

## Faculty Mentoring Program Assessment – AY 2011

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### Executive Summary

In the AY2011 spring quarter, a survey was administered to all 185 tenure-track faculty at RIT through the provost's office using a web-based survey resource. The survey questions focus on the Faculty Mentoring Program at RIT which was launched in AY2010 to support tenure-track faculty at RIT. Survey questions were designed to gain a better understanding of how mentoring relationships *form* at RIT, the *quality and nature* of these relationships, and the protégé's *level of satisfaction* with these relationships. The survey was created in the spring quarter of AY2011 by the faculty associates to the provost and the director of faculty recruitment and retention with input by various deans and the provost. The survey response rate was 55% and the survey was open for approximately four weeks.

Significant findings from the survey include:

- 72% of survey respondents have an RIT mentor, however, this varied by college (96% to 44%).
- 75% of survey respondents know about the RIT Faculty Mentoring Program, this again varied by college (91% to 22%).
- 56% indicate that their college/department assigned them a mentor (varied by college, 90% to 23%).
- The most common type of mentoring relationship reported at 59% is the traditional one-on-one protégé/mentor relationship.
- More recent faculty hires report higher levels of awareness of the mentoring program.
- Faculty respondents on the tenure-track for two to five years report the highest levels of agreement with having a mentor at RIT and being assigned a mentor.
- 62% of the tenure-track faculty respondents have discussed mentoring with their administrative leadership. However, only 20% indicate that mentoring activities are specifically included within their annual plan of work.
- 59% indicate that their mentors offer advice and encouragement and that their mentor is approachable and easy to talk to. However, only 20% and 15% report having a mentor who "discussed work/life balance" and "makes introductions with others in order to help fill in the gaps", respectively.
- Overall, most tenure-track faculty disagree with the statement "mentoring relationship met expectations" however there are three colleges where the average agreement with this statement is more positive.

The following report explores faculty responses for each survey question. While overall average response values are provided, average response by college and length on tenure-track are also included where relevant.

### Survey Administration

In the spring quarter of AY2011, a survey was administered to the tenure-track faculty at RIT through the provost's office using the RIT Clipboard on-line survey resource. **Appendices A and B** include copies of the survey administered and the invitation plan used for survey administration, respectively.

**Appendix C** includes the overall survey response results by count.

The overall survey participation rate was 55% (102/185) with the highest college-level participation from NTID faculty (76%) and the lowest level from SCOB faculty (36%). **Table 1** lists the survey response rate breakdown by college and overall.

**Table 1. TT Faculty Mentoring Survey Response Rates by RIT College**

College	TT Faculty Count	Response Count Final	Response Rate by College
CAST	17	10	59%
CIAS	19	9	47%
COLA	36	23	64%
COS	35	18	51%
SCOB	14	5	36%
KGCOE	22	10	45%
CHST	4	2	50%
GCCIS	17	10	59%
GIS	3	2	67%
Multi Studies	1	0	0%
NTID	17	13	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>55%</b>

**Program Awareness and Mentoring Activity**

Several questions on the survey were designed to allow us to gain an understanding of the general awareness of mentoring programs on campus, the participation in those programs, how relationships were formed, and the types of relationships. **Table 2** includes summary data for these various characteristics by college and overall. 72% of the tenure-track faculty responding to the survey indicated having an RIT mentor (73/102). However, this varied by college with high reported values of 90% within CAST and 96% in COLA and a low of 44% in CIAS. Similar results were seen in regards to the general awareness of the RIT Faculty Mentoring Program with 75% indicating awareness with high levels of variability among colleges (for example, 91% of COLA faculty respondents are aware compared to 22% in CIAS.)

Over half of the faculty respondents (56%) indicate that their college/department assigned a mentor and again there is significant variability reported by college with a high of 90% in CAST and a low of 23% in NTID. The most common type of mentoring relationship reported at 59% is the traditional one-on-one protégé/mentor relationship with the remaining types (group, peer, multiple mentors) at nearly equal representations of 16-17%.

**Table 2. Mentoring Program Awareness and Mentoring Activity Among Respondents**

COLLEGE	n	% with mentor(s) at RIT	% with mentor(s) outside of RIT	% with mentor(s) assigned by College or Dept	Mentoring Relationship Type				% aware of the faculty mentoring program	% aware of mentoring website
					1 ON 1	GROUP	PEER	MULTI		
COLA	23	96%	48%	83%	78%	13%	9%	13%	91%	35%
COS	18	67%	33%	28%	61%	33%	28%	28%	83%	50%
GCCIS	10	60%	50%	70%	60%	10%	10%	0%	90%	40%
KGCOE	10	80%	30%	60%	50%	20%	0%	10%	70%	20%
NTID	13	62%	31%	23%	54%	0%	23%	8%	62%	31%
SCOB	5	80%	40%	80%	60%	0%	0%	20%	80%	40%
CAST	10	90%	40%	90%	60%	40%	40%	30%	90%	10%
CIAS	9	44%	22%	44%	44%	11%	11%	22%	22%	0%
<b>overall averages</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>30%</b>

