Executive summary

Master Mentor Survey

Master mentors conducted a survey of mentoring coordinators across departments in May through June 2017. There were 32 total responses from 21 of 26 departments +3 centers. 81% of departments have a formal mentoring program and these are typically overseen by the Department or Center Chair/Director (78%). All departments have programs for Assistant professors and 34% have programs for Associate Professors. Mentors are assigned based on common interests, track, and mentee requests. A range of mentoring models are used by departments, chiefly dyadic mentoring. (See full survey results)

Departments currently offer a range of professional/skills development seminars.
Three distinct themes were identified in the survey: 1) people and support, 2) collaboration across departments, and 3) need for mentor training.

1) People and support

47% of departments provide administrative support for mentoring. 53% of departments recognize mentoring in consideration for promotion, 16% provide awards for mentoring, and 3% provide incentives for mentoring. Based on review of the comments from the survey, departments desire a bigger mentoring pool including senior faculty members outside the department, a list of faculty with content expertise, and mentors for postdoctoral fellows. Incentives and rewards would be helpful to recognize faculty who mentor. There is a need for greater administrative support for scheduling meetings, disseminating information to faculty about opportunities and events, and for expertise in university regulations, personnel and research success. There is tremendous clinical productivity pressure among faculty. Burnout and isolation are important issues.

Action plan/recommendations:

- OFA would like to develop a list of experts willing to speak or mentor on specific topics – for small or “bottom heavy” departments
  - See University of Michigan model
- Facilitated peer mentoring groups can amplify senior faculty efforts
- Small departments might band together to support mentoring activities
- Administrative support for scheduling will need to be developed at the unit level
- The Center for Spirituality and Healing is a good resource; suggest developing resources and Medical School policies to reduce burnout
- OFA will work to publicize faculty development events, speakers and opportunities at the university including our institutional membership in the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) and the Proposal Preparation Program (P3)

2) Collaboration across departments

Departments desire more collaboration across departments on professional development and mentoring. Departments express shared interest in topics such as quality improvement research, laboratory management, hiring (and firing), and how to administer and lead a research team. Departments wish to share examples of successful grant applications and successful mentoring models. They want to know how to deal with “un-mentorable” faculty.

Action plan/recommendations:

- OFA will work to increase publicity for professional development programs
- OFA will develop list of content experts willing to speak or mentor on specific topics
- New list serve of department mentoring leads should provide venue for sharing of best practices and collaboration among departments; updated OFA website will post example programs
• Master mentors meet one-on-one with individuals and department coordinators by request – [online form]

3) Need for mentoring training

Departments sought “real training” for mentors. They expressed a desire for discussion with other mentors and for more information on mentoring and diversity. They want opportunities for mentors or mentoring coordinators to learn about mentoring models, best practices and strategies, and challenges in other departments. It would be helpful to hold regular meetings for mentors and mentees on career development, promotion requirements and expectations. Potential mentors want to know how to advise faculty members about different tracks. They seek guidance on what the medical school expects departments to provide regarding mentoring. Faculty also need up-to-date information about training opportunities at the University of Minnesota for their faculty. They desire support on scheduling busy people, e.g. commitment from unit leadership; administrative support. Finally, faculty want opportunities to discuss strategies for staying positive and productive during challenging times for federal funding and on how to recognize when it’s the moment to seek other opportunities at other institutions.

Action plan/recommendations:

• Work with departmental mentoring leads to share new and effective models that suit departmental needs such as facilitator mentoring, mentor as coach/connector
• Disseminate and use CTSI and NCFDD resources, outside speakers, and tools such as the mentoring map
• New OFA List serve of department mentoring leads will provide forum for discussion, resource and idea sharing
• Updates to the OFA website are in progress including:
  o New Leadership Opportunities [page]
  o Posting examples of successful [mentoring strategies]