

THE TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL FACULTY LIFECYCLE

An aspirational model for the
onboarding and mentoring of teaching
& professional faculty

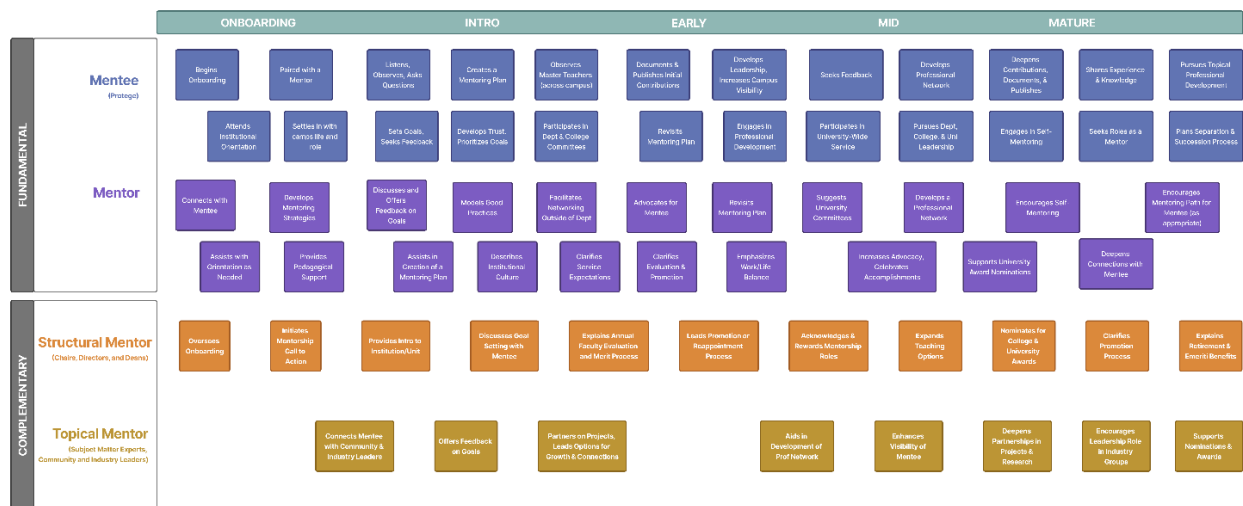
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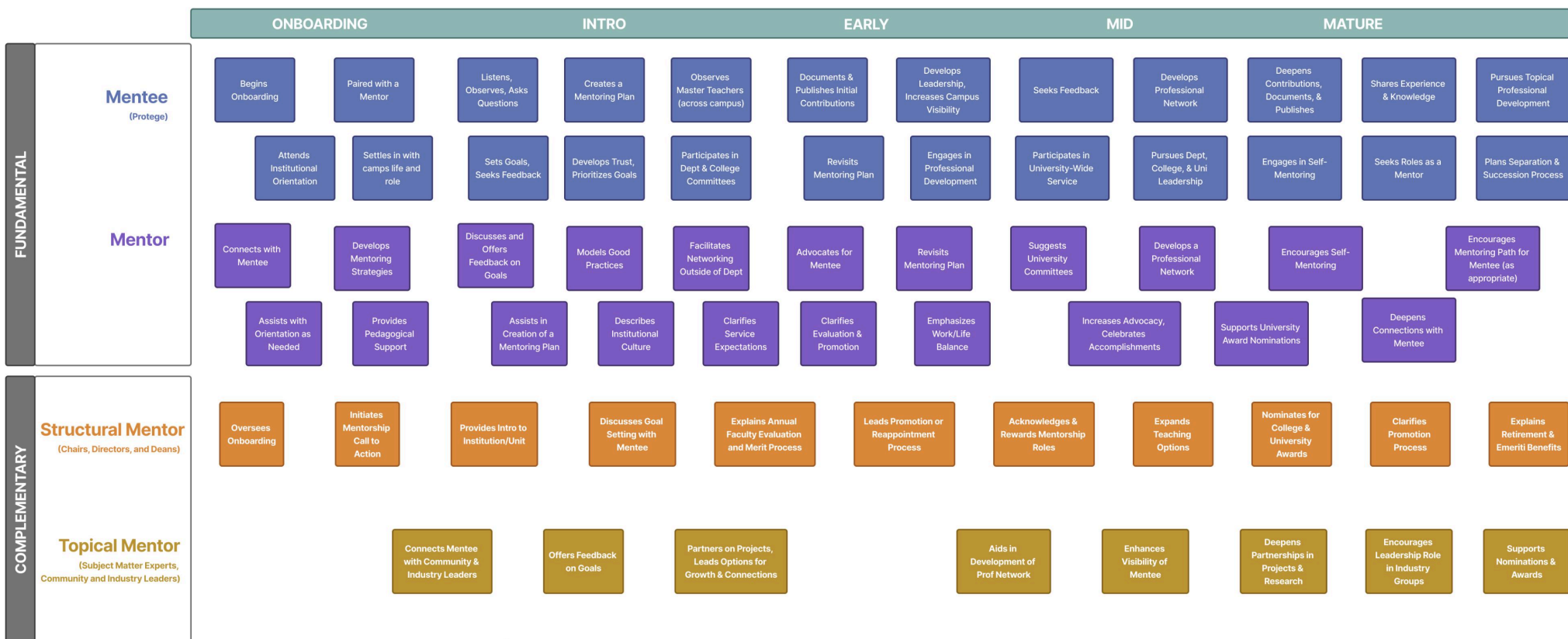
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Overview