In filtering responses by length on the tenure-track, some interesting trends emerge. Of the sixteen faculty who report being on the tenure track for one year, fifteen (94%) are aware of the faculty mentoring program at RIT and eleven (69%) indicate having a mentor at RIT. Most report one-on-one mentoring relationships (9/16 or 56%) and 50% (8/16) were assigned a mentor by their department or college. Of the 46 faculty who report being on the tenure track for 2-3 years, 35 (76%) are aware of the faculty mentoring program at RIT, 36 (78%) indicate having a mentor at RIT, and again most report one-on-one mentoring relationships (32/46 or 70%). 63% (29/46) were assigned a mentor by their department or college. Of the 28 faculty who report being on the tenure track for 4-5 years, 21 (75%) are aware of the faculty mentoring program at RIT, 19 (73%) indicate having a mentor at RIT and half have one-on-one mentoring relationships. Over half (15/28 or 54%) were assigned a mentor by their department or college. **Table 2a** lists these results by length in rank. More recent hires report higher levels of awareness of the mentoring program. Faculty respondents on the tenure-track for two to five years report the highest levels of agreement with having a mentor at RIT and being assigned a mentor. Faculty on tenure-track longer than five years reported the lowest levels of agreement with all of the characteristics shown in Table 2a. This data generally corresponds with the timing of the roll-out of the university-level mentoring program which began in AY2010 (several years after their tenure-track start time).

**Table 2a. Mentoring Program Awareness and Activity by Length on Tenure Track**

Length on Tenure-Track	TT Faculty Count	Aware of Program	Have RIT Mentor	Assigned Mentor	One-on-one Mentor
0-1 year or less	16	94%	69%	50%	56%
2-3 years	46	76%	78%	63%	70%
4-5 years	28	75%	73%	54%	50%
Longer than 5 years	11	55%	55%	36%	36%

### **Mentoring within Working Environment**

Two of the questions on the survey were added to illustrate the degree by which mentoring is incorporated into the working environment within colleges and departments. One question related to whether conversations had occurred between the tenure-track faculty member and their college leadership regarding the importance of establishing mentoring relationships. The second question focused on whether mentoring related activities was part of the faculty member's annual plan of work. **Table 3** includes summary response data for the two questions by college and overall with 62% of the tenure-track faculty respondents indicating that they have had discussions with their administrative leadership regarding mentoring. However, only 20% indicate that mentoring activities are specifically included within their annual plan of work.

**Table 3. Integration of Mentoring within Work Environment**

COLLEGE	n	% who have discussed with dean and/or chair importance of acquiring and interacting with a mentor	% whose current POW reflects mentoring related activities
COLA	23	74%	17%
COS	18	78%	28%
GCCIS	10	50%	0%
KGCOE	10	60%	10%
NTID	13	38%	38%
SCOB	5	40%	20%
CAST	10	90%	30%
CIAS	9	44%	11%
overall averages	102	62%	20%

## Mentoring Relationship Characteristics

A multi-part question on the survey explored the characteristics that exist within mentoring relationships at RIT. **Table 4** includes summary response data for this question by college and overall. More than half of the survey respondents (59%) indicate that their mentors offer advice and encouragement and that their mentor is approachable and easy to talk to. The least common characteristics included having a mentor who “discussed work/life balance” with only 20% of respondents indicated this and having a mentor who “makes introductions with others in order to help fill in the gaps” with 15% indicating this characteristic.

COLLEGE	% who describe current mentoring relationship(s) within RIT as "My mentor(s)....."							
	offers advice & encouragement wrt my goals	meets with me regularly	provides me with prompt feedback	offers constructive criticism to me	is approachable and easy to talk to	facilitates my participation in professional activities w/in RIT	facilitates my participation in professional activities outside of RIT	involves me in networking activities
COLA	70%	9%	9%	13%	22%	13%	9%	9%
COS	67%	33%	39%	50%	67%	39%	28%	33%
GCCIS	50%	30%	20%	30%	50%	50%	20%	50%
KGCOE	50%	30%	40%	40%	60%	30%	20%	20%
NTID	69%	23%	38%	38%	46%	15%	23%	15%
SCOB	60%	20%	20%	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%
CAST	70%	30%	50%	40%	70%	40%	30%	50%
CIAS	33%	44%	33%	33%	44%	22%	11%	11%
overall averages	59%	34%	35%	39%	59%	32%	22%	27%

