Welcome to Your Role as Mentor!

Humber’s Mentor Program for Faculty, Librarians and Counsellors is a program designed to facilitate the orientation and adaptation of new staff members to the role of community college over the course of their first year.

The program is based on an experienced staff member acting as a mentor to new professors at Humber College with a primary focus on substantive and useful discussions.

The role may be slightly different for Librarians/Counsellors but all groups currently play a role in teaching/learning.

The mentor is the key for the success of the program. Your role is very important.

You were selected as a mentor because your Dean/Associate Dean saw in you the following knowledge, skills, attitudes and characteristics that will make you a good mentor:

- Full time, experienced (3 years +) faculty member
- Voluntary acceptance of request
- Exemplary instruction techniques
- A good knowledge of the school
- Excellent communication skills
- Flexibility
- Leadership ability
- Enthusiastic
- Personable
- Organized
- Approachable
- Tolerant
- Competent
- Supportive
- Trustworthy
- Resourceful
- Ethical

If at any time you have problems, questions, or need assistance, please ask for it. Your Associate Dean, the Dean, and the Professional Development staff will be glad to help.

There is no intent to insist on a lot of bureaucratic requirements or restrictions in the Mentor Program. Please consider the ideas in this Handbook as suggestions.

The purpose of the Mentoring New Faculty Program is to provide additional support to facilitate new faculty’s orientation to Humber College. Any strategy that accomplishes this is the one you want to use. We invite you to share ideas, resources and the successes you have had so that we can continue to develop support for our college mentors.

WE WISH YOU SUCCESS IN YOUR ROLE!
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Section I:
Understanding Mentoring
“A mentor is an invaluable tool for developing a personal investment in Change and a commitment to it whilst supporting the individual through the fear, into the risk taking, and then finally on to acting.”
(Kibby, 1997)

“When the word ‘mentor’ has its origins in Greek mythology ... in modern-day terms mentoring is typically seen as a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies.”
(Academy for Leadership and Development, 2006)

Mentoring is a relationship based on shared input and reciprocity between two or more individuals. Such a relationship “facilitates goal accomplishment, provides emotional and psychological support, assists with professional development, and offers role modeling”
(Barker & Pitts, 1997)

Mentoring is a “dynamic and non-competitive nurturing ‘process’ ... that promotes independence, autonomy, and self-actualization in the protégé while fostering a sense of pride and fulfillment, support, and continuity in the mentor.”
(Valadez and Lund, 1993)

At Humber your role as mentor for the new full-time faculty, counsellors and librarians is focussed on assisting that individual in the smooth transition to a new career. Even if the individual has previously been with the college on a part-time or contractual basis, this is a new role with new responsibilities. You are in a position to help facilitate change in a proactive manner.
Benefits of Successful Mentoring

There are numerous benefits of successful mentoring for all levels of the college, including:

Benefits for the Individual Mentee:
- Increased independence
- Increased self confidence
- Increased decision making skills
- Increased problem solving skills
- Increased efficiency and productivity
- Increased access to resources
- Developed networks
- Decreased isolation and stress
- Developed organizational insight

Benefits for the Mentor:
- Reflective practice
- Contribution to the discipline
- Personal satisfaction
- Collaboration
- Collegiality
- Exposure to new ideas and trends
- Leadership opportunities
- Increased personal and career satisfaction

Organizational Benefits:
- Faculty retention
- Succession planning
- Culture of collaboration and collegiality
- Productivity increases
- Opportunities to share best practices are provided

Ultimately the students gain as their faculty are supported in excellence in teaching and learning!

Adapted from the Mentoring Resource Handbook, College of Pharmacy, Dalhousie University, 2003.
**Role of the Mentor**

The following is intended to be a brief description of your role as mentor:

1. To assist and guide the new faculty member, helping him/her to integrate more easily. The first role of the mentor is to help orient the new faculty member to the school and his/her program. (This handbook contains a Checklist that may prove helpful as possible starting point)

2. To help and to refer the new faculty member to appropriate resources as needed. To help them understand/assist with the necessary paper work and documentation (what to do, how to do it, where to find it).

3. To provide support, listening and feedback time (informally or at prearranged times) so that the new faculty member can discuss student problems, evaluation, lesson plans and teaching techniques and test ideas.

