

**MENTORING PROGRAM FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY, MICROBIOLOGY AND  
IMMUNOLOGY**  
**Revised January 2014**

The Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology Department and the School of Medicine are committed to effective mentoring. Thorndyke *et al.* point out that mentoring is “a central component of professional development”, encompassing “a supportive relationship and a teaching-learning process”, and involving “coaching, role modeling, assessing, and sponsoring”. They also point out that effective mentoring “enhances professional socialization, career development, and faculty advancement”.

Dr. Larry Swift, Vice Chair for Faculty Affairs, oversees the mentoring programs for all junior faculty. He works closely with the Department Chair and the Department Appointments and Promotions (A&P) Committee, which is charged with monitoring the mentoring plans for junior faculty (Assistant Professor and below) for investigator, clinician-educator and clinical practice tracks. The information below provides guidance for the formation of the mentoring committee and defines the role and responsibilities of the committee in faculty development.

**I. Initial Meeting with Dr. Swift**

Prior to setting up the Mentoring Committee, each junior faculty member should meet with Dr. Swift to discuss the expectations of new faculty and resources available at the institution. At this meeting, he will discuss, as appropriate:

- Appointment and Promotions criteria
- <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/faculty/academic-track-overview>
- Maintaining an updated CV using Vanderbilt format
- <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/faculty/required-format-curriculum-vitae>
- Development and maintenance of an up-to-date 4 page NIH biosketch
- Procedure for relevant training and passwords for VUMC Informatics system
- PMI conferences and journal clubs
- Department guidelines about travel, subscriptions, dues, benefits, HR policies, etc.
- IACUC and IRB (see attachments)
- Membership in societies
- Teaching activities
- Effort allocation, space, equipment and personnel as outlined in the offer letter
- Research support mechanisms available at VUMC – VPSD, IGP, Discovery grants, other internal sources of funding, e.g., toxicology, diabetes, dermatology, Cancer Center, etc. (see attachments)
- MPH <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/mph/>
- MSCI <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/msci/>
- Leadership Development Program for Junior Faculty
- Research <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/oor/>
- Feasibility and benefits of obtaining a secondary appointment in another department
- Responsibilities for the junior faculty member to maintain compliance with regulatory requirements for themselves and their laboratory members.

## II. The Mentoring Committee

- A. Role: The role of the Mentoring Committee is to provide advice on career development, developing an academic and scholarly program, balancing professional responsibilities, laboratory management, teaching commitments/opportunities, grant preparation, etc.
- B. Selection and follow up: The junior faculty member will, within the first 2 months of his/her appointment, propose three-four senior faculty members to constitute their Mentoring Committee. At least one of the proposed members should be from the Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology. The other members should be senior faculty with similar or allied interests or expertise in appropriate areas. They may be either PMI faculty or members of other departments when appropriate. Selection of mentors must be done in consultation with the Division Chief supervising the mentee with the assistance of Dr. Swift, Vice Chair for Faculty Affairs. Dr. Swift will review the proposed composition of the mentoring committee and choose a Chair for the committee. He will contact all committee members to ensure that they are willing and able to make the appropriate time commitment for this responsibility.
- C. Responsibilities of Mentees and Mentoring Committee: The first meeting of the Mentoring Committee with the mentee should occur within six months of the faculty member's appointment. **NOTE: It is the responsibility of the junior faculty member to schedule all Mentoring Committee meetings.** The purpose of the first meeting is to develop a Mentoring Plan for the coming year. One week prior to this meeting, the junior faculty member should provide committee members with an updated CV and a brief document highlighting professional responsibilities, recent achievements, plans for the near future, and career goals (short and long-term). At the meeting the committee should review the document with the faculty member, discuss professional activities and effort, and provide feedback with regard to goals and how to reach them. Considering the suggestions and comments of the Mentoring Committee, **the junior faculty member should develop a Mentoring Plan for the coming year.** This plan should outline academic goals and must include the following:
1. Short- and Long-term goals. For each goal the mentee should provide the following:
    - a. Proposed steps to be taken toward this goal in the coming year
    - b. Any progress or accomplishments to date toward meeting a specific goal
    - c. Any potential obstacle to reaching a goal should be identified and a plan developed to address it.
  2. Updated Curriculum Vitae

The mentee and the mentoring committee chair should sign the Mentoring Plan and send a copy to Dr. Swift.

Following the initial meeting, the Mentoring Committee should meet not less than once a year. Prior to each meeting the faculty member should provide a document with the following information:

1. Progress Report (1-2 pages) that summarizes **accomplishments** in research, teaching, clinical activities or training and **plans** for the next year. Include any **obstacles** that have been encountered. Also include any substantive changes contemplated in scholarly focus, clinical service, teaching or other commitments
2. A **Mentoring Plan** for the coming year (as defined above), including short and long term goals, and the proposed steps to be taken toward each goal.
3. Current Curriculum Vitae

At the meeting, the faculty member should review the document with the committee. The committee should then discuss the faculty member's activities as they relate to the evolution of the faculty member's career, tenure and/or promotion of the individual and provide feedback with regard to progress to date and future goals as defined in the mentoring plan. They may make specific recommendations with regard to professional activities and the Mentoring Plan. At the end of the meeting, the Chair of the committee will write a 1-2 page summary of the meeting, outlining the committee's comments and suggestions. A copy of this summary should be sent to the junior faculty member for comments and then forwarded, along with a copy of the Progress Report, yearly Mentoring Plan, and curriculum vitae to Dr. Swift.

### **III. Evaluation of Faculty Progress and Needs**

Dr. Swift will review the committee reports and the Mentoring Plans. Of critical importance will be the faculty member's accomplishments and progress over the previous year. It is also important that the Mentoring Plan clearly defines the goals for the coming year and the steps to be taken to reach those goals. He may ask for clarification or revision of the plan if the goals are not clear.

The Mentoring Plan will then be forwarded to the A&P committee for recommendations with regard to the progress of the junior faculty member and any additional steps to implement and/or to facilitate successful faculty development. These comments should be forwarded to Drs. Swift and Santoro. A summary of these comments/recommendations will be provided to the junior faculty member and the Mentoring Committee as well as to the Division Chief.

**Note:** For faculty with three-year appointments, a yearly Mentoring Plan and evaluation must still be submitted to the A&P committee. For those with one-year appointments, this plan and evaluation should be submitted at the time of request for reappointment.

### **Reference**

Thorndyke LE, Gusic ME, Milner RJ, et al. Functional mentoring: a practical approach with multilevel outcomes. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions* 2008; 28 (3): 157-164.

