Teaching Mentorship

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NUS Teaching Academy

Engaging every section of the NUS community in transforming the educational landscape of the university

1. What is the value of Teaching Mentorship?

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Teaching is both an art and science that can be understood and improved through theory and practice. The experience of a teacher grows and matures through a journey of discovery of what effective teaching entails. This journey, while often navigated alone by the teacher, can be made more purposeful by a teaching mentor. The partnership between the teacher and mentor cultivates an environment of trust and accountability with the primary goal being to help the teacher to teach more effectively.

As with any partnership, finding the right blend and balance of qualities in teacher and mentor essential to achieving this goal is not easy. This difficulty is compounded by the multitude of subjective views, concerns, and experiences that have contributed to different conceptions of teaching mentorship. The purpose of this guidebook is to clarify what teaching mentorship is and what constitutes a worthwhile teacher-mentor partnership. It is written for academic administrators, mentors, and mentees.

WHAT IS TEACHING MENTORSHIP?

A few key words characterize what teaching mentorship is: relationship, reciprocal, process, and intentional. Hence, *teaching mentorship* is an intentional process wherein more experienced teachers guide and support colleagues to improve their teaching. In this process, a reciprocal relationship emerges in which both parties develop and enhance their teaching skills.

We put 'relationship' as the first keyword because it lies at the core of teaching mentorship. Hence, a teaching mentorship system should aim to nurture an effective mentor-mentee relationship.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TEACHING MENTORSHIP?

In general, teaching mentorship
- Results in effective teaching through feedback and modelling by the mentor;
- Encourages self-reflection and teaching innovation; and
- Nurtures professional relationships and development.

Many good teachers attribute their success to having had excellent mentors as role models. These mentors showed them the ropes, provided psychological support, and inspired them to excel as teachers.

For the organization, teaching mentorship provides many benefits such as socialization, better teaching, process efficiency, retention of talent, and succession planning.

2. How do we develop mentorship for teaching?

CREATING A TEACHING MENTORSHIP SYSTEM

A teaching mentorship system requires more than matching mentors to mentees. Strong management support is essential, and there is no stronger support than senior management leading the organization by becoming mentors themselves.

A teaching mentorship programme also requires resources such as time off for mentoring, given the time needed to meet for discussions or to observe each other's classes. Although many teachers serve voluntarily as mentors, it is advisable to put an incentive system in place to recognize the place and value of teaching mentorship within the organization.

Finally, an administrator should monitor, evaluate, and adjust the teaching mentorship system over time to improve the system. There is no "one size fits all" system; each organization will need to adapt the principles of teaching mentorship to the local context.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF TEACHING MENTORSHIP?

According to literature (e.g. Harvey et al. 2017; BYU; UToronto etc.), there are six options for mentor/mentee "pairing":
- One-on-one, i.e. dyad mentoring;
- One-to-few, i.e. group mentoring;
- Few-to-one, i.e. compound mentoring where one mentee has several mentors with different expertise;
- Team mentoring, where new faculty team-teach their first two modules with their mentors;
- Peer mentoring; and
- Networks and Community Teaching Support with broader networks of university-wide support such as discussions with different professors.

The one-to-one pairing system is the most common. It is easier to implement, and historically, the training of teachers has tended to take the form of on-the-job training. Nowadays, a hybrid system is proving increasing popular as it exposes mentees to different views and disciplines.

DURATION

There is no optimal duration for teaching mentorship but a period of two semesters is suggested as a minimum to allow for a period of learning and experimentation. The duration of each mentor-mentee relationship can be as short or long as needed to meet the objectives set out for the teaching mentorship. The mentoring process usually starts when

- A new faculty member joins the department; or
- An existing faculty member wishes to have a mentor.

It ends when the organization so stipulates or when both parties agree to terminate it. There is of course nothing to stop the teaching mentorship from continuing informally thereafter.

Similarly, there is no prescribed frequency to meetings between mentor and mentee; it is assumed that mentors and mentees will meet more often during the initial phase to work out a mentoring programme and build rapport.

IDENTIFICATION OF MENTORS

Many organizations select mentors based on seniority, experience, teaching performance, expertise, communication skills, commitment, and character. Generally, there are benefits to mentors and mentees being in the same discipline so that they can better understand teaching challenges particular to that discipline.

Mentors tend to be caring, emphatic, supportive, confident, and tactful. In addition, culture, race, and gender may affect the outcome of mentoring. For instance, Johnson & Smith (2016) argue that women face more barriers in securing mentorships than men and may reap a narrower range of career and psychological benefits. Hence, the selection of mentors should take these factors into consideration.

The selection of mentors should also consider the specific needs of mentees and their preferences. The matching process should not be one-sided or top-down.

TRAINING OF MENTORS

As most mentors are experienced teachers, many institutions do not have dedicated training for mentors. Instead, the institution tends to provide general guidelines, responsibilities, expectations, templates, and handbooks.

MENTORSHIP AGREEMENT

Prior to commencement of the mentoring process, the mentor and mentee should come to an understanding with regard to expectations and desired outcomes. The Mentorship Agreement should stipulate timelines, processes, monitoring, and documentation.

The Agreement should also include clauses to protect the interests of both mentors and mentees, such as confidentiality, the 'no-blame' basis on which the mentorship is undertaken, and the protocols for dispute resolution. Generally, the confidential information from mentoring should not be used for peer evaluation of teaching or annual review of staff performance. In smaller departments where faculty members may have to do double duty as mentors and peer or annual reviewers, there should be mutual agreement on which parts of the mentorship processes and documentation can be used for such evaluation.

MENTORING CONVERSATIONS

Mentoring conversations between the mentor and mentee are essential to raising the mentee's quality of teaching as part of career development. These conversations reflect on key learnings and outcomes from the teaching journey. Constructive feedback and guidance, when given at the appropriate context and time, build up the mentoring relationship. These conversations may be documented for future reference; one such example can be found at the University of Otago's *Mentoring Guide* (link in the reference section).

The mentor should also be open to receiving feedback from the mentee. Such continual feedback is important to a healthy mentor-mentee relationship.

At the end of the mentorship, a mutual sharing of the experience provides an important closure for the mentoring relationship.

3. How can mentors contribute?

ROLES OF MENTORS

Mentoring can include activities related to the areas below:
- Teaching, e.g. module design, material preparation, delivery, assessment, and classroom observations;
- Institutional knowledge, e.g. procedures, guidelines, location of resources, and so on; and
- Personal development, e.g. self-reflection, understanding of organizational culture, and opportunities to join teaching networks.

We can break these activities down to 3 Ps: the pedagogical, the practical, and the psychological.

WHAT ARE THE PEDAGOGICAL THINGS THAT I CAN HELP WITH AS A MENTOR?

The bulk of your contribution as a mentor will probably fall under this category as part of the career development of the mentee. Your job as a mentor is not to teach someone how to teach so much as to help him or her develop into an effective teacher. Teachers should develop an awareness both of why they are doing what they are doing, and whether that is the best way to accomplish their teaching aims. As a mentor, you should share and provide a range of pedagogical options with your mentee.

There are a few ways to do this. One of the functions of a mentor is to be a sounding board for the mentee. By providing an empathic ear, the mentor creates an environment in which the mentee is encouraged to share and sound out his views and ideas on teaching without feeling defensive or judged.

Another way of sharing your teaching experience is by demonstration – this is where a mutual observation of classes could prove fruitful. The mentor models the kinds of teaching for the mentee as a way of building competence and expertise.

Mentors can supplement demonstration by sharing their experiences on other aspects of teaching such as class management, how to deal with students, and the local student learning culture.

The last part of pedagogical mentoring involves helping the mentee to present or represent his teaching, such as in the preparation of teaching dossiers. Essentially, the dossier represents the teacher through a coherent narrative. Hence, knowing what to include and what to omit, how to present oneself, how to flag up what needs to be flagged up, how to help the reader navigate the mass of material, and how to write a thoughtful teaching philosophy (see Wu 2016) – all these are things a mentor can help the mentee to do effectively.

WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL THINGS THAT I CAN HELP WITH AS A MENTOR?

The 'practical' part of the 3 Ps is about institutional knowledge, or how to obtain information about the university in terms of policies, procedures, resources, and how to navigate relationships with colleagues. A university is a large organization, and practical local knowledge is valuable, such as how to locate resources of various kinds (e.g. library, teaching workshops, and videos of teaching demonstrations) and protocols for dealing with particular situations (e.g. students who need academic counselling).

SO WHERE DOES THE 'PSYCHOLOGICAL' COME IN?

Your role as a mentor isn't just about offering practical help or teaching guidance. It also involves offering psychological support to relieve stress. These supports include offering a listening ear, cultivating an environment of trust, providing alternative views, and offering possible solutions.

ACHIEVING THE RIGHT BALANCE

Any mentoring relationship involves real people, no two of whom are alike, and therefore what works for one person may not work for another. The basic principle here is the need to be sensitive to the mentee and to be as flexible and adaptive as possible. Some mentees will desire more contact and interaction, some less, some will be proactive, and some require you to initiate interactions. Hence, it is always tricky to find the right balance in a mentoring relationship. There is no rule of thumb.

Good mentors have a high degree of emotional intelligence. They have the tact to navigate the intricacies of the mentoring relationship, sensing the right time to offer teaching advice, and the time to be a good supporter and listener.

4. How can a mentee optimize the mentoring?

BEING PROACTIVE

As a mentee, you should be committed to the mentoring relationship. This commitment not only requires time; it also requires you to be proactive in consulting your mentor. By being direct, you save the mentor the trouble of trying to figure out specific areas where they can help you. Once the mentor knows that you are proactive, he can dispense with the costly need to monitor you closely.

INDEPENDENCE

As a mentee, you should exercise some degree of independence to work things out on your own as part of learning to be a good teacher. Over-reliance on a mentor can result in pedagogical mimicry where one ends up imitating the mentor and consequently never learning to develop one's own distinctive pedagogical style.

OPENNESS

Openness to feedback is important. If you do not take feedback seriously or constructively, this will soon stop the mentor wanting to suggest anything at all. Openness does not mean feeling the need to implement everything the mentor suggests without careful consideration. If you think a particular technique may not work, it may be useful to talk the matter through with the mentor, rather than dispensing with it altogether.

IS THERE A PRODUCTIVE WAY OF HANDLING CONFLICT?

Because relationships lie at the core of teaching mentoring, there is bound to be conflict. Some organizations have procedures and guidelines for handling conflict, such as the use of a third party. For an academic department, this third party is likely to be the Head of Department or a senior administrator.

