

Collegial Advising Program Adopted by Department of History APT, November 29, 2004

In response to an initiative from junior and recently tenured faculty in History and in accordance with the university's call for formal mentoring programs, the Department of History APT has established its own "collegial advising" program, to be put into effect immediately. The Department's APT preferred the phrase "collegial advising" to "mentoring," and that is the term used throughout the program description that appears below.

Rationale for Program

Junior faculty are deeply invested in learning about how to prepare for tenure; they typically seek out the information and advice necessary to position themselves for fair and thorough review. Tenured faculty members are equally invested in the seriousness of the process, offering formal and informal guidance at strategic points.

But even in the most ideal circumstances, junior faculty—some of whom may arrive at the University with no teaching or professional experience beyond graduate school—sometimes do not have the perspective necessary to grasp their individual responsibilities in the timeframe established by an unforgiving tenure clock. The size of the department, the episodic nature of APT evaluations, and the multiplicity of interpretations of APT guidelines may contribute to confusion about the priorities of the APT process. Finally, the faculty's periodic disagreement about certain aspects of APT guidelines can provide contradictory direction to junior faculty.

Program

These issues and problems can be addressed through a collegial advising program, in which the Department undertakes to provide a more formal structure of advising junior faculty members than the one currently in place. That program should consist of the following elements:

- The Director of Undergraduate Study will provide incoming faculty with written guidelines on the essentials of course development (e.g. course design, course management, room assignments, teaching assistants, grading standards, grade submission, course readers, library reserves, academic integrity, and teaching support).
- The Chair will meet with the new faculty member early in the incoming faculty's first year to review APT processes and timelines.
- Early in the incoming faculty member's first year, the Chair and new faculty member will meet and settle on a faculty adviser drawn from the ranks of the tenured faculty.
- The advising relation will be structured along these lines:
 - the advisor might:
 - informally help a junior colleague in transitioning into the new work environment, answering questions about administrative structures, caucuses, and responsibilities in the department;
 - advise the junior faculty about Department, College, and University policies and resources helpful for professional development
 - at the request of the junior faculty member, the adviser may:
 - offer feedback on course content, pedagogy, and classroom management

- read selected scholarship and provide feedback on content, analysis, and placement
 - offer advice on general professional development and long-term planning
- Following the third-year review, the Chair, faculty adviser, and faculty advisee will meet to discuss the third-year review, identifying areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. This meeting is meant to be supplemental to the regular Chair-junior faculty member meeting that occurs after the third year review.
- The collegial adviser relationship will formally dissolve at the end of the fourth year (though it may continue in an informal manner). By then the advisee should have a clear sense of the work—scholarly, teaching, and service—required to achieve tenure. And an adviser freed of such advisory duties would become available to the Chair for service on that junior scholar’s tenure committee in the sixth year.

Working Principles on Peer Advising

The adviser-advisee relationship should be largely defined by the junior faculty member. That is, the junior faculty will be encouraged to seek out the adviser’s advice and help if s/he finds it useful and appropriate. It seems reasonable to expect that much of the advising will take place in the first months after hire and then at strategic points in future years. In the case where problems arise, the Chair can be called upon by either party to intervene and find a remedy.

The adviser should, in good faith, be willing to commit to a multi-year relationship. However, neither junior faculty nor adviser should see the relationship in terms of apprenticeship or advocacy. Progress towards fulfilling the requirements for the third year and tenure reviews should be monitored by formal mechanisms already in place, including the annual meetings between the Chair and each junior faculty member.