

Mentoring Guidelines for Tenure-track Faculty

We are delighted to be able to welcome you to the Brandeis faculty. We hope that you will find Brandeis a welcoming environment, so that you quickly feel part of the Brandeis community, and that you will spend many satisfying years here. In order to help you achieve these goals, the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences (DAS), in collaboration with department chairs, has developed guidelines for the mentoring of new faculty at Brandeis. Below we outline the mentoring program so that you can develop an understanding of how it is intended to work. We very much hope that you find the assignment of a mentor beneficial. If any questions should arise, please do not hesitate to contact either Stephen Hum (shum; 63440) or Lorna Laurent (llaurent; 62108) in the Dean's Office.

Expectations

- 1) Prior to your arrival, a representative from the Dean's Office will be in touch with your department chair to discuss the question of a suitable mentor for you. You will be advised of the name of your mentor (either by your department chair or by a representative from DAS) shortly after the selection of a mentor has been agreed, and ideally before you arrive on campus; you will also receive a copy of these guidelines. (By the time you are notified of your mentor's name, s/he will have accepted the role, and will have received the mentors' version of the mentoring guidelines.)
- 2) At the most basic level, the ideal mentor should be able to offer you an informal helping hand as you navigate your way around a new scholarly community, teaching culture, and administrative/policy environment.

Ideal Mentor Profile

- Interested in mentoring a colleague
- Good listener
- Knows Brandeis well, including teaching environment and service opportunities
- Tenured and has served on an *ad hoc* committee
- Proactive in making connections with appropriate resources inside the University and outside of it
- Strong professional know-how; up-to-date with profession
- Research-active and, in the sciences, adequately funded
- Available for the first three years of your appointment, and open to the relationship continuing through tenure

- 3) We view the mentoring of new tenure-track faculty to be most critical in their first three years at Brandeis. In the first year, you may be largely occupied with practical issues such as setting up office and/or laboratory, locating forms, mounting courses etc. During this phase, your mentor will be available to you either to provide direct help or to explain where you can find appropriate support (from your department administrator for example). Beyond the first year, you will hopefully be in a position to engage more closely with your scholarship (research and/or creative work), something that might generate a number of questions that you would welcome the opportunity to discuss. Again, your mentor will be seeking to help you, and again, it may be something that s/he feels s/he can do alone, or s/he may call upon other resources (your department chair for instance).

We recognize that, after your first three years, you may have developed relationships with other faculty that act as effective substitutes for your relationship with your mentor, or you may decide with your mentor that you will continue to meet but on a more *ad hoc* basis. Our main goal in assigning you a mentor is to help you to understand what is expected of you so that you can succeed at Brandeis – hence the emphasis on your first three years – after that, we understand that mentoring relationships will evolve in response to personal preference and needs.

The Role of Your Mentor – In General Terms

- 1) To act as an informal social conduit to introduce you to faculty, staff and students in your home department as well as in other departments and programs.
- 2) To act as a sounding board to discuss any emerging issues or to answer any questions.
- 3) To act as a resource about department and University policy.
- 4) To direct you to resources to further your scholarship and teaching goals, and to introduce you to service opportunities in the department, University, and profession.

Examples of Specific Commitments of Your Mentor

- 1) To arrange regular meetings with you during your first three years at Brandeis.
- 2) To offer to meet with you mid-way through the spring semester of your first year to discuss your activities report prior to its submission.
- 3) To offer you advice on keeping track of your activities, accomplishments, and honors.
- 4) To invite you to accompany him/her to a University event.

Your Role – In Relation to Scholarship (Research and/or Creative Work)

You will be prompted to assemble your reappointment materials in only the second year of your tenure-track appointment, at which point your progress in scholarship and teaching will be assessed. It therefore makes good sense for you to begin a discussion with your mentor (and department chair) early on about the department's expectations of you in relation to these two reappointment criteria. (Typically, you will be considered for tenure in your seventh year on the Brandeis faculty, at which point your performance in relation to the *three* criteria of scholarship, teaching and service will be assessed.)

- 1) Share works-in-progress with your mentor and with others in the department.
- 2) Discuss and review external grant proposals with him/her. In the sciences, this is most effective in the first 1-3 years of a tenure-track appointment, when you will be applying for starter grants.

- 3) Ask your mentor for advice on resources at Brandeis that support scholarship.
- 4) Discuss with your mentor which journals/publishers to target for your manuscripts.
- 5) *For the sciences*: Seek assistance with laboratory set-up and renovation issues.
- 6) Make the question of how to balance the relative importance and weight of scholarship, teaching and service a topic of ongoing discussion with your mentor and department chair.

Your Role – In Relation to Teaching

- 1) Seek advice from your mentor on developing syllabi, course assignments and exams, especially when you first begin teaching.
- 2) Ask your mentor and/or faculty colleagues to review your syllabi, course assignments and exams.
- 3) Discuss Brandeis teaching culture with your mentor.
- 4) Visit at least one class taught by your mentor or by another colleague whom s/he may recommend. Afterwards, discuss what was observed.
- 5) Invite your mentor to visit one of your classes. Afterwards, discuss what was observed.
- 6) Consider discussing teaching evaluations with your mentor and department chair.

Your Role – In Relation to Service

- 1) There is an expectation that tenure-track faculty will have developed a service record by the time they come up for tenure; however, there is no expectation that significant service responsibilities must be assumed in the early years. Discussing service opportunities with your mentor and your department chair is a good idea, but keep an eye on over-commitment, particularly early on in your appointment.
- 2) Your department may have a view about the appropriate level of involvement in service for a tenure-track faculty member, or the types of service that really count in the run-up to tenure. You should feel free to ask your mentor and department chair questions like this.
- 3) Discuss undergraduate and graduate advising issues with your mentor and department chair.

Finding the Right Mentor

Naturally, all of the above depends on the development of a good relationship between your mentor and you. If a mentor assigned to you upon appointment proves not to be the right fit for you, you should not hesitate to raise this with your department chair or Lorna Laurent (llaurent; 62108) or Stephen Hum (shum; 63440) in the Dean's Office.

Contact:

Stephen Hum for appointments in
IBS

The Heller School

Departments in the Arts & Sciences School of Social Sciences;

Lorna Laurent for appointments the Arts & Sciences Schools of
Creative Arts
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