4. To invite the new faculty member into your class or to arrange for him/her to visit other classes (each semester the Professional Development Office provides access to the schedules of faculty who have been nominated by their Associate Dean and agreed to welcome new faculty observers in their classrooms on a prescheduled basis).

5. To visit the new faculty member’s class for support and encouragement and/or team teach if in same area of expertise.

6. To assist with the Tuesday afternoon Teaching Excellence Program, *TEP 105: Issues in College Teaching* course, as necessary.

7. To meet with the new faculty member once a week for a minimum of one hour.

8. To connect with the representative from Professional Development responsible for Teaching Excellence Program (TEP) as needed.

9. To optionally provide your personal contact information (e.g. home phone number or email address).

10. To provide direction with the assignment components and/or practicum (in consultation with Associate Dean).

Most emphatically *mentors do NOT evaluate the new teacher’s performance*. You are a peer!!! Moreover it is not expected that the mentor be an expert in program development but merely a colleague and role model.

You will probably find that as the relationship develops the new faculty member will become more and more independent, needing less and less time with you.
The 16 Laws of Mentoring

1. **The Law of Positive Environment**
   Create a positive environment where potential and motivation are released and options discussed.

2. **The Law of Developing Character**
   Nurture a positive character by helping to develop not just talent, but a wealth of mental and ethical traits.

3. **The Law of Interdependence**
   Promote autonomy; make the learner independent of you, not dependent on you.

4. **The Law of Limited Responsibility**
   Be responsible to them, not for them.

5. **The Law of Shared Mistakes**
   Share your failures as well as your successes.

6. **The Law of Planned Objectives**
   Prepare specific goals for your relationship.

7. **The Law of Inspection**
   Monitor, review, critique and discuss potential actions. Do not just expect performance without inspection.

8. **The Law of Tough Love**
   Acknowledge the need to encourage independence in your mentee.

9. **The Law of Small Successes**
   Use a stepping-stone process to build on accomplishments and achieve success.

10. **The Law of Direction**
    It is important to teach by giving options as well as direction.

11. **The Laws of Risk**
    A mentor should be aware that a learner’s failure may reflect back on him/her. A learner should realize a mentor’s advice will not always work.

12. **The Law of Mutual Protection**
    Commit to cover each other’s backs. Maintain privacy. Protect integrity, character and the pearls of wisdom you have shared with each other.

13. **The Law of Communication**
    The mentor and the learner must balance listening with delivering information.

14. **The Law of Extended Commitment**
    The mentoring relationship extends beyond the typical 8 – 5 business day and/or traditional workplace or role.

15. **The Law of Life Transition**
    As a mentor, when you help a learner enter the next stage of his/her life or career, you will enter the next stage of yours.

16. **The Law of Fun**
    Make Mentoring a wonderful experience – laugh, smile and enjoy the process.

*Source: Mentoring – A Success Guide for Mentors and Protégés, F. Wickman and T. Sjodin, 1977*
Section II:
Planning for Success
Steps to Facilitate a Successful Relationship

• Initiate and keep regular meetings to get to know each other
• Provide friendly professional support
• Introduce your Mentee to helpful colleagues and resources
• Take a tour through the program area and classrooms and other resources they are most likely to need, clarifying procedures for accessing these
• Introduce to references on teaching and learning
• Share school and program policies and procedures
• Offer to help with the preparation or critique of materials
• Provide constructive feedback
• Listen and communicate clearly
• Encourage risk taking
• Role model
• Encourage creativity and risk taking
• Maintain confidentiality

Key Qualities of Effective Mentors

While there are many varied qualities that make up an effective mentor, the following are among the key traits needed:

• Personable
• Listens
• Supportive
• Genuine
• Accessible
• Resourceful
• Encourages
• Ethical
• Knowledgeable
• Clear
• Observant
• Empathetic
• Helpful
• Insightful
• Non-judgmental
• Patient
• Respectful
Feedback from Previous New Faculty Members

Every semester we survey the new faculty and ask them for feedback on Humber’s Mentoring Program. Here are some of the quotes we have received over the years.