Teaching and Professional Faculty comprise over 40% of DU's professoriate. The Teaching and Professional Faculty Lifecycle model assists these faculty members (and their mentors) with career planning by offering guidance and insight toward a fulfilling career and stable retirement. However, it is not a one-size-fits-all standard. At DU, Teaching and Professional Faculty enter the Lifecycle at different points and with different backgrounds.

So, let's get started. First, find your role (Mentee, Mentor, Structural Mentor, or Topical Mentor); then, review the topic boxes along the progressive career stages.





Lifecycle Stages by Role

Mentee (Protégé)

BEGINS ONBOARDING

Mentee coordinates arrival and orientation sessions with department/unit supervisor.

PAIRED WITH A MENTOR

Mentee is paired with a mentor, and a first meeting is scheduled.

ATTENDS INSTITUTIONAL ORIENTATION

Mentee attends [orientation and institutional welcome meetings](#), ensuring start date, benefits, and payroll content are accurate and ready.

SETTLES IN W/ CAMPUS LIFE & ROLE

Mentee does a self-guided or mentor-guided tour of campus and works with department to get office and supplies prepared.

LISTENS, OBSERVES, ASKS QUESTIONS

Mentee participates in department and college meetings, listening for guidance on continuous improvement. Mentee ask questions of colleagues and gets more seasoned with [teaching and service responsibilities](#).

CREATES MENTORING PLAN

Mentee uses the model as guidance, meeting with mentor to create a mentoring plan for 2-3 years in scope.

OBSERVES MASTER TEACHERS (ACROSS CAMPUS)

Mentee seeks opportunities in their college and at the institutional level to observe master teachers and get additional insight and experience. Performance review and student evaluations can be used as a basis for planning.

SETS GOALS, SEEKS FEEDBACK

Mentee meets with mentor to receive feedback on department goals, pedagogy, and curriculum development.

DEVELOP TRUST, PRIORITIZES GOALS

Mentee collaborates with mentor to refine mentoring plan and to seek guidance regarding additional structural and topical mentors.

PARTICIPATES IN DEPARTMENT & COLLEGE COMMITTEES

Mentee seeks service opportunities in their college and at the institutional level, seeking a variety of roles and leadership positions over time.

DOCUMENTS & PUBLISHES INITIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Mentee documents contributions in [annual review materials](#), highlighting significant accomplishments.

REVISITS MENTORING PLAN

Mentee revisits mentoring plan with mentor and makes adjustment based on feedback and experience.

ENGAGES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mentee engages in professional development toward building knowledge, awareness, and skills related to their position, as well as carving out their professional identity. Professional development may include opportunities based within the institution, your community, and local, state, regional, and/or national professional organizations. Mentee should check with unit/department chair regarding the availability of professional development funding.

DEVELOPS LEADERSHIP, INCREASES CAMPUS VISIBILITY

Mentee pursues relevant service and leadership opportunities within their immediate sphere(s) of influence, broadening knowledge of institutional systems and increasing their campus visibility. This could include involvement in high profile committees and task forces.

SEEKS FEEDBACK ON PROMOTION

Mentee connects with formal and structural mentors regarding the reappointment and promotion process. Mentee should understand the processes and timelines, align their experience and performance with the job expectations, and know where they can direct related questions in the future.

PARTICIPATES IN UNIVERSITY-WIDE SERVICE

Mentee pursues university-wide service opportunities (e.g. [Faculty Senate](#), task forces/committees convened by upper-administration, and other emerging university-wide initiatives).

DEVELOPS PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Mentee intentionally builds professional network within the institution, community, professional organizations, and their discipline.

