



AEJMC Teaching Committee’s Guidelines for Participation

(These guidelines are based on AEJMC Teaching Committee conference call in April 2011)

The mentor-mentee relationship is informal and this should be clearly communicated to both the mentors and the mentees, so everyone knows what to expect.

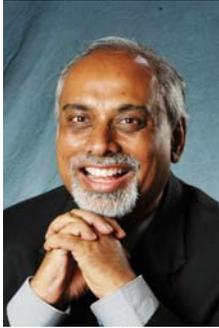
The expectation of the mentors would be to meet with the assigned mentee at a mutually convenient time during the AEJMC national conference. That way those who are not able to join the last part of the pre-conference workshop session because of travel arrangements could still be a mentor.

The mentee would be told that he or she should treat that meeting as a way to ask questions about teaching in the larger academic environment (where research is king and service eats up time).

The mentor-mentee relationship beyond that meeting would be up to the mentor and mentee, as some faculty already have mentors they work with and may not need a formal mentor for the next year. Others may exchange email addresses and decide to check in throughout the year or plan a follow-up phone call(s). We will leave this to the mentor and mentee.

We’ll devote the concluding hour of the pre-conference workshop session to discuss how to successfully find and work with a mentor. Workshop participants may talk about finding mentors on their campus and finding mentors for different purposes (research, teaching, etc.).

<end of guidelines>



Top 10 Tips for Great Mentoring

(Excerpted from page 16 of AEJMC News [January 2011])

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We witnessed the profound effects of mentoring at AEJMC’s inaugural “Magnanimous Mentor” initiative (termed “MM” for short!) at the AEJMC conference in Denver in August 2010.

I initiated the MM program to facilitate mentoring around a simple idea. We all need the friendly care and assistance of a mentor who is an empathetic colleague, reliable adviser and a trusted counselor. To that end, the MM mentors and mentees are committed to developing a simpatico spirit of camaraderie and loyalty. We accomplished that and more. Several MM participants gained a mentor who sharpened and reshaped their work ethos. Before you say “wow,” let me humbly accept that some MM match-ups did not work! And, that’s my point. Successful mentoring is a lot of trial and error.

The success of AEJMC’s MM program set me thinking about effective mentoring strategies that may benefit our students and colleagues alike.

Here’s my list of top ten tips for developing successful mentoring relationships.

- 1. Commitment:** Good mentoring is fueled by a deep commitment to devote the time to it.
- 2. Reciprocity:** A reciprocal interaction strengthens mentoring relationships. For instance, the young mentee may benefit a mentor with emerging technology tips and other expertise of the young. Also, reciprocal roles bond the mentor and mentee to switch roles and provide expertise to each other.
- 3. Multiple Mentors:** In our multifaceted world, we need the wisdom of multiple mentors. This also facilitates non-hierarchical, collegial and cross-cultural collaborations based on ideas and expertise of multiple mentors.
- 4. Honesty and Intelligence:** Good mentors and mentees cherish intelligent interactions and steadfast honesty, regardless of consequence.
- 5. Power of Perseverance:** The omnipotent effect of persistence and determination has fostered most mentoring relationships.

6. **Empathy:** As Sophocles said: “One who knows how to show and to accept kindness will be a friend better than any possession.”
7. **Good Listening:** Assiduous listening sets the mentoring agenda. It also helps to understand opportunities and challenges based on teaching and learning from constructive criticism.
8. **Confidentiality:** It is important to protect the confidentiality of the message and the messenger.
9. **Time Together:** Mentoring is always sustained by priceless time together either face-to-face or online. This fosters clear communication, harmonious conciliation, give-and-take collaboration, and mutual cooperation.
10. **Act Now:** As they say, we have a choice: to plow new ground or let the weeds grow.

AEJMC has helped forge and sustain several mentoring relationships and the MM initiative is off to a great start. Please let me know if you wish to participate in it, either as a mentor or a mentee.

As immediate past chair of the AEJMC Teaching Committee, my work is not over, for good reason! The AEJMC Teaching Committee has assigned me to coordinate a pre-conference workshop on “Effective Teaching Strategies” at AEJMC’s annual conference in St. Louis, Missouri in August 2011.