- “A great source of encouragement and I love the chance to bounce ideas off each other.”
- “I would suggest we start to meet earlier in the semester.”
- “Mine is a natural leader.”
- “Sharing an office makes access easier.”
- “My mentor consultations have made my life very easy. My questions have always been answered or I am given direction in how to find the answers.”
- “Mentors are very useful – especially in the area of policy and procedures.”
- “This is very helpful if the mentor is a good fit.”
- “My mentor reviewed my lesson plan before my class visit with the Associate Dean. This helped me feel more confident for my class visit.”
- “Being friendly, as simple as it sounds, feeling supported reduces the uncertainty when teaching your first semester.”
- “My mentor demonstrated her Blackboard course site for me and how she structures it – that provided me an alternative way to do course planning.”
- “I know he is there if I need him and his advice has been helpful.”
- “My mentor was helpful in understanding processes and supports.”
- “I received important ‘Humber information’ that is not written out in a manual.”
The Teaching Excellence Program

Over the course of their first two years with the college all new full-time hires participate in various courses, activities and assignments designed to facilitate excellence in teaching and learning. The mentor is an important part of this process, assisting in the transition to the new role and helping build connections with people and resources that will help the new person meet their responsibilities.

Some of the experiences our new full-time hires participate in include:

**Year I**
- Residential orientation and micro-teaching and critiquing
- College and school orientations
- Observation of other classes chosen from an approved list of faculty
- Attendance at weekly sharing sessions to discuss issues and best practices
- Attendance at weekly sessions on excellence in teaching and learning
- Individual learning plan creation
- Educational project proposal
- Incorporating technology as an effective pedagogical tool

**Year II**
- Portfolio development
- Educational project completion
- Leadership
- Seminars on advanced issues in teaching and learning
Departmental Orientation Checklist for Consideration

Departmental Policies/Procedures

___ Office space and keys
___ Phone system and voice mail
___ Computer access code and support
___ Copier and printers
___ Classrooms and equipment
___ Reporting structure re areas of responsibility
___ Key people and roles within the school
___ Schedule of meetings
___ School acronyms
___ Purchasing requirements
___ Acquiring textbooks/supplies
___ Academic council
___ First Class
___ Emergency procedures
___ Class lists
___ Course materials
___ Mailbox
___ Grading and evaluation
___ Blackboard program practices

College Policies and Procedures

___ SWFs
___ Emergency procedures
___ Sick days
___ Mileage
___ College web site
___ Student rights and responsibilities
___ Copyright legislation
___ Academic regulations
___ Parking and photo ID
___ Library card and access
___ Freedom of Information Act

Professional Development

___ Teaching Excellence Program
___ The Instructional Support Studio
___ Tuition Assistance Program
___ Mentoring

Please note that while some of these areas are covered during the orientation phase of the Teaching Excellence Program with new faculty, repetition may be helpful given the volume of information new employees are asked to digest. Should there be anything you would recommend adding to this list please feel free to let us know.
Section III:

Components for Success
The First Meeting

The planning meeting may be the first contact you have with the faculty member. First impressions tend to be lasting; as a result, the planning meeting should be carefully organized. Your primary objective will be to establish mutual agreement on the objectives of the mentorship program and a working plan for accomplishing them. In addition to setting objectives, a schedule or calendar should be agreed upon for additional meetings, reciprocal class visits, phone conferences, and any other mutually agreeable program elements. The objectives that you establish should reflect the following considerations:

A. The faculty member should have a chance to become familiar with the administrative requirements of his/her job including:
   1. The conditions stated in the Faculty Agreement
   2. Class lists
   3. Grade reports
   4. Instructor absence procedures
   5. Use of guest lecturers, field trips, etc.
   6. Attendance records
   7. Use of course outlines
   8. Student withdrawals
   9. Academic regulations

B. An explanation of the course outline should be given concerning its use and the degree of flexibility the faculty has in varying from it or in modifying it.

C. The mentor should familiarize the faculty member with instructional resources available through the Test Centre, Learning Resource Centre, Print Shop, L.R.C., Professional Development Office, Student Services, etc.

D. The mentor should provide for the new faculty a positive example of the teaching role.

E. The faculty member should also become familiar with the grading and evaluation system used by the department, or one that has been successfully used in a similar class. Either the mentor’s system or that of another faculty member could be provided for discussion.