Before running to the third person, attempt to resolve the issue with your mentor. Nobody likes surprises, and your mentor may have a different view of the issue. Goodwill and trust will go some way to settling difficulties. If all else fails, both parties should have the option of terminating the relationship amicably.

5. Conclusion

The core of teaching mentorship is the relationship between a mentor and mentee, wherein the mentor guides the mentee in his career development, provides psychological support, and helps the mentee develop institutional knowledge.

In this guidebook, we have discussed several principles on teaching mentorship to help administrators, mentors, and mentees. We reiterate that there is no "one size fits all" teaching mentorship system; we need to tailor these principles to specific contexts.

6. A Snapshot of Mentorship at NUS

This section is based on an NUS-wide survey conducted in May 2018. There were 254 responses submitted by participants from 18 NUS schools, faculties, and units. Instead of reporting precise statistics, below are condensed excerpts that focus on the broad consensus.

WHAT IS THE GENERAL PERCEPTION OF TEACHING MENTORSHIP IN NUS?

Although there is currently no university-wide implementation, teaching mentorship is relatively common in NUS. About 60% of survey participants had experienced some form of teaching mentorship in their own departments. Irrespective of prior experience, most participants welcome teaching mentorship. Many felt that mentorship is beneficial for junior faculty members as well as faculty members looking to improve their teaching.

HOW SHOULD WE STRUCTURE TEACHING MENTORSHIP IN NUS?

Teaching is rather sensitive to many influencing factors. Every discipline has its quirks, cultures and contexts in teaching approaches. It is unlikely that a "one size fits all" teaching mentorship structure exists. Here are a few widely accepted parameters suggested by survey participants:

- Duration of one academic year;
- One-to-one mentor-mentee pairing; and
- Preference for mentor with proven teaching expertise, e.g. teaching award winners.

Even though most survey participants prefer an informal and voluntary setup, many other organizations have a formal structure to increase participation and engagement among mentors and mentees. In addition, simple "rules of engagement" can help to resolve many issues and potential conflicts.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON TEACHING ASPECTS THAT A MENTOR CAN HELP?

Most participants indicated the following teaching areas for mentor's advice:
- Instructional design;
- Delivery and classroom; and
- Feedback, such as from students, peers, and mentors for self-reflection.

HOW DO WE MOTIVATE POTENTIAL MENTORS TO SUPPORT THE MENTORSHIP SCHEME?

As mentoring requires considerable effort and time, most survey participants agree that some recognition for mentors is justified. These include recognizing teaching mentorship as a form of service to the department or as a form of teaching excellence or leadership.

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Mentorship across institutions and organisations

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A brief review of literature on mentorship definitions and various higher education teaching mentorship practices has been put together with findings from an Academy Roundtable discussion on Teaching Mentorship to provide context for the design of useful and sound Teaching Mentorship programmes.

1. Definitions of Mentorship

Conceptualisations of mentoring are often not just multifarious but also often insufficiently distinct from related concepts such as coaching or training. As Ghosh (2012) has pointed out in his comparative study of mentoring definitions in educational and business contexts, there are many "commonalities" in mentoring functions across contexts. For example, the definitions below, offered almost 20 years apart, both foreground career development, and the relationship between the mentor and mentee:

> In 1996, Spencer defined mentoring as ''a relationship, which gives people the opportunity to share their professional and personal knowledge, skills and experiences, and to grow and develop in the process'' (p.5).

> In 2015, W. Brad Johnson was cited by Hinsdale as offering this definition: "Mentoring is a personal and reciprocal relationship in which a more experienced (usually older) faculty member acts as a guide, role model, teacher, and sponsor of a less experienced (usually younger) faculty member. A mentor provides the mentee with knowledge, advice, counsel, challenge, and support in the mentee's pursuit of becoming a full member of a particular profession" (p.46).

Despite the similarities however, mentoring as a process is always situated within a particular context and hence any working definition "need[s] to be attuned to the exclusive needs of each context [as] defined by the unique cultures of schools and … organisations." (Ghosh 2012, p.170). Organisational needs and corresponding mentoring goals and purposes would therefore need to be carefully considered before any useful definition of mentorship can be offered.

2. Goal/Purpose of Teaching Mentorship

A quick examination of teaching mentorship programmes across institutions reveal that there is an increasing number of higher education institutions devoting more resources to teaching-focused mentoring. This is perhaps not unexpected, as teaching mentorship has macro-implications for any university's core mission of educating.

However, although mentorship (in teaching and other aspects of higher education academic work) has traditionally been provided to new faculty (see https://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/resources/mentoring/), there has been a gradual shift away from perceptions of mentorship as confined to traditional mentor-protégé hierarchical relationships (e.g. Merriam 1983). As the University of Toronto's Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Report 2016 noted,

> "Mentoring within the higher education context has historically focused on a one-to-one relationship, often hierarchical in approach (Harnish & Wild, 1994; Johnson, 2006). Mentors have been variously described as someone who is deemed an effective teacher, trusted guide, sponsor, counselor, advisor, coach, trainer, colleague, and role model (Harnish & Wild, 1994; Gaskinm et al, 2003; Fraser, 1998; Mawer, 1996). More recent shifts in faculty mentoring approaches have described a more reciprocal dyad that enhances learning for both individuals involved (mentor, mentee/ protégé) (Ambrosino, 2009; Luecke, 2004)" (p.23-24).

In recent years, more institutions now consider teaching mentorship to be beneficial to all faculty at all career stages. For example,

> the Purdue University Faculty Mentoring Network "provide[s] faculty of all ranks with an opportunity to work collaboratively to improve their teaching skills [and its] goals are to facilitate effective teaching and learning at the undergraduate, professional, and graduate levels; develop a network for faculty to interact about teaching and

scholarship; develop a community of faculty who share a responsibility in learning; strengthen the community of teacher-scholars [and] help faculty learn the Purdue culture." (see http://www.purdue.edu/cie/teachingacademy/FacultyMentoring.html)

Similarly, the University of Calgary's "Teaching Academy offers a peer-to-peer teaching mentorship initiative that has been designed to support University of Calgary teachers at all career stages to think and talk about their teaching practices; ask critical questions about teaching; locate resources for teaching development [and] articulate teaching development intentions, plans and progress." (see http://www.ucalgary.ca/taylorinstitute/community/teaching-academy/peer-to-peer)

An NUS Teaching Academy Roundtable discussion on Teaching Mentorship held in 2017 attended by mentorship faculty leaders across NUS also revealed a range of mentorship models ranging from those with more focus on entry-level mentoring (e.g. CELC's Educators' Development Programme (EDP)) to programmes open to all faculty members (e.g. SoC's Teaching Focus Groups & Business School's Mentors for Teaching Excellence). As the needs of academics at different career stages can differ significantly, there is justification for considering these needs separately.

Early career academics in particular, would need help in transitioning into their work as lecturers providing tertiary education. Mentoring can aid in early career academics' balancing of their teaching and research commitments. Having obtained qualifications primarily from a focus on research, sometimes without explicit pedagogical training, early career academics often need initial direction and some degree of facilitation to gain proficiency in the following (which unfortunately have also been identified as common gaps in mentoring):

"Effective teaching strategies (components of effective instruction, adult education theory, demonstrations of active, collaborative, and experiential learning); curriculum development; information about forces that shape the curriculum policies and procedures (grading, syllabus preparation, departmental and university policies); and anticipating potential problems (challenging classroom situations)" (Fagan-Wilen et al. 2006, p.43)

Across career stages, mentoring conversations can significantly contribute to teaching quality by "encourag[ing] self-reflection and new ways of thinking" (Ambler et al. 2016, p. 619), widely recognised by academics as "a mechanism for the improvement and development of teaching" (McAlpine & Weston, 2000, p.382).

At the same time, in response to teaching challenges arising from new pedagogical developments, as well as the changing profiles and expectations of students, peers and other stakeholders, mentoring conversations can help faculty members, both mentors and mentees, refresh teaching techniques to adapt to the learning needs of increasingly diverse student cohorts.

Mentorship can also function as a booster to institutional support, allowing for more successful

- implementation of evidence-based teaching practices (Slimmer, 2012)
- development of scholarship in teaching (Slimmer, 2012)

With time, mentoring and conversations on teaching can also nurture professional and interpersonal relationships (see Ambler et al. 2016, p. 614), contributing to the formation of a knowledge-sharing community on teaching (within university, school or department)". This could provide networking, support and potentially friendship to all involved, and become a beneficial side-effect of Teaching Mentoring.

2.1 An Operational Definition of Teaching Mentorship

In response to the above findings, the following operational definition of Teaching Mentorship has been synergised:

Teaching Mentorship is a deliberate process involving more experienced teachers interacting with new or less experienced teachers to mutually share knowledge, skills and experiences on teaching. The outcome of this deliberate process should either

i) facilitate the transition of a new faculty member into the role of a teacher in the university; or

ii) support the continuous growth and development of an existing faculty member to become a more effective teacher.

Mentorship is defined as
- "a deliberate process", which merely implies a planned and purposeful process but does not dictate the form of Teaching Mentoring, which can still be unstructured and/or informal. This allows the organic development of mentoring processes sensitive to the needs and constraints of mentors and mentees in our institution.
- a more reciprocal and "mutually" beneficial relationship through which all individuals involved can develop teaching skills.
- a process which provides both guidance and support of new teachers during transition into their roles as teachers, as well as teaching skills development of other faculty members, who might already be good teachers.

3. Elements of Teaching Mentorship Models

With myriad approaches to teaching mentorship, and an increasing heterogeneity of mentorship models, a survey of existing mentorship programmes would be more useful to programme leaders if it can assist in both design (and assessment) of mentorship programmes.

In response to findings from the Roundtable discussion, and the review of the Teaching Mentorship programmes of other Higher Education institutions, Dawson's "Sixteen Mentoring Design Elements" (2014) have been condensed and/or adapted into ten variables that teaching mentorship programme designers likely have to make decisions on.

3.1 Objective/s
Whereas the broad objective of Teaching Mentorship has already been outlined above in Section 2.1, programme leaders should define their own priorities and secondary aims if any. Similarly, mentees & mentors should determine their own personal goals/objectives, via consultation with each other.