PURSUES DEPARTMENT, COLLEGE, & UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP ROLES

Mentee becomes increasingly involved in relevant leadership opportunities within their department, college, and/or the institution at-large (e.g., Faculty Senate). Since opportunities will vary within and across units, mentees will benefit from seeking guidance from formal and structural mentors as needed in this process.

DEEPENS CONTRIBUTIONS, DOCUMENTS, & PUBLISHES THEM

Mentee deepens their professional contributions, further defining their professional identity in the process. With an eye toward reappointment and promotion, mentee should be sure to document contributions regularly.

ENGAGES IN SELF-MENTORING

Mentee engages in self-mentoring activities, including self-reflection, self-assessment, and both short- and long-term goal setting toward identifying areas of strength and areas for growth.

SHARES EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

Mentee identifies and establishes outlets for sharing their experience and knowledge with early-career faculty.

SEEKS ROLE AS MENTOR

Mentee pursues formal mentoring opportunities, including those as both topical and structural mentors.

PURSUES TOPICAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mentee pursues topical professional development on and off campus to deepen professional identity and build professional network.

PLANS SEPARATION & SUCCESSION PROCESS

Mentee intentionally plans separation and succession processes. This includes collaborating and consulting with colleagues and other stakeholders related to transfer of institutional knowledge and planning for long-term University benefits (e.g., insurance, financial planning, emeriti opportunity).

Mentor

CONNECTS WITH MENTEE

Mentor initiates contact with mentee, establishes expectations and regular opportunities for contact, and addresses any initial questions, concerns, or other needs.

ASSISTS W/ORIENTATION AS NEEDED

Mentor collaborates with mentee's supervisor and relevant stakeholders (e.g., unit/college leadership, mentoring program coordinator) to support new mentee orientation.

DEVELOPS MENTORING STRATEGIES

Mentor assumes responsibility for developing mentoring strategies and pursues professional development as a mentor.

PROVIDES PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT

Mentor offers resources for sound pedagogical practice, explaining unit-level policies regarding syllabi, office hours, course evaluations, etc. Mentor offers to provide feedback on pedagogical materials.

DISCUSSES & OFFERS FEEDBACK ON GOALS

Mentor draws on their institutional knowledge and asks clarifying questions and offers critical suggestions on goals.

ASSISTS IN CREATION OF MENTORING PLAN

Mentor and mentee collaborate on creation of mentoring plan.

MODELS GOOD PRACTICES

Mentor models good practices in teaching and service, while authentically sharing and discussing their own professional challenges with mentee.

FACILITATES NETWORKING OUTSIDE OF DEPARTMENT

Mentor facilitates broad networking opportunities for mentee outside of department, introducing mentee to colleagues in other departments, across campus, and in community.

DESCRIBES INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

Mentor shares knowledge of department, college, and university structures and processes, explains types of faculty lines, and advises mentee on professional responsibilities.

CLARIFIES SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

Mentor assists in clarifying service expectations as relevant to department expectations, including amount and type of service.

ADVOCATES FOR MENTEE

Mentor advocates for mentee within department and at college level.

REVISITS MENTORING PLAN

Mentor meets with mentee regularly to revisit and update mentoring plan accordingly.

CLARIFIES EVALUATION & PROMOTION

Mentor provides information and direction related to evaluation and promotion as relevant to specific position. Mentor directs mentee to department and Faculty Senate guidelines for reappointment and promotion.

EMPHASIZES WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Mentor provides context and reflection on work/life balance and welcomes conversation from mentee.

SUGGESTS UNIVERSITY-LEVEL COMMITTEES AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Mentor offers suggestions for university-level committees and service opportunities, particularly those that align with mentee's professional goals, skills, and interests.

DEVELOPS PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Mentor assists mentee in developing broad professional network - on campus and beyond - for support and development.

INCREASES ADVOCACY, CELEBRATES MENTEE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mentor supports mentee within department and across campus, promoting mentee's accomplishments to various audiences.

SUPPORTS UNIVERSITY AWARD NOMINATIONS

Mentor works with department/unit chair to nominate mentee for department-level and [annual campus teaching and service awards](#).

ENCOURAGES SELF-MENTORING

Mentor helps mentee understand the need to document accomplishments in teaching, service, and research for promotion.

DEEPENS CONNECTION WITH MENTEE

Mentor recognizes the mentor/mentee relationship will evolve over time and career life cycle.

ENCOURAGES MENTORING PATH FOR MENTEE

Mentor encourages mentee, if they're interested, to mentor new colleagues.

Structural Mentor (Chairs, Directors, and Deans)

OVERSEES ONBOARDING

Structural mentor ensures all new faculty participate in onboarding process through [Office of Human Resources and Inclusive Community](#).