Each mentor/faculty relationship will be different and should be structured to meet the needs of the individuals involved. However, a specific work plan for the mentor’s program should be the outcome of the planning meeting. Some suggested elements of this plan may include:

1. Visits by the mentor to the instructor’s class (es)
2. Visits by the instructor to the mentor’s class (es) or other teachers’ class (es)
3. A schedule of future meetings
4. Visits or tours of institutional support facilities
5. Scheduled meetings with other faculty, administrators, or staff
Class Visits

A. BEING INVITED INTO YOUR MENTEE’S CLASS

Classroom visitations can be extremely valuable when approached in the right manner. For the record, the role of mentor is not evaluative or supervisory, nor should you volunteer a critique unless it is specifically requested. The primary purpose of the classroom visit is to maintain communication and to provide the opportunity for nondirective dialogue about the teaching process.

The followup discussion should focus upon such things as problems in following the course syllabus, problems with students, answering questions, discussion of the subject matter, strategies for teaching future topics, etc.

Two things should be emphasized:
1. Try to be low key and non directive in discussions, and
2. Try to be positive (no mutual gripe sessions about employees or students)

BE A GOOD OBSERVER!!

If you are asked (or if it seems appropriate) to make comments about the class you observed be sure the first thing you say is positive and that, overall, the sum of the things you say also is positive. If there is some criticism you feel the need to point out, approach it indirectly to see if the instructor is already aware of it. If not, by all means mention it, but do so in as nonthreatening a manner as possible. As a mentor, your role is to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

While your role is not to provide a critique of the instructor’s teaching performance, you cannot participate effectively in discussion or respond to questions unless you carefully observe the teaching behaviour. Like most things, success as an observer will depend largely upon the amount and quality of your planning and preparation. The result should be a mental checklist that you go through as you are observing the faculty member. Some things you might consider placing on the checklist may include:

• What are the objectives?
• What did the faculty do? Lecture? Ask questions? Monitor lab/group work?
• What did the students do? Answer questions? Listen? Laboratory work? Group discussion? Read? Take tests? Do assignments?
• What is the degree of correlation between the above three things? Were they all consistent in objective or purpose?
• Where did this session fit into the syllabus?
• How was the class managed?
• What instructional materials/aids were used?

Why so much soft soap? You will never be accepted as a friend and a confidant if you assume an authoritarian role. Your prime concern is to help and you can’t do that if you are a threat. Once you establish an atmosphere of mutual trust, it may become possible for you to be more direct with your comments. Until that happens, low key is the word.

B. INVITING YOUR MENTEE TO YOUR CLASS

Your willingness to serve as a mentor is indicative of your personal feelings of professional competence, as well as the institution’s recognition of your abilities. We hope you will extend an invitation to your mentee to observe your classes. On such occasions, take care to practice what you preach, because the real message that will be communicated will be dictated by your actions, not your words.

If the instructor does visit your class, you may want to suggest that she/he also develop a mental check list of
things to look for during the session. His/her checklist would probably look something like the one you used in your visit.

In the follow-up session, you may want to ask questions which lead to a natural and meaningful discussion of the class session. Because it was your class and since you are not easily threatened, the discussion may take form of a critical analysis of what occurred; however, don’t let it get out of hand or allow yourself to become defensive.

As a part of the observation, plan to have a follow up meeting with your visitor. Again, try to be low key and nondirective. Answer any questions as openly as you can. Try to expand the discussion to encompass your strategy for teaching the entire course. If appropriate, go over your course outline with the instructor, your lesson plan, discuss the grading system, explain how you handle administrative chores, and try to demonstrate the clear relationship between your objectives and your teaching methods and techniques.

Of course, as we are all aware, no one can perform miracles in the classroom so be open about your short comings and explain what you are doing about them.

As professional teachers, we know people learn in many ways. Observation of your class may provide a valuable addition to the learning experience of the new faculty member. Open and meaningful dialogue is also a useful way of learning and in this situation may be especially important.

If you are just not comfortable with having the instructor visit your class or, if for some reason it is inappropriate, then don’t invite him/her. Instead, you may be able to arrange for them to observe someone else (perhaps someone who is teaching the same course as the faculty member).

Classroom visits are a very important part of the Mentor Program. Without these visits, your discussions with the faculty member will be theoretical. With these visits you can talk specifically about materials, techniques and events.