The first such workshop in Denver was a resounding success. With lively discussions and a mentor meet-up, this interactive workshop covered proven strategies for effective teaching and developing mentoring relationships. Each workshop participant was paired with individual mentors, as part of the MM program. The workshop featured winners of the Scripps Howard Journalism Administrator of the Year and Scripps Howard Journalism Teacher of the Year awards, renowned educators, and students who celebrated and critiqued teaching in its current state and style.

This workshop marked a three-year pilot plan based on the “strategic directions” outlined by the AEJMC 2009 State of the Discipline report <http://www.aejmc.org/_about/discipline/index.php>. The AEJMC pre-conference workshop addressed four objectives: (i) Examine what we teach, how we teach and allay anxieties about a discipline in transition; (ii) Adapt course content to the new realities of communication and draw upon core values; (iii) Harness research, creative and professional activity, media and industry support, professional organizations and community resources to incorporate curriculum changes, technology innovations and assessment of learning outcomes; and (iv) Develop peer-to-peer and co-mentoring relationships.

If you have workshop ideas for the AEJMC’s St. Louis conference, please share them with me.

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❖ What Makes a Great Mentor?*



Great mentors are:

- ❖ **Good listeners:** They take time to understand what is going with the mentee before they offer advice and information.
- ❖ **Self-aware:** They know what they can and cannot offer and they observe and note how what they offer is being received by those they mentor.
- ❖ **Flexible:** They are willing to adjust to the needs of mentees.
- ❖ **Good role models:** They demonstrate good academic practices,
- ❖ **Transparent:** They make their thinking explicit so mentees understand why they do what they do.
- ❖ **Positive guides:** They recognize and acknowledge progress mentees make; they also provide constructive criticism and helpful advice. They pay attention to the timing of their comments. They strike the right balance between guidance, criticism and praise.
- ❖ **Facilitators:** They help mentees connect to others who share their interests, who can help them, and provide resources.
- ❖ **People of integrity:** They are honest in what they say and do and work for the good of those they mentor; they do not take advantage.

*Adapted from: Characteristics of Effective Mentors—J. Nakamura, D. Sheronoff & C Hooker, Good Mentoring: Fostering Excellent Practice in Higher Education, 2009, Cited by Deb DeZure, Associate Provost for Faculty Development, Michigan State University at her April 9, 2010 Presentation for the Center for Faculty Excellence at UNC-Chapel Hill

❖ Why Be a Mentor?



Being a mentor is an important commitment and often involves persistent work. However there are also societal, institutional, departmental, and (most of all) individual rewards to be gained by serving as a mentor.

❖ **By being a mentor you continue a long tradition that is critical to human progress in general and academic progress in particular.**

The Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine has published a comprehensive **Faculty Mentoring Guide**. This handout features some edited excerpts from the handbook, which is available on the web at http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/facultyaffairs/career_dev/facultymentoringguide/

In the introduction, the guide refers to some important mentoring relationships in Western arts and letters including:

“...Socrates and Plato, Haydn and Beethoven, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller, Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. In each of these cases, a “senior” person who had garnered respect and an amount of prestige and power within her/his field, took a “junior” person under the wing to teach, encourage and provide an extra push to ensure that junior individual’s success.”

Needless to say the “junior’s” success immeasurably enriched western culture and led to new intellectual and artistic developments that shaped the succeeding generation. These outstanding and dramatic examples could be multiplied thousands of times at more normal levels of accomplishment in every field of academic, cultural, technical, and social endeavor. In fact it seems possible to argue that, without mentoring, no field of human endeavor advances very far, very fast.

❖ **By being a mentor to faculty you learn as well.**

Mentoring is not a one-way street. The early career faculty member likely knows literature and research with which you are unfamiliar and certainly has perspectives that you do not have-- but that you probably need to know about.

