

Mentoring Program

Who is Assigned Mentors?

All faculty members hired as Assistant Professor and as Assistant Teaching Professor are assigned two mentors. Faculty members who join the Department with tenure or at a level higher than Assistant Professor or Assistant Teaching Professor, may request that the Department assign a mentor to them.

Who Acts as Mentor?

All tenured faculty members at the Associate Professor and Professor levels, rostered in either ME Department or in other CU Boulder Departments, are eligible to mentor any mentee. In addition, all Associate or Full Teaching Professors in the Department are eligible as mentors of Assistant Teaching Professors and all Associate Research Professors and Research Professors are eligible as mentors of junior research faculty and Teaching Professors.

Role of Mentors

Mentors make their experience available to their mentees to get them acquainted with the Department and to make decisions about their careers. They advise about teaching, research, and service as appropriate. To that end, mentors and mentees should establish regular meetings (at least monthly). The Department will bear small, pre-approved expenses that may be incurred in carrying out these meetings.

Assignment of Mentors

As part of the onboarding process, the HR & Operations Manager, in consultation with the Department Chair selects a mid-career and senior-career mentor for the newly hired faculty. These mentors contact the new hire at the earliest opportunity to establish communication and help with non-administrative matters.

The mentor-mentee assignment normally lasts until a tenure-track faculty receives tenure. For Assistant Teaching Professors, it lasts until they are promoted to Associate Teaching Professor. For research faculty, it lasts until they are promoted to Research Associate Professor. For senior faculty who elect to have a mentor, the assignment lasts for one year.

At any time during the mentorship period a faculty may request to change one or both mentors. The request is made to the HR & Operations Manager or to the Chair. Mentors may likewise request to be relieved of their mentoring duties. Whenever the number of mentors of a faculty member falls below the prescribed number the HR & Operations Manager and Chair, in consultation with the mentee, nominates a new mentor.

Recognition of Mentors

Mentors have a significant responsibility in fostering the professional growth of junior faculty and in creating a welcoming environment. Successful mentorship relationships promote better teaching, research and service for the whole Department and improve retention.

In recognition of the important role that mentor plays, and of the significant time commitment requested of them, the Department considers mentorship of junior faculty as a major component of a mentor's service.

The Department further recognizes the role of mentors by instituting a yearly award. Nominations may be submitted by all faculty. The decision is by the Executive Committee, which also sets the deadlines for nominations so that the award may be announced in time for the yearly Departmental awards.

Peer Observation of Teaching

A crucial component of the mentoring program is peer observation of teaching. Each mentor and mentee is required to conduct at least one peer observation of each other's teaching annually. This reciprocal process fosters shared learning, constructive feedback, and continuous improvement in instructional practices.

Please find our Peer Observation Guidance here: [ME Faculty & Staff Resources](#) > Teaching Quality Framework > [Peer Teaching Evaluation Process](#)

Mentor Check-In Guidance

Monthly mentor check-in topics:

- What's going well in teaching, research, or service?
- Any challenges or questions?
- Departmental processes or culture insights
- Upcoming goals or milestones (CRPT)
- Feedback or support needed