops to increase scholarly productivity, "Write on Site" and "Dissertation Bootcamp." The first Write on Site drew nine faculty members to share a space (in PRCC) to write for four hours. Faculty said they enjoyed the time and would appreciate similar future opportunities. We have scheduled four more dates for the Spring semester.

The first Dissertation Bootcamp will be held during Spring Break and run for five days. To date 29 individuals have submitted applications and 15 have been selected to participate. This will be a guided space (Taja-Nia Henderson as facilitator) where Ph.D. (or other terminal degree) students can work intensively on their scholarship.

(5) Academic leadership program

We are now working with HR to develop an Academic Leadership Training Program (for 10-12 faculty) with an intended launch in the Fall 2017. This year-long program will prepare faculty to take on academic leadership roles, such as chair or dean, and will build internal capacity for leadership.

Proposed (AY17-18) Programs and Activities

(1) Chancellor's/Provost's Fellows Program

This is the second phase of the academic leadership program. Beginning in Spring 2018, we will select two to three candidates to work in the Chancellor/Provost Office on special projects, giving participants a university perspective that would not otherwise be available to them. This continues to build internal capacity for academic leadership.

(2) Writing Fellows Program

Beginning in the Fall we will add a "course" of workshops on writing skills (including facilitated peer review) to the write-on-site program. This is an internally developed seven-module program.

(3) Affinity groups/peer-support

In addition to managing common stressors, a number of our faculty also deal with navigating certain dimensions of difference and diversity. Women, people of color, and LGBTQ-identified academics would benefit greatly from safe, supportive, and affirming spaces within which they can begin to address the specifics of their particular experiences in the context of the academy. We will create spaces and places to build community through support of various affinity groups again in collaboration with HR.