3.2 Mentoring Period
The Academy Roundtable on Teaching Mentorship revealed that in response to the level and needs of mentees, the duration of mentoring was highly variable across faculties and departments, e.g.:

- Project-basis
- 12 weeks (NUS CELC's mentoring on demand)
- 1 semester
- 2 semesters/ 1 year / 12 months
- Until promotion
- No fixed time frame (negotiable & extendable)

For the two groups of faculty members identified in the definition above, the mentoring process starts when a
- New faculty member joins
- Existing faculty member indicates need/desire to begin mentorship

And ends when the
- New faculty member ends the P&T process
- Mentorship agreement between faculty member and mentor is completed.

For "proper closure to the mentoring relationship" (see Harvey et al. 2017 in their "Spectrum Approach to Mentoring"), recommended concluding activities include reflection and sharing on mentoring outcomes.

3.3 Mentor vis-à-vis mentee (the mentoring relationship)
There are many options for mentor/mentee "pairing" as pointed out for example, by Harvey et al. (2017):
- One-on-one i.e. dyad mentoring
- One-to-few i.e. group mentoring

- Few-to-one i.e. compound mentoring (where one mentee has several mentors with different areas of expertise)
- Team mentoring (e.g. North Carolina State University's team-teaching mentoring approach where new faculty team-teach their first two courses with experienced colleagues who have earned recognition as excellent teachers)
- Peer mentoring
- Networks and Community Teaching Support (University of Toronto's decentralised, flexible mentoring model that includes broader networks of support e.g. discussions with different professors)

Freedom to exercise personal choice in how the mentoring relationship is composed, i.e. whether to participate and who to pair up with can have significant impact on the success of the mentoring. Consideration of personal preferences, needs, capacities and flexibility in reassignment of mentors/mentees better allow for the generation of a "supportive environment that affirms" (Lucey & White 2017). As NUS SSHSPH shared during the Roundtable, mentorship which incorporates professional relationship building help new faculty members adapt better.

Roundtable participants as well as general consensus from the literature also recommend that mentoring be a formative journey rather than part of an evaluative process which might elicit a fear of policing and negative impacts on trust. As University of Toronto's Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Report stated "Concerns have … been raised regarding whether mentors can in turn be involved in an evaluative component of the tenure and promotion process." In particular, when there is uneven distribution of power, faculty may be "wary or fear the mentoring process based on evaluative components, particularly if mentors are from the same departments and may be involved in retention, tenure, and promotion decisions" (Diehl & Simpson, 1988, p.159).

3.4 Programme Structure

In general, literature reveals that informal mentorship appears to achieve more positive outcomes than highly formalised mentorship programmes. Lucey & White (2017) reported that "Research has shown that mentees in various professions who experience informal mentoring processes report higher levels of career-related support (Chao et al., 1992), social support, and general satisfaction from the mentoring relationship (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), when compared with formal mentoring. Lucey and Giannangelo (2015) further demonstrated the potential for professional growth through informal mentoring in higher education during an undergraduate social studies methods course. They found that genuine, truthful, and positive communications contributed to mentee growth through an affirmed sense of professional identity."

Nonetheless, whilst fewer pre-determined outcomes allow more room for discovery and exploration, some mentoring programmes inevitably have specific required deliverables. For example, programmes designed to initiate early career academics may specify development of teaching, research and service-related skills, e.g. University of Toronto's Peer-to-peer Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Pilot Program (P2P) which has a formal structured format; Washington University's Mentoring in STEM teaching (MiST) which pairs new faculty with senior tenured faculty for two years of mentoring; & Shippensburg University's Tenure Track Faculty Mentorship in Teaching, Scholarship, and Service. Such programmes may also have more formalised structures which incorporate regular close monitoring processes and documentation of timelines and processes (including mentoring meetings, recommended developmental pathways e.g. CELC's EDP, supervision etc.), monitoring and formative feedback (e.g. NUS SoC's Teaching Focus Group Review Form).

Hence, programme designers would need to balance the optimal level of formality, the need for particular pre-determined outcomes, and the communications and monitoring structure.

3.5 Selection of Mentors

In many institutions, faculty members who have received recognition for their teaching skills (i.e. award winners or those with excellent teaching records) are often chosen or tasked to be mentors. Examples are numerous, including North Carolina State University and NUS Business School.

During the Academy Roundtable, participants shared that faculty may also be chosen to be mentors due to personal traits such having as a caring nature, confidence, the ability to be a supportive listener etc. The mentor's potential compatibility with the mentee (e.g. mutual professional interests) and his/her availability or capacity

should also be considered. Experienced faculty may already have additional responsibilities, which might affect their commitment to mentoring.

3.6 Selection of Mentees

Mentoring programmes typically identify at least 2 groups of faculty members, new faculty members as well as those who request mentoring for growth/improvement, e.g. Assistant Professors applying for promotion to Associate Professor; Faculty engaged in Teaching Projects (e.g. NUS Centre for the Development of Teaching and Learning Teaching-Enhancement Grant recipients); those who wanted to improve on their Teaching Feedback etc.

Consultation with Heads of Departments, the Department Senior Administration, Teaching Excellence committee or the equivalents could help guide a mentee's choice, but personal choice is important (see Section 3.3). The mentee's willingness to engage in the mentorship process should be assured, so as to ensure their commitment, pro-activeness and acceptance of responsibility.

Mentoring programme leaders should also be mindful of the potential "social stigma that has been associated with 'remedial' notions of new faculty hires who may be in need of assistance" (Beans, 1999; Murray, 2001). As Zellers (2008) noted: "Junior faculty members are especially vulnerable to being stigmatized in academic settings in which mentoring is not embraced as a cultural value or accepted as a core academic responsibility" (p. 562). Public communications about mentoring could be more focused on mutual benefit and skills enhancement.

3.7 Agreement

Prior to commencement of the mentoring process, mentor and mentee should come to an understanding on expectations and desired outcomes. Timelines, processes, monitoring and documentation should also be delineated (see Section 3.4). No blame exit processes could also be included.

Clauses to protect the interests of both mentors and mentees should also be agreed on, for example with regard to issues of confidentiality, or a no-blame basis for (mutual) feedback. Situations which might necessitate the breaking of confidentiality, e.g. due to ethical responsibilities, might also be discussed.

In the event that the mentor has to be involved in evaluative processes despite potential conflict of interest (e.g. in smaller departments with insufficient experienced faculty who have to do double duty in mentorship as well as Annual or Peer Review), this should be made known from the beginning, and there should be mutual agreement on which parts of the mentorship processes/documentation can be used for evaluation.

3.8 Activities

A scan of Teaching Mentorship programmes reveal that the mentoring processes can include activities in the following areas, which can either support or challenge the mentee (Ghosh 2012):

Teaching and Learning cycle
- Updates on Subject area/domain knowledge and expertise
- Discussion of How to design course syllabus and define learning outcomes.
- Discussion of How to design and prepare teaching and learning materials with regard to teaching contexts (Purdue university)
- Discussion of How to deliver instructions and teaching materials and Techniques for engaging students in classroom discussion and more generally, for promoting active learning (University of Toronto's FMTR) and how to manage students
- Discussion of How to design assessments that serve identified teaching objectives (University of Toronto's FMTR)
- Discussion of How to provide feedback to students based on the assessment outcomes to close the learning loop.
- Mutual observation of classes and provision of formative feedback

Institutional Knowledge
- Institutional procedures & guidelines (e.g. University and faculty assessment guidelines etc.)
- Help to locate or apply for resources

- Guidance in development of teaching portfolios
- Discussion of How to present and use course evaluation data in assessing one's teaching effectiveness in cases of tenure and promotion.
- Discussion of Evaluations e.g. teaching ratings, Student Feedback reports etc.(suggested at Academy Roundtable)

Personal Effectiveness
- Sharing of experiences, ad-hoc tips
- Self-reflection & new ways of thinking
- How to prepare for classes efficiently, to ensure some time is available each week for scholarship activities, interactive learning, deliverables, assessment (University of Toronto's FMTR)
- Relationship-building

3.9 Resources

A survey of resources available to mentors in both NUS and other institutions show that the following resources have either been provided to mentors or have been identified as desired by mentors:

- Teaching Mentor training – as most mentors are experienced faculty known for their teaching skills, many institutions do not have dedicated training for mentors. One of the few with dedicated advice for mentors is Boston University, which provides some "recommendations for a productive mentoring relationship" (see http://www.bu.edu/apfd/work-life-resources/teaching-and-mentoring/).
  In addition, culture and gender have become increasingly acknowledged as important factors affecting the success of mentoring. For instance, Johnson & Smith state that "Evidence consistently shows that women face more barriers in securing mentorships than men, and when they do find a mentor, they may reap a narrower range of both career and psychological benefits" (2016, blurb). Should and can mentor training include more deliberate address of such issues?
  Sensitive acknowledgement of the personal qualities (in addition to disciplinary expertise) of successful mentors could also be discussed.
- Documents related to the mentoring process e.g. checklists, developmental pathways, progress maps, monitoring/review forms, even conflict management strategies etc. (E.g. CELC's EDP Mentoring Handbook with SOPs)
- E-resources on teaching e.g. articles & videos on pedagogy
- Department-external teaching-related workshops/courses conducted by teaching-focused centres e.g. NUS' Centre for Development of Teaching & Learning, Shippensburg University's Centre for Faculty Excellence in Scholarship & Teaching, University of Toronto's Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, Washington University's Teaching Centre.
- Teaching-related support networks and broader community teaching support such as that espoused by the University of Toronto Report which pointed out that there could be localized communities of practice for faculty development, to help faculty to become more expert in teaching and scholars of their own teaching and learning. Similarly, Boston University has a "Women in Networks (WIN) program for faculty in science and engineering … to develop networking activities and investigate the impact of networks on the professional growth of female faculty members." Connecting across the institution to share experience, best practices and innovations, as well as reflection and engagement with pedagogical research are documented ways for faculty to level up.
- Faculty / Departmental budgetary support e.g. meal budgets to facilitate informal chats

3.10 Recognition

Mentorship can be a time-consuming process. However, most of the mentorship programmes examined do not explicitly mention institutional recognition of mentoring work. However, rational choice theory would point towards mentors themselves also needing some form of motivation or benefit. Besides personal satisfaction and intrinsic benefits, mentorship programme designers could articulate the rewards mentors earn from engaging in mentoring. For example, NUS Business School considers teaching mentorship as a form of service and each mentor

is formally appointed and recognised as a "Mentor for Teaching Excellence". Some participants at the Roundtable have also suggested that perhaps there could be university-wide structures for recognition of outstanding mentors, especially cross-faculty mentors.

