

TOP TEN REASONS TO HAVE A MENTOR
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Dr. Rhonda J. Malone
Director of Faculty Mentoring & Development and
Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs & Provost
University of Maryland, College Park

A Mentor(s) Can Help You:

1. Create a Timeline

- Beware of the dangers of the daily to do's.
- 6 yrs can seem (& is) a very long time. But count backwards and include the length of time it takes to accomplish tasks, esp. scholarly tasks, and planning is crucial.
- Take advantage of those who have an idea of how long it will take to accomplish tasks. *Scholarship*: Conduct research, write paper, but also get paper accepted, revised, and published. *Implement a project or plan a program*: Develop program/idea, etc. but how long to gather support, gain approval, and actually accomplish reserving rooms, preparing materials, etc. The devil can be in these details.
- Comfort of knowing where you stand it terms of time.

2. Clarify Expectations

- Think how valuable it would be to have regular one on one time with someone who has actually been part of a number of reviews for promotion/permanent status, who has heard discussions of standards and how to determine the accomplishments and career trajectory of a candidate.
- Gain insight into both what is expected and how to document accomplishments.

3. Understand University and Libraries' Cultures

- Read from "New Faculty" page 32.
- Learn the To Do's and the Not To Do's. Give examples: okay to speak up in meetings, to interrupt conversation because have to pick up child.

4. Become Familiar With Helpful Resources

- Think about faculty out there you could really help but they don't realize what you can do for them. Similarly, there are available resources you probably don't even know about.
- Save time with the "inside skinny." Who to call for what: if you need something done it that office, call so and so.

5. Determine Involvement in Professional Development Activities

- You have both librarian and disciplinary organizations and conferences in which you can become involved.
- Annual funding for professional development. Still choices to make. Which organizations to become involved with, how to become involved.
- Getting to know the major “domos” in your field.

6. Get Answers to “Dumb” Questions

- I’ve heard from a number of faculty that they fear asking questions of colleagues who will be voting on their career future in a few years. They are also afraid of bothering busy folks. A mentor has VOLUNTEERED for you to ask questions!

7. Gain Professional Skills

- You’ll receive performance evaluations but who will help you implement the suggestions?
- A mentor is in many ways your own personal coach. Instead of help learning how to drip the ball or throw a pass, they can help (or tell where to get help) with writing skills, presentation skills, etc. Of course, one important difference is that they don’t always see you playing on a field so in many cases, you’ll need to be doing your own self-assessment so you know the areas where you need to be working.

8. Organize, Manage and Balance Time Effectively

- Time is of the essence for each of you. Organizing, managing and balancing your time are the keys not only to your professional success but also your personal success.
- Here are some examples of how a mentor can help: which service responsibilities give you the best bang for your buck, which tasks are taking a great deal of your time but aren’t really that important to your performance review, how to organize your time so that you have uninterrupted writing and thinking time, how to and when to say no.

9. Develop an Advocate

- Senior librarians, the Directors, and the Dean need to know what you are doing, to understand what you are doing, and to value what you are doing. Keeping them informed about this is vital. You can, and should do this, but your mentor can be very helpful in this regard. Think of your APPS Review meeting and in that room is someone who knows and respects your work, who can answer questions and concerns. How valuable is that?

10. Make a Connection

- Faculty work can be quite isolating. It’s one of the biggest complaints I have heard. Mentors are not only a connection themselves; they can offer connection through them to others in their network.