COLLEGE	% who describe current mentoring relationship(s) within RIT as "My mentor(s)....."								
	acts as an advocate for me w/in my dept/unit	encourages me to submit grant proposals	encourages me to develop research ideas	encourages me to author publications	has observed me while teaching and offered feedback	discusses the tenure process with me	offers advice regarding how to manage a balance between work/home life	discusses teaching related strategies with me	connects me w/people who "fill in the gaps" in areas where I am less skilled
COLA	9%	9%	13%	13%	13%	26%	9%	13%	0%
COS	44%	39%	39%	50%	22%	33%	17%	28%	17%
GCCIS	30%	40%	40%	40%	10%	30%	30%	50%	10%
KGCOE	20%	40%	30%	30%	20%	40%	50%	20%	20%
NTID	31%	15%	46%	46%	31%	31%	0%	31%	15%
SCOB	20%	20%	40%	40%	20%	40%	20%	60%	20%
CAST	50%	50%	60%	50%	30%	60%	20%	30%	20%
CIAS	22%	33%	33%	22%	22%	22%	0%	0%	11%
overall averages	34%	34%	42%	43%	25%	44%	20%	31%	15%

## Quality and Satisfaction of Mentoring Relationships

A multi-part, Likert-scale question explored the level of agreement with statements related to the quality and the general satisfaction of mentoring relationships. Response options include strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). **Table 5** lists average response data for each sub-question by college and overall. Although the overall responses for each sub-question are less than 3 which correspond to a level of disagreement, college level responses reveal some higher levels of agreement. For example, the right column in Table 5 refers to “mentoring relationship met expectations” and respondents in COLA, KGCOE, and CAST reported average scores of 3.8, 3.5, and 3.1, respectively which are approaching agreement (4).

Table 5. Quality/Satisfaction of Mentoring Relationship								
COLLEGE	n	Average Level of Agreement (1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree)						
		I developed a plan including goals to be met under the direction/guidance of my mentor(s).	I met or made satisfactory progress towards meeting my goals.	My mentor(s) and I discussed how we would evaluate the success of our mentoring relationship(s).	I am satisfied with the frequency of our meetings.	My mentor(s) and I established guidelines defining how often or when we would meet.	Overall, I am happy with the type of mentoring in our relationship(s).	This mentoring relationship(s) met my expectations.
COLA	23	3.0	3.5	2.0	3.3	2.3	3.7	3.8
COS	18	2.7	3.1	1.6	2.8	1.8	2.9	2.8
GCCIS	10	1.9	2.6	1.3	2.1	1.3	2.6	2.5
KGCOE	10	2.4	2.9	1.6	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.5
NTID	13	2.2	2.9	1.8	2.4	1.5	2.7	2.5
SCOB	5	2.2	1.8	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.9	2.6
CAST	10	2.6	3.0	2.4	3.2	2.7	3.4	3.1
CIAS	9	1.3	2.3	1.3	2.1	1.1	1.9	2.1
overall averages	102	2.2	2.7	1.7	2.6	1.8	2.8	2.7

### Responses to Open-ended Questions

The survey also included opportunities for respondents to comment on more open-ended questions (see **Appendix C** for full responses). In this sub-section responses to those questions are summarized.

#### Question (13): What were two of the most beneficial development activities you did with your RIT mentor(s) during this academic year? (49 respondents did not answer)

- The majority of the responses were in reference to the tenure process. These responses included reviewing tenure portfolios, discussion on tenure guidelines, tenure expectations, and what activities were most critical for tenure review preparation.
- The next most popular topic was research and scholarship. Many commented on working with mentors to establish research agenda, while others mentioned collaborative research, general research meetings, and the significance of research in the tenure context.
- Some commented that the mentoring processes made them feel more a part of the RIT community.
- Some commented that they did not have mentors, and did not see the need for RIT-based mentors because the current expectations exceeded many of the senior faculty member's expertise.
- Others commented that the mentoring process was critical to their ongoing success.

#### Question (14): What is the most beneficial change you identified in yourself as a result of your RIT mentoring relationship(s)? (53 respondents did not answer)

- The idea of acceptance and integration into the RIT community was a running theme.
- Some cited an increase in their organizational skills, time management, and confidence.
- Encouragement was important.
- Mentoring relationships led to increased scholarly activity (grant writing and publications).
- Protégés learned more about the tenure and promotion process.
- Some cited the need for real mentors that make natural fits, not assigned "chaperones" that do not take to the role.
- There was mention of advocacy and increased understanding of how the university works.

#### Question (15): What are three or more points of guidance from your RIT mentor(s) that you believe were the most helpful this academic year, and why? (58 respondents did not answer)

- Understanding the tenure process
- Teaching advice and insight.
- Understanding the university system
- Research and scholarship advice; recommending appropriate venues.
- Encouragement

- Work/life balance
- Relationships
- Networking

**Question (16): If applicable, offer suggestions on how your RIT mentoring relationship(s) could be more effective. (55 respondents did not answer).**

- Some suggested group mentoring over the one-on-one approach.
- Matching proper mentors instead of assigned mentors. Some are not happy with the formal approach and suggest a more informal one.
- Chairs should be more involved.
- It was suggested that women need female mentors.
- Mentors should be better informed about the promotion and tenure process.
- Mentors could be more helpful in finding resources (funding, lab space, etc.).
- Some think very highly of the program and the mentors they had, others think it was useless and a “joke”. The comments ranged that far apart.