The following table summarises the discussion above:

Dawson's Design Elements (2014)			2018 NUS Teaching Academy Adaptation
Objectives	the aims or intentions of the mentoring model	Objectives (Section 3.1)	• Broad objective of teaching mentorship already defined • Priorities and secondary aims (if any) to be defined by programme leaders • Personal goals/objectives to be determined by mentee/mentor in consultation
Time	the length of a mentoring relationship	Mentoring Period (Section 3.2)	• Duration (see Section 3.2) • Start when new faculty member joins &/or when existing faculty member indicates need/desire to begin mentorship
Termination	how relationships are ended		• Ends when P&T ends or upon completion of agreement • Concluding activities
Cardinality	the number of each sort of role involved in a mentoring relationship	Mentor vis-à-vis Mentee (the mentoring relationship) (Section 3.3)	• One-on-one i.e. dyad mentoring • One-to-few i.e. group mentoring • Few-to-one i.e. compound mentoring (where one mentee has several mentors with different areas of expertise) • Team mentoring (new faculty team-teach with experienced colleagues) • Peer mentoring • Networks and Community Teaching Support (e.g. discussions with different professors) Personal choice/preferences, needs, capacities and flexibility in reassignment should also be considered: • Mandatory or voluntary participation in the process • Degree of choice allowed to mentee / mentor in matching (e.g. department-initiated vs. self-sourced)
Matching	how mentoring relationships are composed		
Relative seniority	the comparative experience, expertise, or status of participants		
Tie strength	the intended closeness of the mentoring relationship	Programme Structure (Section 3.4)	A suitable balance has to found for the following: • Formality of the mentorship structure & process • Degree of pre-determination of outcomes • Structure of communications & monitoring (frequency of meetings, monitoring processes and deliverables etc.)
Time	regularity of contact, and quantity of contact		
Monitoring	what oversight will be performed, what actions will be taken under what circumstance, and by whom		
Roles	a statement of who is involved and their function	Selection of Mentors (Section 3.5)	Prospective mentors should have • Recognition for teaching skills (e.g. award winners or those with excellent teaching records) • Personal traits such having as a caring nature, confidence, the ability to be a supportive listener etc. • Potential compatibility with the mentee (e.g. mutual professional interests) • Availability/capacity • Freedom to express personal choice
Selection	how mentors and mentees are chosen		
Roles	a statement of who is involved and their function	Selection of Mentees (Section 3.6)	Mentees are either new faculty or faculty who require/request for mentoring. There should be • Consultation with HoD/ Department senior admin/teaching excellence committee or equivalents • Freedom to express personal choice / Consideration of preferences • Willingness to engage in the mentorship process
Selection	how mentors and mentees are chosen		

			• Mindfulness of the potential social stigma of participating in mentorship programmes
Policy	a set of rules and guidelines on issues such as privacy or the use of technology	Agreement (Section 3.7)	An Agreement between mentor and mentee should cover the following: • Expectations/Desired outcomes of mentoring • Timelines and Processes • Monitoring and Formative Feedback (including documentation to be used) • Confidentiality / No blame basis clauses • Situations which necessitate the breaking of confidentiality • Participation of mentor in evaluative processes, if any (Annual Review, P&T processes etc.) and the parts of the mentorship processes/documentation that can be used towards evaluation
Activities	actions that mentors and mentees can perform during their relationship	Activities (section 3.8)	Mentoring can include activities related to the areas below: • Teaching and Learning Cycle (e.g. update domain knowledge, course design, material design/preparation, delivery, active learning, assessment & feedback, classroom observations) • Institutional Knowledge (e.g. procedures, guidelines, location of resources etc.) • Evaluation (e.g. teaching portfolios, student feedback/course evaluation data discussion etc.) • Personal effectiveness (e.g. self-reflection, relationship building, balance of responsibilities etc.)
Resources and tools	technology or other artefacts available to assist mentors and mentees	Resources	Resources that can be made available include: • Teaching Mentor training • Documents related to the mentoring process e.g. checklists, developmental pathways, progress maps, monitoring/review forms, even conflict management strategies etc. • E-resources on teaching e.g. articles & videos on pedagogy • Department-external teaching-related workshops/ courses conducted by teaching-focused centres • Teaching-related support Networks and broader community teaching support • Faculty / Departmental budgetary support
Role of technology	the relative importance of technology to the relationship		
Training	how necessary understandings and skills for mentoring will be developed in participants		
Rewards	what participants will receive to compensate for their efforts	Recognition	Besides personal satisfaction and intrinsic benefits, what are the rewards mentors earn from engaging in mentoring? E.g. • Formal recognition of Teaching Mentorship as a kind of Service to Department/Institution? • Awards for outstanding mentors (within departments/ faculties and across faculties)

4. Further issues

During the Roundtable on Teaching Mentorship, it was pointed out that there is currently insufficient reliable data on the outcomes of monitoring. Predominantly, there was instead a heavy reliance on self-reporting/evaluation for feedback, with no control group. Reports on the outcomes of mentoring also tended to be anecdotal in nature. Hence, programme designers could consider defining objectively verifiable indicators which provide valid and comparable measures of progress towards the achievement of teaching mentorship targets/objectives.

5. Conclusion

This review identified important elements and issues relevant to Teaching Mentorship. However, it does not furnish the local perspectives held by the NUS Teaching Community at large on teaching mentorship.

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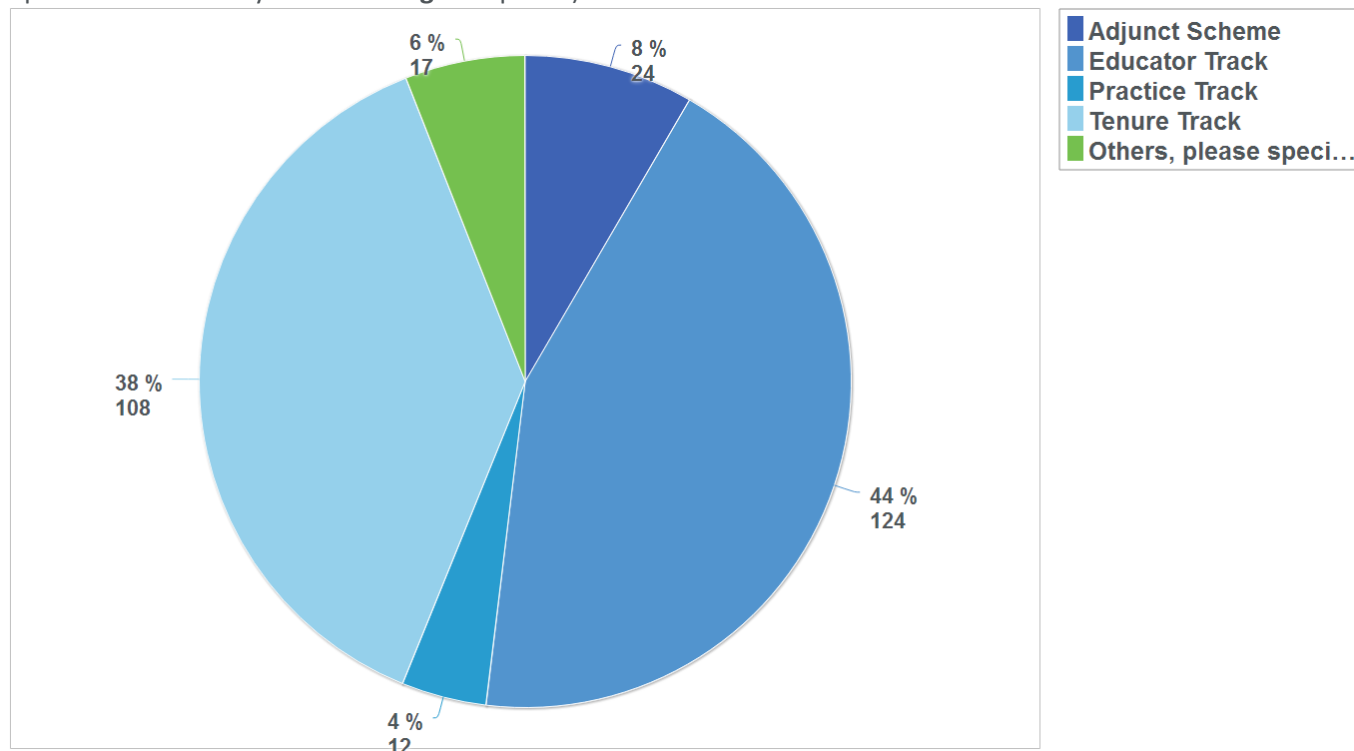# Perceptions of Teaching Mentorship in NUS (Survey Findings)

Soo Yuen Jien, Yanika Kowitlawakul, Ravi Chandran s/o Thiagaraj, Grace Wong Khei Mie and Ng Cheng Cheng

This survey was designed to find out more about the NUS Teaching Community's experiences with Teaching Mentorship and to elicit their views and perspectives on Teaching Mentorship. It opened to the NUS Teaching Community on 22 February 2018 and closed on 19 March 2018. The number of attempts was 297 and completed responses totalled 254.
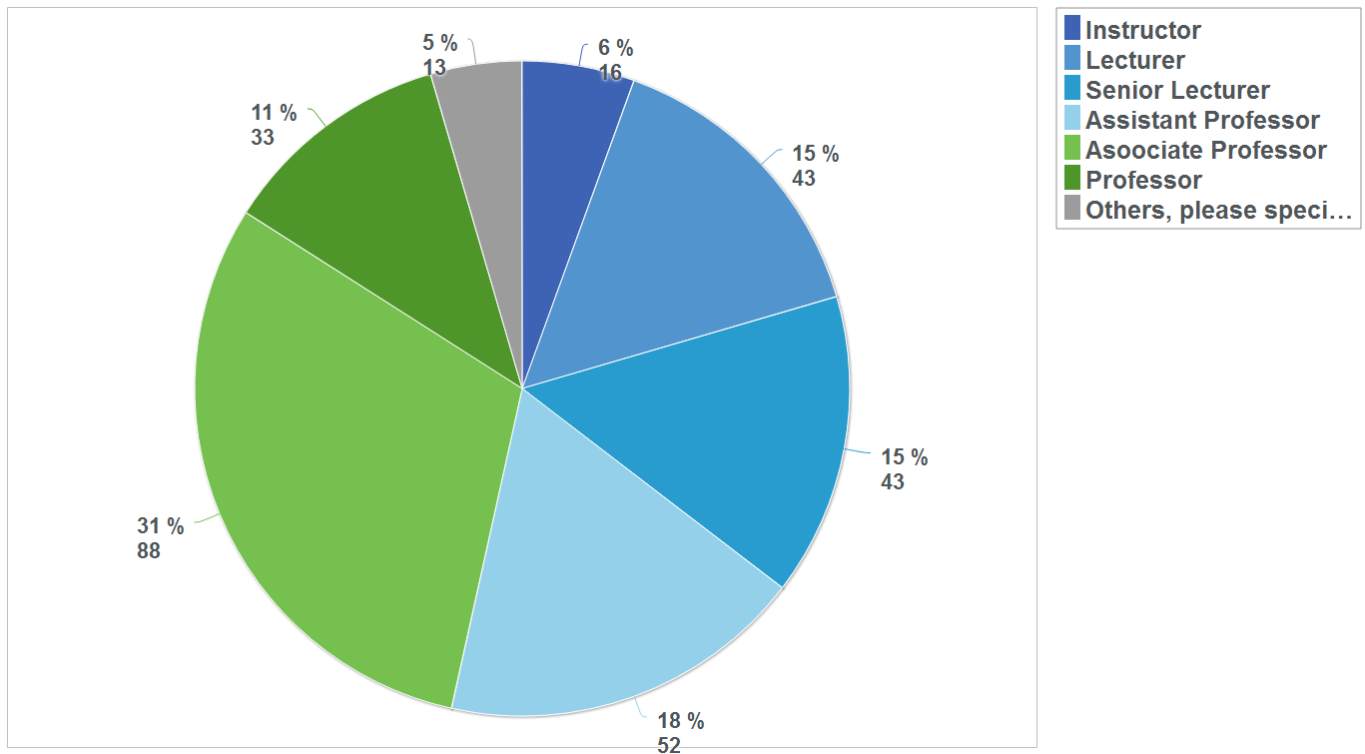
Demographics

