

# MENTORING-IN-A-BOX: Women Faculty in Computing

## Set-the-Stage Template

When entering into a mentoring partnership, both parties commit to a shared effort. This form is designed to document decisions you make together about the work ahead. As conditions change and your relationship matures, refer to this sheet to be reminded of agreements you made early on. *In advance of your first meeting, think about the themes below. When you meet, let the form serve as the basis for conversation and decision-making.*

**1. Establish Purpose.** Mentoring is an intentional engagement with shared purpose. Be ready to discuss your reasons for working together.

**2. Clarify Roles.** The role of a mentor is to share expertise, advise, advocate, coach, and support. The role of the mentee is to seek advice and take steps toward professional growth. What are the boundaries of this relationship? Are there any roles that would be best served by having one or more mentors?

**3. Document Initial Goals.** For the mentee: What do you wish to accomplish? *In your meeting, discuss goals and set priorities. You will continue setting goals as you meet in the weeks ahead.*

**4. Establish a Mentoring Timeframe.** How long should your mentoring relationship last? Having a clear end point will make you more productive in your time together. Let major milestones guide your timeframe. Consider: Desired research accomplishments, performance review anniversary, stage in the tenure process or academic year. Plan a mid-point check halfway to your goal to reflect on progress.

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**5. Plan Your Work Together: Regular Meetings.** Decide when, where, and how frequently you will meet. Agree to maintain momentum by keeping to your meeting schedule, but discuss what you will do if one of you needs to reschedule a meeting.

**6. Plan Your Work Together: Informal interactions.** Mentoring works best when the participants can interact in an “open door” environment, but set some ground rules. Are impromptu drop-in meetings acceptable? What kind of turn-around can each of you expect when the other leaves a message by phone or email? Are weekends off-limits or are they the best time to meet?

**7. Discuss Constructive Feedback.** In a healthy partnership, both parties are able to give and take constructive feedback. A mentor may give critical input to help a mentee learn a new skill, change methods, or build awareness. In turn, a mentee may counter a recommendation or ask for a different kind of support from the mentor.

**8. Establish Boundaries.** Discuss any limits either party would like to impose, such as availability beyond work hours or topics that are off limits.

**9. Establish Meeting Agenda.** Review the *Mentoring-in-a-Box Meeting Plan Template* together. It is designed to help you structure effective meetings and document activity that occurs between meetings. Discuss ways to adapt or extend the Meeting Plan Template, and then customize it for your purposes.

**10. Prepare for your next meeting** using the *Meeting Plan Template*.

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**11. Agreements.** Modify if needed and initial each.

A. If we cannot attend a scheduled meeting, we agree to notify our partner and reschedule.

Mentor\_\_\_\_\_ Mentee\_\_\_\_\_

B. Confidentiality - Sensitive issues that we discuss will be held in confidence. *Note: Criminal behavior, sexual abuse, fraud against the university, gross misconduct or threats to personal health and safety cannot be held in confidence and must be brought to the attention of authorities.*

Mentor\_\_\_\_\_ Mentee\_\_\_\_\_

C. Continuity - We agree that our mentoring relationship will continue as long as we both feel comfortable or until we meet primary goals (see #4).

Mentor\_\_\_\_\_ Mentee\_\_\_\_\_

D. Graceful Exit Clause - If one of us needs to terminate the relationship for any reason, we agree to abide by the decision of our partner.

Mentor\_\_\_\_\_ Mentee\_\_\_\_\_

*We acknowledge and share these expectations for working together.*

Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s):\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s):\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_

*Make copies of this document for future reference.*