

Developing a Climate for Continuous Development

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Overview

Overarching goal to focus on the continuous professional development all faculty and staff. We began with a mentoring program for Associate Professors (AP's).

We conducted a needs analysis of AP's and got a strong response (N = 28; 62 %). 54% responded positively regarding their confidence in being promoted in the next 5 years, but 46% were either neutral or negative. AP's were also neutral to slightly positive when asked whether they received regular encouragement about promotion and career-related guidance. The survey suggested that 71% would like clarification of criteria to full professor and would like to review successful dossiers. 64% wanted guidance developing a plan for promotion and felt that a mentor would be helpful in this process. To a lesser degree, they felt that receiving feedback from the Unit and Departmental P&T Committee and their Chair/Dean would be beneficial.

Some of our specific goals were to :

- Increase the number of AP's who have an active plan for promotion
- Increase amount of feedback given to AP's
- Increase AP's confidence regarding promotion
- Increase faculty perceptions of School's commitment to their development
- Establish 7 mentor-mentee pairs
- Establish other developmental programming for SOS faculty and staff

Outcomes

Mentoring Program

- Invited all 45 AP's to apply
- Completed interest applications
- 16 mentored pairs
- All 7 departments represented
- 4 structured meetings across the year
- Final goal was to develop an individual developmental plan

Intended Outcomes

- Conducted needs surveys with lecturers and staff
- Conducted focus groups with lecturers and staff
- Mentoring group met with Gail Williamson to discuss promotion issues
- Mentoring facilitator sent out readings, reminders to meet, and offers to assist
- Chairs must offer a mentor to all faculty during annual review meetings

Unanticipated Outcomes

- Clarification of P&T guidelines in departments
- Development of criteria for areas other than research in some departments
- Quarterly staff training
- Lecturer program (in development)
- Staff onboarding process (in development)
- Writing group developed

Lessons Learned

The various surveys and focus groups highlighted a genuine need and desire by all faculty and staff to have access to professional development opportunities. Overwhelming interest in the mentoring program by AP's and senior faculty.

Strengths

- Cross department pairs
- Engaged faculty
- Broadened network
- Learned about other disciplines/cultures in the school
- Learned about commonalities across fields
- Appreciated with the program symbolized
- Helped focus activities and behaviors
- Learned more about how the school works

Suggestions

- More structured meetings
- Mentor training
- Focus on areas beyond P&T
- Criteria for success of program
- Secondary mentor from home department
- Create electronic listserv
- Mentors would have liked more guides/structures
- Separate meetings for mentors and mentees
- Create community of practice
- Start mentoring earlier in career
- Get more input from Unit Committee
- More interaction between the groups – less one one one
- Generate pairings from an informal/social gathering