A. My career track:

(Respondents could only choose a **single** response)

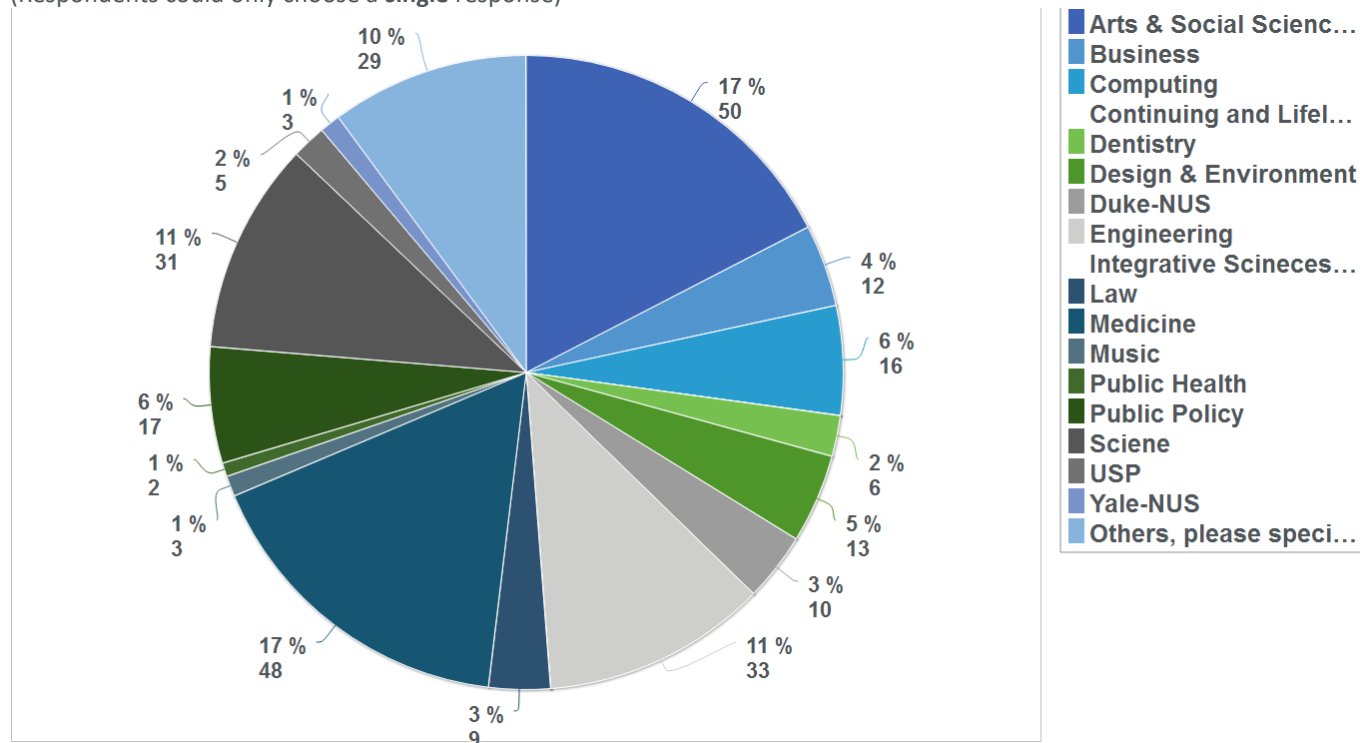| Others, please specify ... Responses (identifying info deleted)		
TAS		
Clinical Faculty Scheme		
Teaching Assistant		
Visiting associate		
Not sure		
Contract		
Visiting		
Professor, Research		
X Medical Center		
CFS		
Undecided		
Visiting Professor		
Research Track		
Assoc. Professorial Fellow		
X Medical Center		
I worked for NUS for over 20 years covering various career tracks (teaching to management). This survey is based on these accumulated experience and not my current position.		
Program Chief		
	Valid Responses	**17**
	Total Responses	**297**

B. My current position:
(Respondents could only choose a **single** response)

Legend	
■	Instructor
■	Lecturer
■	Senior Lecturer
■	Assistant Professor
■	Asoociate Professor
■	Professor
■	Others, please speci...

Pie chart values:
- Instructor: 6 % — 16
- Lecturer: 15 % — 43
- Senior Lecturer: 15 % — 43
- Assistant Professor: 18 % — 52
- Asoociate Professor: 31 % — 88
- Professor: 11 % — 33
- Others, please specify: 5 % — 13

Others, please specify ... Responses (identifying info deleted)		
Director		
Director		
Teaching assistant x 5		
member TAS		
Clinical Associate Professor		
Principal Lecturer		
senior tutor		
Adjunct Professor		
Probably classified as Senior Lecturer		
	Valid Responses	**13**
	Total Responses	**297**

C. My Faculty/School:

(Respondents could only choose a **single** response)

Legend:
- Arts & Social Scienc...
- Business
- Computing
- Continuing and Lifel...
- Dentistry
- Design & Environment
- Duke-NUS
- Engineering
- Integrative Scineces...
- Law
- Medicine
- Music
- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Sciene
- USP
- Yale-NUS
- Others, please speci...

Others, please specify ... Responses		
CELC x 15		
UTown Residential College		
Residential College		
residential college		
UTown College		
RC4,UTCP		
Residential College		
Science and engineering (ESP)		
ISS		
ISS		
NUS-ISS		
SCALE		
Provost Office		
Office of the Senior Deputy President and Provost		
Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies		
I have a joint appointment ...		
	Valid Responses	**30**
	Total Responses	**297**