New faculty members are chosen because they bring certain interests and new knowledge. They likely have studied with experts at other universities who have developed cutting edge concepts and techniques. By working with early career faculty members, you not only impart what you know about teaching, about scholarship, about getting along in the department and in the discipline, but you can also learn what they know. Thereby you gain perspective on the emerging trends in the

discipline. In this way getting early career faculty off to a good start can be revitalizing for your own work and thinking as well.

❖ **By being a mentor you can advance to a new stage of career maturity and assure an enduring impact on your field.**

In the MCVU manual they also argue that mentoring has deeper benefits for the mentor than just augmenting the prestige of the mentor. Drawing on the Daniel Levinson's path-breaking study of adult development *The Seasons of a Man's Life* they go on to argue that:

".....mentoring is a developmental stage in one's professional life, and since each developmental stage is crucial for growth, failure to serve as a mentor can lead to stagnation and internal conflict. By becoming a mentor, you have the opportunity to affect the future — you leave a part of yourself in everyone you mentor, your ideals, your ethics and your professionalism. Long after you've retired from the world of grants, publications, students and patients, your work will still be going on in those you've guided as a mentor. "

❖ **By being a mentor to new faculty at a critical stage in their careers, you make a huge contribution to your field.**

As established faculty members, we are committed to our fields. We want our field to be the best it can be, and we want to contribute to making it excellent. The largest investment an institution makes is in its faculty, so hiring is the most critical decision a department or school makes. However, the faculty members serve and advance our field. The new scholars that join our field represent the future. There are ample studies to show that early positive career experiences presage productive and satisfying scholarly careers long-term. The opposite is also true. Therefore whatever you do in the early stages to help the young scholar be more informed about the academic environment, to become more knowledgeable, more skilled, and more efficient is of great value.

In the language of economics, the return on your investment in time and energy for mentoring early career faculty is the highest. This is not to say that mid-career and even late career faculty do not need or benefit from coaching and mentoring as well. They do, but support directed toward early career faculty is especially valuable to the institution and to those mentored.

❖ **By being a mentor you can support values of diversity and equity.**

The US system of higher education was built largely for and by white American males born into middle and upper class families. In the past few decades different ethnic, religious, and racial groups have made their presence felt on campus and more low income families have had access to higher education. Women are now achieving closer parity in numbers with men as students and in the faculty in many disciplines.

Faculty members who are different from the prevailing norm in any way (gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc) may feel their difference creates problems for them and may need strong mentoring to help overcome those problems. In the mentoring process, the mentor, the mentee and the professional association (such as AEJMC) also gain awareness about how to truly support and benefit from the talents of a diverse faculty.

❖ **Post Script: You can define your own contribution to a mentoring initiative.**

You do not have to be a Freud to Jung, or Benedict to Mead to be a mentor in good standing. More contemporary definitions of mentoring include a variety mentoring arrangements beyond the master-apprentice model. Mentoring can take the form of a very targeted contribution (e.g., limited to teaching guidance.) It can occur in groups and through teams rather than in a one-on-one setting. Mentoring can occur across departments and even across universities, and it can take place online. It can be an informal relationship or a formal one.

The key is to understand mentoring as a critical social process that helps faculty develop cultural competence, build the skills, and develop the networks they need to be successful and to contribute to the academic enterprise. Each unit needs to take responsibility for how that process unfolds, and each faculty member needs to take responsibility for how to relate to the mentoring. Your contribution can come in many forms and at different times. You can choose how and when you want to be a mentor. So, thoughtfully decide on the role you want to play and then use some of the resources in the following pages to be the best mentor you can be.

Note to AEJMC Participants:

These materials were made available to UNC-Chapel Hill Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication Debashis Aikat by the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) at UNC Chapel Hill.

This packet contains summaries of articles about faculty mentoring as well as some original material. Dr. David Kiel, CFE Leadership Coordinator, has served as the editor for this packet. All the summaries provided contain citations or web addresses of the original articles.*

While CFE is in the process of gathering materials to support faculty mentoring efforts at UNC-CH, the specific purpose of this packet is to provide a set of resources for those attending the AEJMC session, co-led by Professor Aikat.