

Political Science Department Junior Faculty Mentoring Program

The Political Science Department is committed to the professional growth and well-being of its junior faculty, and to the creation of a nurturing environment supportive of their progress toward tenure. To this end, the department has adopted the following Junior Faculty Mentoring Program. The overarching goal of the Political Science Department's Junior Faculty Mentoring Program is to provide a variety of resources and support networks for its junior faculty in order to help them thrive and achieve successful Fourth Year and Tenure Reviews.

- **General.** Each junior faculty (JF) member of the department will be assigned a mentor from among the senior faculty (SF), and the JF member is encouraged to offer input about this assignment. The SF mentor shall serve as a resource for information about the university and career-related support for the JF member.
- **Role of Department Chair.** The department chair will meet with new faculty members to discuss the mentoring program and, in consultation with the JF member and other department members, will assign a SF mentor to work with each JF member. The department chair will also meet at least twice every academic year with each JF member individually, once at the beginning of the year and once at the end of the year. These meetings will ordinarily include a discussion of progress toward the Fourth Year Review/Tenure and Promotion as well as allowing time for a discussion of any other questions or concerns that either the Chair or JF member may have.
- **Role of Assigned Faculty Mentor.** The SF mentor will be available to meet at least twice in an academic year, once per semester. Among the forms of assistance the SF member can provide are the following:
 - o The SF mentor will be available to assist the JF member with Annual Faculty Report (AFR) preparation, especially the first time the JF member is undertaking this effort. This assistance can guide the JF member with regard to things such as: what to include or not include on an AFR, how to present or characterize items in the AFR, explanations regarding the purpose of the AFR and its various sections and how they will be used in future personnel reviews (i.e., the Fourth Year and Tenure Reviews), etc.
 - o The SF mentor can serve as a resource to assist the JF member with preparation of the Fourth Year Review and Tenure and Promotion files, including aspects of the file such as the personal statement and CV, additional items to include in the file, etc. (Questions about the organization of the file and/or the timing of its submission or other logistical matters should be addressed to the DPC and Department Chairs.)
 - o More generally, the SF member can offer advice related to teaching, research, and service activities at the university. This advice may include help with course design or problematic situations in the classroom; advice on conducting, revising, and publishing research, as well as departmental and university expectations with regard to research; reviewing options for service both in and outside the department and discussing appropriate levels of service; discussing professional organizations, networking, conferences, and relationship to the profession more broadly; and so on.
- **Role of Junior Faculty Member and Network.** While the SF mentor may well be the JF member's go-to person for help and support within the department, neither this relationship nor this document means should be taken to mean that the JF member cannot seek guidance or advice from other senior faculty, both within and outside the department. The Department strongly encourages JF members to build a network of support beyond the department itself. This may include other faculty members within the Political Science Department, faculty members of other departments at UMass Boston, faculty members at other universities (including but not limited to former graduate school advisors), and other colleagues and associates who can provide professional, emotional, and intellectual support.
- **Accountability and Recognition.** To encourage thoughtful implementation of this mentoring plan, the department will monitor the JF mentoring in two ways. First, the head of the DPC will request annually a report from each SF mentor and from the department chair briefly detailing their mentoring activities. Faculty members will note the number of meetings with mentees and provide this information to the DPC chair. Second, the DPC chair will invite all faculty, annually, to comment on the department's mentoring efforts. A summary of this information on accountability will be made available to the department chair. In addition, all SF mentors, again including the department chair, are strongly

encouraged to report their mentoring activity on their AFR so that the DPC may take note of this important service.

The purpose of the JF Mentoring Program, then, is merely to formalize one aspect of what is ideally a broad network of support available to JF members. JF members are encouraged to discuss any questions they may have about this mentoring program, or any suggestions for its improvement, with the department chair and/or their SF mentor.