D. I have experienced teaching mentorship
(Respondents could only choose a **single** response)

	As a mentor
	As a mentee
	As both mentor and m...
	Not at all

- 20 %
- 58
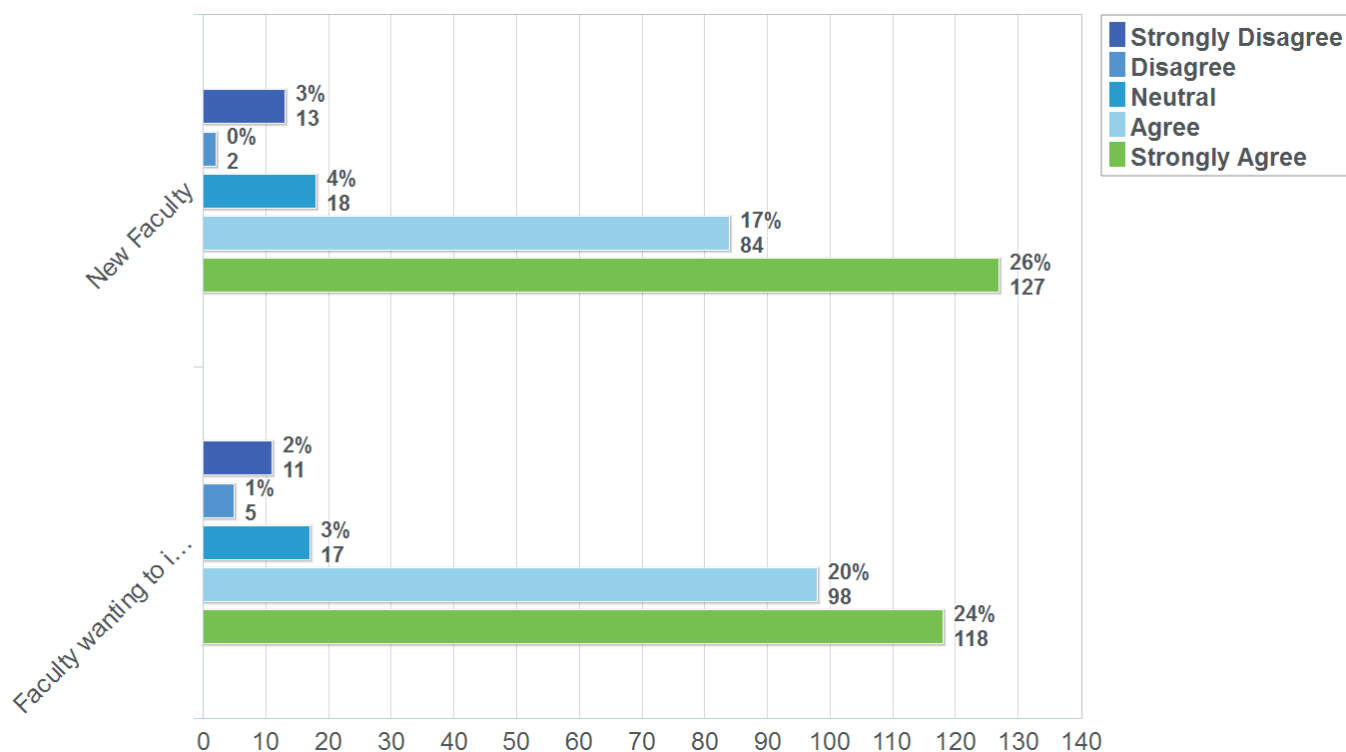- 14 %
- 39
- 22 %
- 64
- 44 %
- 126
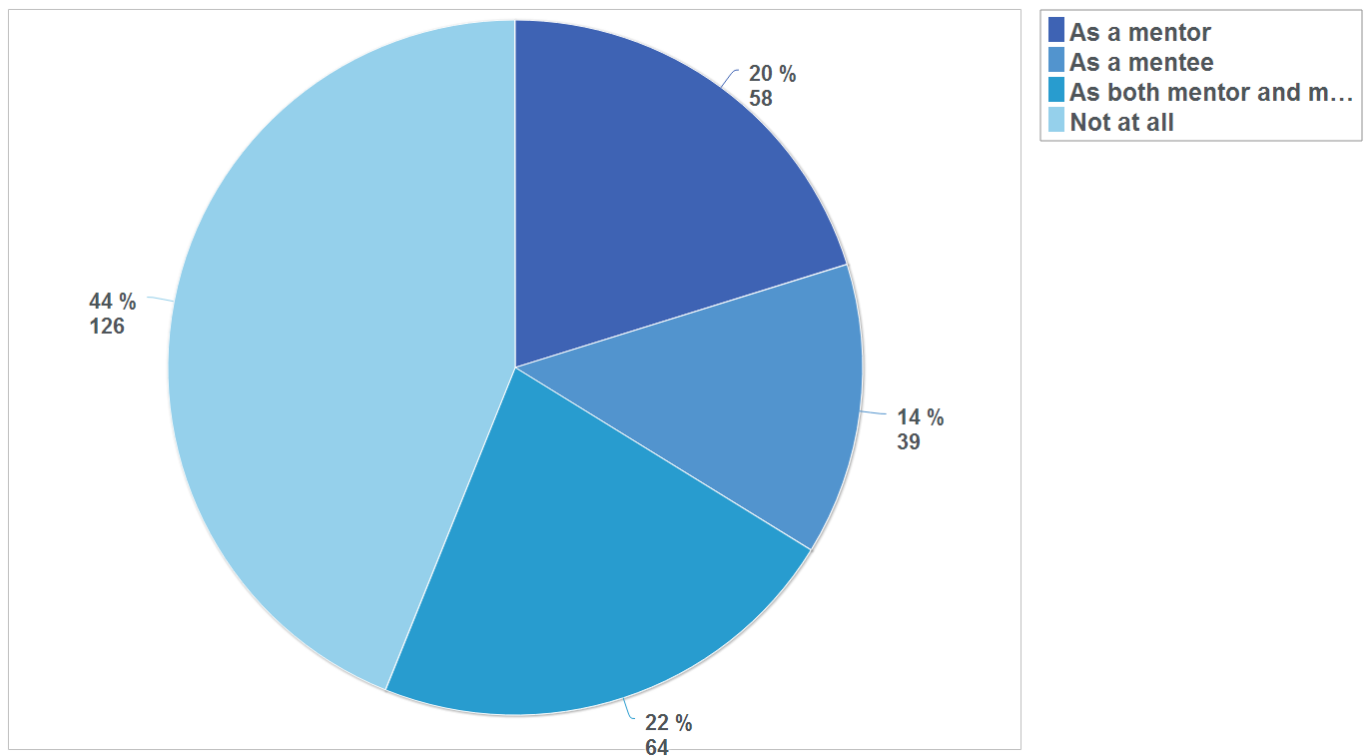
	Total Responses	287

The Survey

1. Teaching Mentorship is helpful for

- o New faculty
- o Faculty who want to improve on their teaching at any career stage
- o Others, please specify

(Respondents could only choose a **single** response for each topic)

If there are others in the teaching community who can benefit from Teaching Mentorship, please let us know.

Response
TAs
TAs
Teaching Assistants
Teaching assistants
Teaching assistants
Teaching Assistants
Teaching assistants
Teaching Assistants
Teaching Assistants
Teaching Assistants
Teaching Assistants
Teaching assistants (full time or students)
Teaching assistants, e.g. graduate teaching assistants.
Graduate teaching assistants
Graduate students who will serve as tutors
graduate student teaching assistants
Graduate tutors
PhD students
Post-docs
Post Docs really need and want this mentorship
phd students with a teaching and research career credibly ahead of them

Graduate students who want to be a teacher as their career
PhD Students and Postdocs who aspire for an academic career
Graduate students and faculty members who did not come from a coursework + research PhD program: it is unlikely they were given opportunities to develop teaching skills.
the adjunct professors, and the teaching assistants
Teaching assistants, adjunct faculty
postdoctoral fellows and teaching assistants
Part-time tutors
Adjunct Lecturers
adjuncts
Part time tutors
Students
Students who are aspired to be a teacher in near future
UG students who are interested in teaching
All heads of department and convenors
Faculty performing poorly in teaching aspect
Ideally this should be done BEFORE one joins the faculty. That is how it works with those who teach junior college, secondary, primary and kindergarten children.
Residents especially those difficult learners
Mentoring should also be on EDIC Instructor as they are involved in helping the teaching staff.
May be useful to define "new" Faculty. Would this be based on teaching experience or duration of service with the university.
practical experience having been in public service and corporate and consultancy ervices and at the same time holding an academic adjunct AP
Hm... some older profs who don't want to embrace newer teaching technologies? (I will have to remind myself when I am older)
Private GPs and polyclinic doctors who are our adjuncts in the Family Medicine posting in the NUS School of Medicine.
Middle grade Doctors.
Faculty taking on a course new to them but which has been taught by others.
Every NUS staff should have some mentorship skills which must be carefully designed based on the nature of duties.
Surprisingly, many people have "teaching" roles that are under appreciated. Administrators who bring in new staff, Finance/HR who need to share new policies, procedures all have to teach something

	Valid Responses	47
	Total Responses	254

**~ 27 mentioned Teaching Assistants or PhD students**
~ 6-8 mentioned adjunct faculty or part-time tutors

Open responses regrouped

2. Teaching Mentorship should be made mandatory for
- o   No one (i.e. should be kept voluntary/optional)
- o   New faculty
- o   Faculty whose teaching scores fall below departmental expectations

(Respondents could only choose a **single** response for each topic)
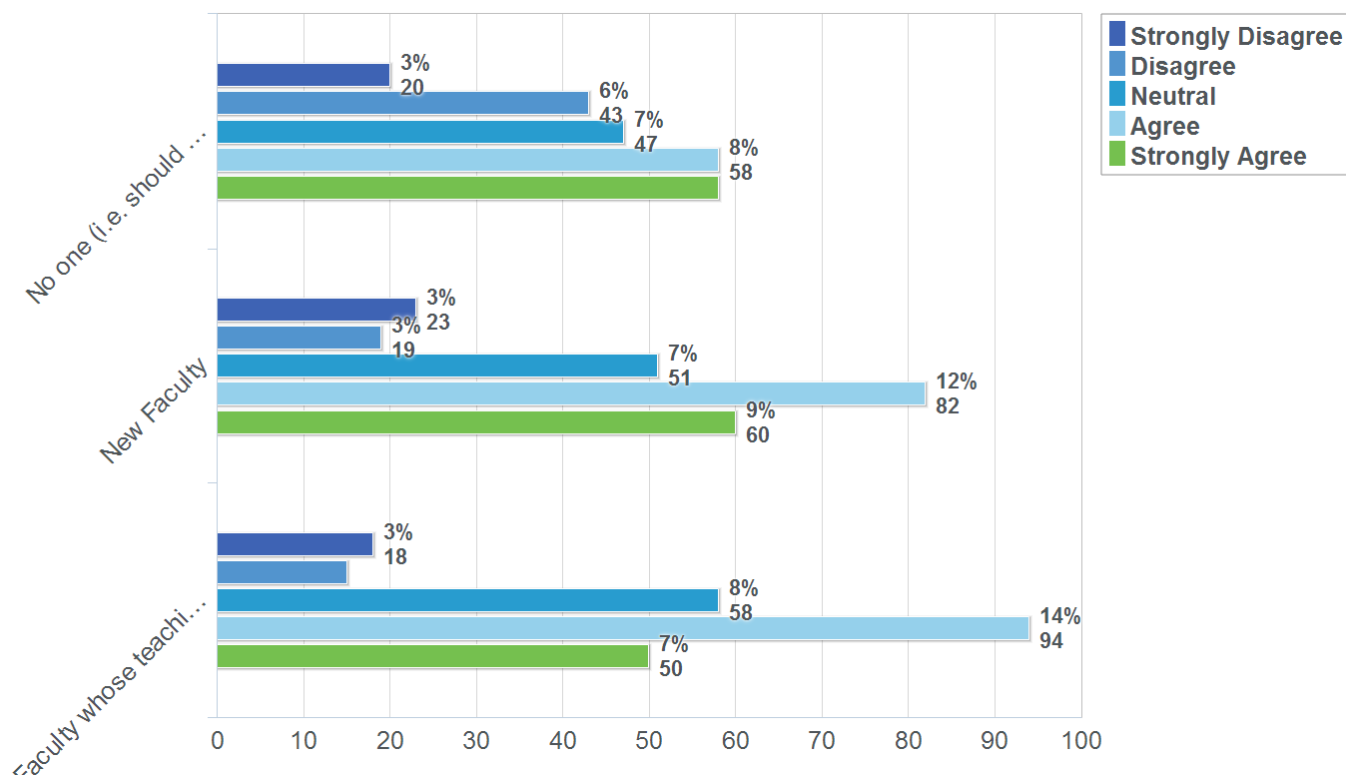
If there are others in the teaching community for whom Teaching Mentorship should be made mandatory, please let us know who and why.