**Closing Comments**

In addition to the initial planning meeting, possible exchange of classroom visits, and regular weekly meetings, you or the new faculty may find the need for occasional contact by telephone or even written messages. The important thing is to make yourself available. Experience in other mentoring programs has shown that as the year progresses, the new teacher will become more and more independent.
Section IV:

Barriers to Effective Mentoring
Negative Mentoring Behaviours

- Breaching confidentiality
- Verbal abuse
- Excessive criticism
- Deception
- Authoritative demeanor
- Blaming approach
- Favoritism
- Jealousy
- Intimidation

Potential Challenges:

A. Regular meeting times may be difficult to schedule but these are critical, especially early on to build trust.

B. Extremely diverse teaching philosophies may create challenges that are fewer if the philosophy of the partners is similar or at least complementary.

C. There is not often formal recognition for the time and energy invested and so it is critical that the individuals feel an intrinsic motivation for entering into the relationship.

D. Seasoned faculty need to acknowledge any feelings of threat from the newer person’s knowledge or skills.

E. Previous negative experiences with ‘authority’ or ‘expertise’ may need to be explored

F. Clear and realistic expectations of what both parties are to get out of the contact need to be clarified.

G. Matches need to be made with factors other than simply scheduling taken into account

What to Do When Things Aren’t Going Well in the Mentoring Relationship

Actions:

1) The first step is to talk about it. Try approaching the subject by asking the other person how they feel the relationship is working. Then offer your observations and share your concerns. Be sure to provide specific examples. (Remember to cite the behavior not your interpretation of the motivation.)

Then once the concern is in the open, encourage the other person to share their views, if they have not already done so.

2) You have had the initial conversation and discussed both of your expectations, but you are still having difficulties. Talk about it with each other and explore options. It may be that you don’t have the same understanding of the expectations or of the mentee’s goals. Cover these slowly to ensure understanding and use concrete examples. Be sure to flag areas of concern or disagreement. Talk about your different points of view. What can you adjust that will still facilitate the goals within the mentoring relationship? Ask each other what you can do differently that will help. Listen carefully to ensure you understand the request and consider whether it is something you can change.

3) You have had several conversations at this point that explored your expectations of the relationship and of each other. You have discussed and clarified the mentee’s development goals to ensure you are both on track. You are still having difficulties moving the relationship and the goals ahead. This would be an appropriate time to bring in third party assistance. Talk with your administration or Professional Development for recommendations. This is not a sign of failure, you have both been proactive and both people are interested in making it work, but feel they may be stuck on something or overlooking some aspect that will enable them to move forward.
4) You have tried everything! Your communication or interpersonal styles may just be too different to work together effectively in this relationship. Or, an existing managerial relationship or work priorities place too much strain on the mentor-mentee relationship. Despite best efforts, it is not workable. You may need to **end the mentoring relationship** while there is still goodwill between the two of you.

*Provided by Humber College—Mentoring Workshop*

### Potential Problem Areas and Strategies to Overcome

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<td>Arguments, complaints</td>
<td>Conflict, clash of personalities/interests/values</td>
<td>Poor relationship, ineffective development, credibility of mentor/mentoring suffers, organization less effective</td>
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<td>Not meeting, no time</td>
<td>Changing priorities, mentor motivation and/or confidence</td>
<td>Lack of motivation, ineffective development, poor credibility for mentor/mentoring, frustration</td>
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<td>Lack of apparent progress, going nowhere</td>
<td>Real performance problem in protégé, difference in standards, unclear standards</td>
<td>Lack of motivation and loss of credibility of parties</td>
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<td>Frustration over methods, timescales</td>
<td>Unclear ‘contract’ between mentor and protégé, lack of communication between them, lack of mentor skills/confidence</td>
<td>Lack of motivation and loss of credibility</td>
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<td>Unproductive meetings, uncommunicative protégé</td>
<td>Mentoring relationship ‘run its course’</td>
<td>Frustration and stagnation Mentor self-doubt</td>
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Section V:

References
References


The Chair Academy. (2006). Cultivating a Meaningful Mentoring Relationship

Section VI:
Resources
The following are among the services that new full-time faculty/counsellors/librarians are expected to be oriented to during their first couple of weeks at the college. During the orientation phase individuals should visit those listed here, being introduced to the people and resources available. Once these have been signed off this sheet needs to be shared with Professional Development for logging of completion.

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