INITIATES MENTORSHIP CALL TO ACTION

As the [DU Chair Handbook](#) recommends, structural mentors "establish a department mentorship program for new hires; match new faculty with more senior faculty to better distribute mentorship opportunities in the department."

PROVIDES INTRODUCTION TO INSTITUTION/UNIT

Structural mentor discusses strategic vision for department/unit and for university, providing context for mentee's professional obligations. Structural mentor explains professional development funding available to mentee.

DISCUSSES GOAL SETTING WITH MENTEE

Structural mentor helps mentee identify appropriate goals, particularly those aligning with strategic vision for unit and university.

EXPLAINS ANNUAL FACULTY EVALUATION AND MERIT PROCESS

Structural mentor explicates the annual process for evaluating faculty, including assembly of faculty materials in Activity Insight. Structural mentor identifies primary criteria for evaluating faculty's teaching, service, and research as explained in the [DU Chair Handbook](#).

CLARIFIES EXPECTATIONS: REAPPOINT. & PROMOTION

Meets individually with faculty. Identifies and explains benchmarks for satisfactory performance vis a vis annual evaluations. Notes "that annual evaluations are used to substantiate promotion decisions or major multi-year reviews." ([DU Chair Handbook](#))

LEADS REAPPOINTMENT & PROMOTION PROCESS

Each School/College/Unit will have their own process of assigning a "chair" for mentee's promotion or reappointment progression. This may or not be the same person as the formal mentor. Structural mentors should explain this process early on.

ACKNOWLEDGES & REWARDS MENTORSHIP ROLES

Structural mentors will encourage and support mentoring of faculty and students within their unit, recognizing and rewarding mentorship roles in the reappointment and promotion process.

EXPANDS TEACHING OPTIONS

When possible, structural mentors will provide opportunities for mentee to teach different courses and develop new curriculum. The [Office of Teaching and Learning](#) hosts multiple workshops for development in these areas and is also an excellent resource for teaching workshops and professional development.

NOMINATES MENTEE FOR COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY AWARDS

The University recognizes outstanding teaching, research and service in a variety of awards. Individual schools, colleges and units may also have awards conferred to faculty, staff and students. Structural mentors will nominate deserving faculty for such awards.

CLARIFIES PROMOTION PROCESS

Structural mentors explain all aspects of reappointment and promotion process, answering any questions mentees might have, while also acknowledging that the [Faculty Senate](#) works with faculty and administration to make sure that the documents clarifying promotion and renewal requirements are equitable and clear for each faculty line.

EXPLAINS RETIREMENT & EMERITI BENEFITS

Most structural mentors will rely on [Human Resources](#) to explain retirement benefits for university employees. Structural mentors will nominate and reward deserving faculty for emeriti status.

Topical Mentor (Subject Matter Experts, Community & Industry Leaders)

CONNECTS MENTEE W/COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY LEADERS

Topical mentors will help develop a mentee's professional network inside the university, in the community, and in industry. The [Center for Community Engagement to Advance Scholarship and Learning](#) supports many initiatives, routinely connecting interested faculty with community organizations.

OFFERS FEEDBACK ON GOALS

Topical mentors, particularly those off-campus, can provide unique insight into helping mentees refine and achieve their goals. Multiple mentors can be involved in this process.

PARTNERS ON PROJECTS, LEAD OPTIONS FOR GROWTH & CONNECTIONS

Topical mentors can alert mentees to opportunities outside of DU in their area(s) of expertise, and when appropriate, partner with mentee on specific projects. [CCESL's Grand Challenges](#) program can provide an avenue for such a partnership.

AIDS IN DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Topical mentors can assist in developing a mentee's professional network beyond campus, particularly with community and industry groups in the Front Range and beyond.

DEEPENS PARTNERSHIPS IN PROJECTS & RESEARCH

Topical mentors continue to work with mentee in increasingly complex ways, expanding the scope of their partnership across projects as appropriate.

ENHANCES VISIBILITY OF MENTEE

Topical mentors promote mentee as subject matter expert, recommending mentee when their expertise aligns with the needs of a community or industry organization.

ENCOURAGES LEADERSHIP ROLES IN INDUSTRY GROUPS

Topical mentors will help develop a mentee's professional network, and when the opportunity arises, they will encourage seasoned mentees to seek leadership roles in industry and in the community.

SUPPORTS NOMINATIONS & AWARDS

Topical mentors promote the mentee's achievements inside and outside of the university, advocating on behalf of the mentee over the course of their lifecycle.