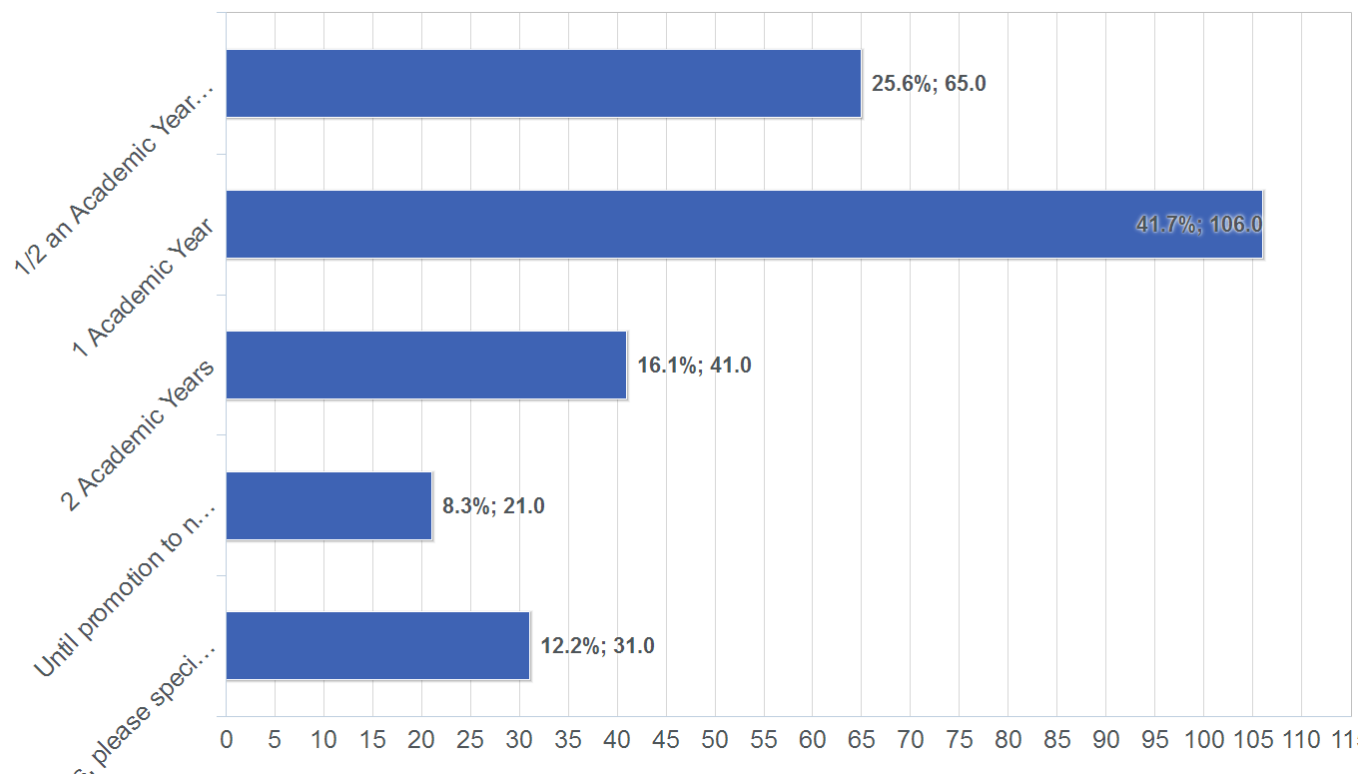| Response |
| --- |
| Teaching Assistants |
| Teaching assistants who are graduate students or postdocs, for obvious reasons. |
| Teaching Assistants |
| Teaching Assistants |
| Teaching assistants. |
| The problem with "mandatory" is that people resent it. There should be some means of making them aware of the gap, the problems it poses, and having them "want" to have mentorship. |
| Should not be mandatory. |
| Mentorship should not be made mandatory in general. If either party were unwilling, documentation of the process would become meaningless and mechanical. |
| Teaching mentorship, including participation in the CDTL teaching seminars and workshop, MUST NOT be mandatory to anyone. Pedagogy is something individual teachers have to figure out themselves through trial and error and experimentation. No one size fits all model to teaching exists. Any institutionalization of rules that mandate participation in mentorship programs are bound to only add to unnecessary burden, rather than being of any substantive value. |
| No one, but it should be offered to those who are motivated |
| It should be mandatory for everyone eligible for promotion and on a contract longer than 2 years. |
| It should, to help new faculty navigate the maze that is NUS bureaucracy |
| new faculty staff from overseas whom are not familiar with the education culture in Singapore |

There is some disparity between 1. and 2. because, if a new faculty has a lot of teaching experience, mentorship may not be necessary.
Faculty who have no prior teaching experience
Clinician Educators
Teaching staff who join NUS after they have gained considerable industry experience should also be mentored. It should not be assumed that they are experienced in industry and hence do not need to be mentored.
(i) adjunct professors - 2 reasons: (a) though very experienced from the industry, they may NOT have any teaching experience (b) they went through tertiary education in the 70s/80s, but tertiary education PHILOSOPHY/METHOD, etc. have changed dramatically (ii) teaching assistants - 2 reasons: (a) most are from overseas, hence they may need to understand NUS education PHILOSOPHY/METHOD, etc. (b) command of English, and attitude (some are passionate, but some regard it as a requirement)
adjuncts
Adjunct faculty who are looking to expand on their involvement in NUS.
As above. Because they are teaching but may not know what they do not know, about teaching students.
Part-timers and other non-full-timers
Yes. Faculty scores should be evaluated fairly and taken seriously by the faculty when they fall below departmental expectations.
Faculty whose teaching scores always around average after a very long time (no first breakthrough).
Unless teaching scores are extremely low, e.g. < 2.5 they do not prove a valid measure of the quality of a staff member's teaching.
Faculty whose cumulative qualitative feedback (by peers and students) over three years does not meet international or university standards. Reliance on "scores" alone doesn't necessarily make a good teacher. The faculty member could be teaching "popular" fluff that gets good scores due to the ease of the module but doesn't meet disciplinary/industry standards or challenge/push students to grow. There must be qualitative metrics to determine if a member requires assistance.
Teaching Mentorship should be broadened to as many of the community as possible, especially adjuncts and part-timers who may not have the complete picture of the teaching culture.
Teaching mentorship should be assigned, the mentor should offer to provide assistance, and the mentee should have option to accept or reject the assistance.
Everyone should have a teaching mentor regardless of which stage of career they are in. I think there are always things to share and learn from each other. Just having someone around to spare ideas with is can be both reassuring and energizing, and it reminds us why we are doing what we are doing.
Educator leaders
Should be a person and place that have no interests. Therefore, it is difficult within the same organization.

	Valid Responses	31
	Total Responses	254

Open responses regrouped

3. The optimal duration for Teaching Mentorship is
- o ½ an Academic Year
- o 1 Academic Year
- o 2 Academic Years
- o Until promotion to next grade
- o Others, please specify __

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)

The optimal duration for Teaching Mentorship is

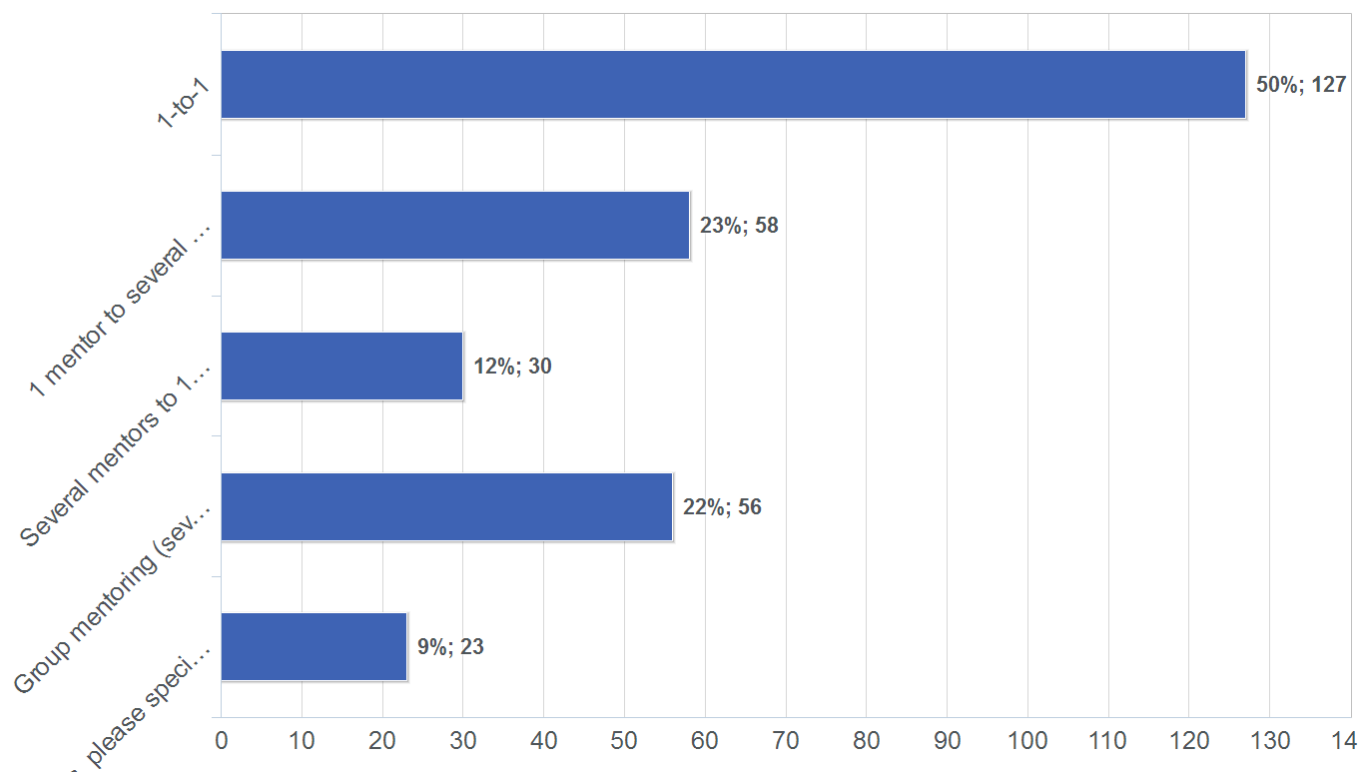| Others, please specify ... Responses |
| --- |
| None |
| Don't think it should exist |
| as and when needed/wanted |
| As long as desired, and only as only as desired. |
| Need basis |
| Depends on the mentee's goals |
| Depends on the communication between mentor and mentee |
| Depends on paesons and situation |
| Depends on the faculty member in question. Needs to be variable. |
| Optimal will vary |
| flexible |
| I really think it depends on the individual. |
| As long as needed to reach a certain level of performance. |
| It should be a negotiated amount of time, depending on person's needs. |
| As agreed upon by both mentor and mentee (case by case) |
| As long as the two still continue to see value in the relationship |
| after 1 to 2 sessions of teaching |
| 1 month |

1 semester at a time	
two semesters, with one semester break in middle	
One year formal, and continue the relationship while needed	
one year -new staff, 3-6 months career mentoring	
Depends whether for new faculty or experienced faculty. New faculty: 1-2 academic years, Experienced faculty: on needs basis	
At least 2 years but can be longer, if both parties wish it.	
Those who are teaching well should ask their colleagues in the department for suggestions.	
Continuous	
Think mentorship should be an ongoing process. It may be useful to organise/structure it with an initial timeframe but after that it should be ongoing.	
Throughout academic career in the same department	

