

Overview of BMG Faculty Mentoring

The goal of faculty mentoring in BMG is to nurture the professional development of early and mid-career faculty. This will enhance the careers of mentees but also strengthen the department and the SOM through developing productive relationships that impact our missions of teaching, scholarship, and service.

1. The basic structure is to create a mentoring committee composed of three faculty members for each mentee, one of whom serves as chair. The mentoring committee chair will be the person responsible for ensuring “things happen” and serve as the primary contact for the group.
2. The composition of the committee will likely be two primary BMG faculty, and a third member who either has a close relationship with BMG, is an expert in the subject area of the mentee, or both. Committee-mentee interactions can be initiated by either party and occur on an informal basis. The process should be largely organic.
3. The committee will provide advice and instruction to the mentee on an ad hoc basis, on topics including gaining access to and managing trainees, publication, teaching, and navigating requests for committee work within and outside the department. The committee will advise on collaborations, creating visibility, and building the Promotion & Tenure portfolio <https://med.virginia.edu/faculty-affairs/advancement/pandt/> .
4. The committee will help advise the mentee on research direction and scope, including the preparation of grant proposals. The BMG department “grant brews” are one setting where the committee (together with other BMG faculty) can provide rigorous and constructive input.
5. The committee will work closely with the department chair for defining opportunities for service, and for nomination of career stage-appropriate awards, both local and national.
6. The committee will have an in-person meeting with the mentee in January of each year to discuss a 12-month game plan. This places the meeting about 6 months prior to the SOM annual review performed by the dept chair. This will enable an assessment of progress in 6-month intervals. The chair of the mentoring committee will write a short summary of the meeting and share with B. Paschal. This is analogous to annual meetings held between PhD candidates and their committee, with the report submitted to the DGS. Meetings between committee and mentee could include topics that are best kept confidential.
7. The critical element of mentoring is effective communication and relationship building. Although the plan describes mentoring mediated by the aforementioned committee, it will be important for all department members to recognize they can and should contribute to mentoring young faculty. This can occur different ways.
8. Mentoring will be carried out in a way that is not burdensome to current faculty. This is an important consideration given the department is small.
9. Mentoring will be largely focused on assistant professors, but there is also a role for mentoring faculty between promotion and award of tenure.

10. We would like to involve SOM faculty with secondary appointments since this could be an impactful way for them to “give back” to BMG.

Contact Bryce Paschal bmp2h@virginia.edu with questions regarding faculty mentoring.