Smathers Libraries

Mentoring Program

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Learning Objectives

- Be able to describe the current Smathers mentoring process
- Understand the goals of the mentoring program
- Identify 3 best practices to bring to your mentor/mentee relationship
Agenda

- Brief History of Mentoring in the Libraries
- Libraries Current Process
- The Value of Mentoring
- Mentor/Mentee Best Practices
- Questions
University of Florida Libraries Mentoring Program - History

- 1990’s - Informal Mentoring by the Tenure Support Group
- 2003 – Mentoring required by UF
- 2004 – Mentoring Program formalized by Libraries
- 2009 – Mentoring Program revised after discussion groups and survey
- 2010 - Approved by Faculty Assembly and implemented
University of Florida Libraries Mentoring Program - Survey

AGENDA
- History
- Process
- Value
- Best Practices
- Questions

- 70% of mentees wanted extension to award of tenure
- More structure
- Trainings/workshops
- Process for evaluating mentoring relationship
- Opportunities to socialize/informal gatherings
Changes implemented

- Formalized goals
- Formalized mentor selection process
- Added signed Mentoring Agreement
- Formalized the feedback
- Extended eligibility to staff pursuing or holding a degree in librarianship
- Changed duration of relationship – usually 6 years - until end of tenure process
“No matter what you do or how busy you are, you were new to the profession once, in need of support. Were you fortunate enough to have someone to welcome and guide you?”

Aniko Halverson Nijhoff
American Libraries Magazine July/August 2011
The value of library mentoring
For the Libraries

- Compliance with University regulation
- Fosters personal and professional growth
- Easier socialization and communication for new hires
- Additional support for staff development
- Improved quality of professional engagement
- Improved leadership skills
- Opportunities for information exchange
- Higher retention of employees
- Greater organizational stability
The value of library mentoring

For the Mentor

- Sharing knowledge and expertise
- Improved leadership skills
- Opportunities for information exchange
- Opportunity to stay current in the field
- Sense of satisfaction
  - New professional’s career
  - Service to the profession
- Increased job satisfaction
The value of library mentoring
For the Mentee

- Integration into the work environment
- Assistance prioritizing responsibilities
- Tenure and Promotion guide - reviewer
- Socialization into scholarly community
- Greater success for tenure & promotion
- Confidential advice outside supervisory structure
- Advocate and supporter
- Increased job satisfaction

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“…every mentor has a different view of what constitutes the mentoring role, no two mentors undertake this important task in the same way. … no two junior faculty have the same understanding of mentoring, nor have the same idea of what to expect of the […] relationship, nor have the same needs. Administrators charged with the creation and assessment of mentoring programs also differ in their definitions of mentoring and indices of success”

*University of Maryland – A Guide for Mentors (and Mentees)*
Mentoring is not

- Orientation
- Supervision
- A friendship (only)
- A guaranteed path to tenure etc.
- A guarantee of success
- A substitute for training
- Complete support no matter the issues, activities, performance
- Alternative way to communicate with supervisor or supervisor to communicate with employee
Best Practices

Meet early on
- Become acquainted
- Define expectations and greatest needs
- Set some clear goals
- Complete the Mentoring Agreement

Keep communication open
- Stay in touch – formal/informal – calendar appointments
- Be available – be proactive & responsive
- Share - personal/professional
- Prepare for your meetings
- Address misunderstandings as they arise
Mentor

- Construct a framework for your mentoring - agreement
- Assist in identifying professional service activities
- Assist in balancing professional responsibilities, service and scholarship
- Be encouraging
- Be honest – constructive feedback
- Be aware of the T&P process/deadlines and mentor’s role
Mentee

- Be proactive – this is your career
- Construct a framework for the mentoring relationship - what do you need, what format (how) and when?
- Share your vulnerable areas/anxieties
- Share your performance goals annually
- Be prepared to accept honest feedback
- Engage your mentor
• What are your strengths?
• What are you most anxious about?
• What expectations do you have for this relationship?
• When do you think you will need the most coaching/feedback?
• How would you like to give and receive feedback?
• How will you determine if your relationship is meeting expectations?
Take a few minutes to think about 3 new best practices that you will bring to your mentee/mentor relationship.
Resources used:
- Educause – Mentoring Kit
- ACRL Mentoring Tip Sheets
- Vincent J. Novara, Phillipa Brown, M. Jane Williams. “Mentoring when Librarians have Faculty Status”. Information Resources Management Association
- SELA Mentoring Program
- Rutgers University Libraries Mentoring Program