	Valid Responses	**29**
	Total Responses	**254**

Open responses regrouped

1 semester at a time

two semesters, with one semester break in middle

One year formal, and continue the relationship while needed

4. The ideal combination for mentor/mentee matching is

- o   1-to-1
- o   1 mentor to several mentees
- o   Several mentors to 1 mentee
- o   Group mentoring (several mentors to several mentees)
- o   Others, please specify ___

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)

The ideal combination for mentor/mentee matching is

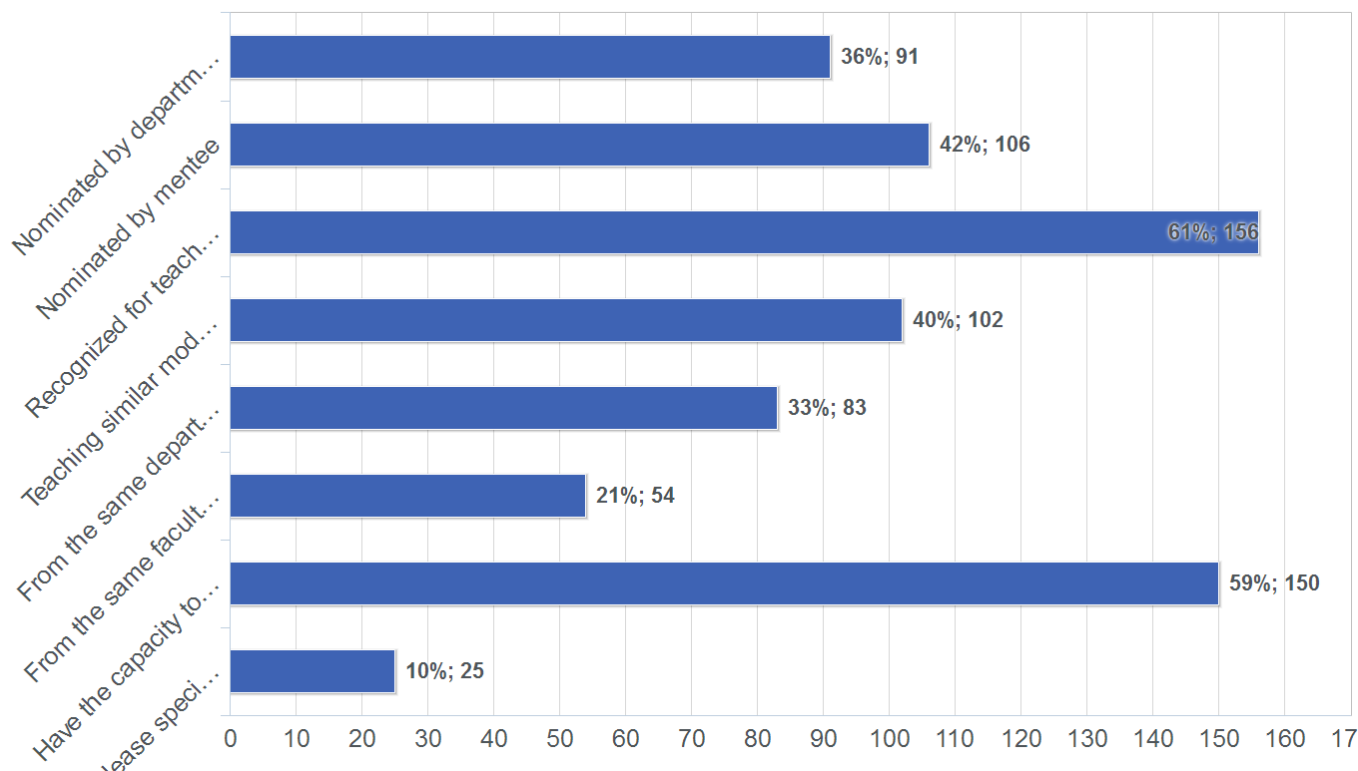| Others, please specify ... Responses |
|---|
| As I don't think it should exist, there is no 'ideal combination." It is 0-0 |
| None |
| A combination of 1-to-1 and Group is probably necessary depending on the needs of the mentee. |
| 1-1 but, of course, one mentor can (at any time) have more than one mentee with whom that mentor has a 1-1 relationship, and can be free to bring mentors together. By the way, I think my idea of mentorship is much more informal and fluid. |
| Realistically, it will be a 1 mentor to several mentees situation since the number of actually good mentors will likely be small |
| The mentorship sessions should be 1:1, but an experienced mentor may have many mentees. |
| 2 mentors x 2 mentees is better than 1-to-1 if resources permit |
| Pair mentoring - 2 mentors to 1-2 mentees |
| Experience exchange among staff |
| As meantioned in 3, teachers have to have passion in imparting their knowledge. Colleagues have to first acknowldege that they might need help. Only then mentor/mentee program can work. Forcing whoever to improve may be counterproductive. |
| Mosaic mentoring |
| Varies depending on goals. Different mentors are good for different things. Always important to get a good match. Sometimes the mentor is just the one that the mentee can establish the best rapport with, but may not be the best teacher. |
| It depends on what is being worked on. Somethings can occur in a class - but I guess I feel that "mentorship" is really a one to one. |

Depends		
Ideal will vary		
Depends on the mentees needs		
It depends on the individual and their needs. I don't think there should be 'hard and fast' rules here.		
customizable - one to one, peer, group as befits purpose of mentoring		
Be flexible and optional in mentoring; some may want to meet in person as 1 on 1 interactions, and others may simply seek advice via emai		
flexible, voluntary, and to encourage a culture of mentoring as well as for those who need advice/help to approach willing and experienced colleagues		
a mix of the above. all options are valuable dependent on the strength/ weakness of staff		
	Valid Responses	**21**
	Total Responses	**254**

Open responses regrouped

5. The following are important for the selection of a teaching mentor
- o Nominated by department/faculty
- o Nominated by mentee
- o Recognised for teaching excellence
- o Teaching similar modules as the mentee
- o From the same department
- o From the same faculty
- o Have the capacity to take on the role (in terms of workload)
- o Others, please specify ____

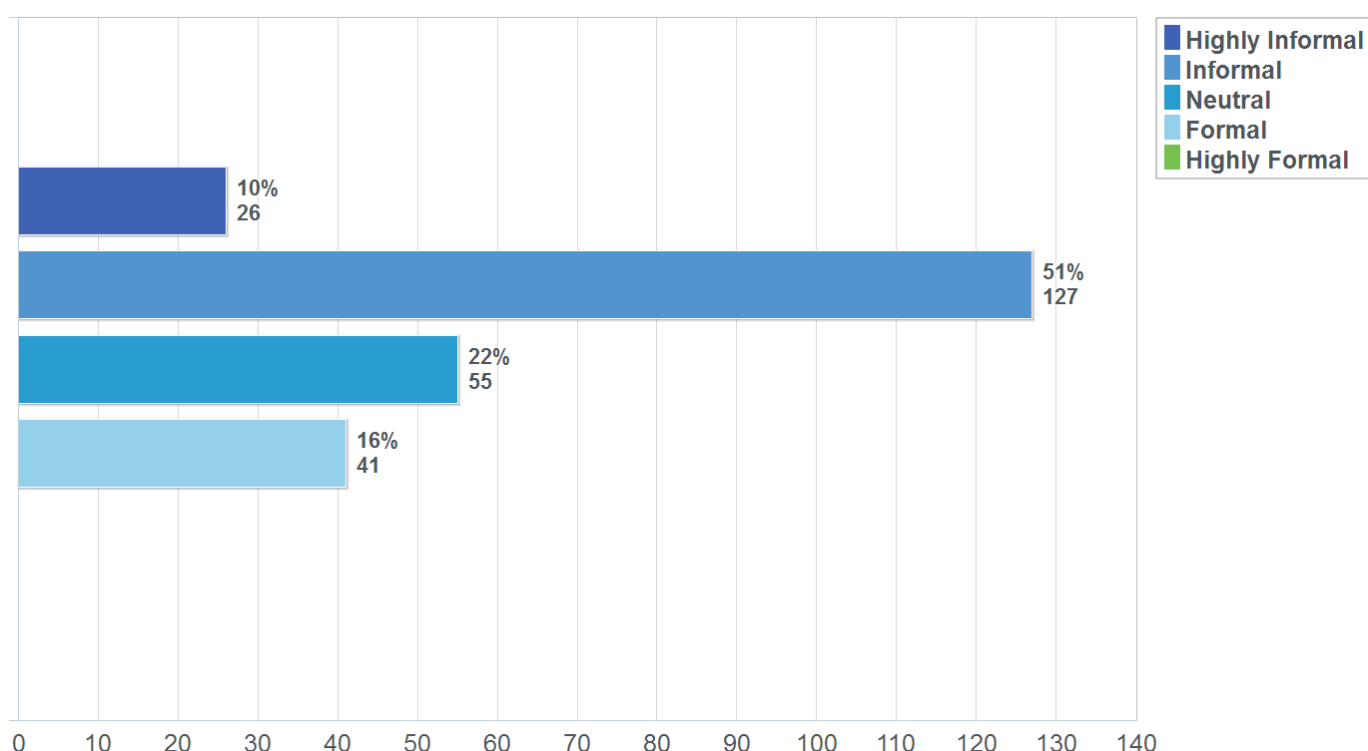(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)

The following are important for the selection of a teaching mentor

Others, please specify ... Responses
Willingness to share and mentor; good rapport with mentee
Continued good feedback as a mentor
Good teachers should not be asked to mentor poor teachers. They can give advice. I have been doing that for many years unofficially and only to help those who I think can and willing to improve.
have the capacity to take on the role in term of capability (teaching quality and mentor skills), willingnesss to be one and time available to be a mentor
Should not be nominated by HOD
Interested and capabale as a mentor
Capacity and ability to mentor someone. Not everyone who can do knows why they do well and how effective they are. There is a skill in mentoring.
capacity and skill - not everyone, even if they are a good teacher, is a good mentor. And not everyone knows best practices to improve teaching.
No one. Why are we hiring people who can't teach? The system is flawed, and this survey exists to justify your job and program. Get to the root of the problem. We hire people who are atrocious teachers. That shouldn't happen.
Chemistry.
in my humble opinion, please kindly add these 2 conditions: (a) mentor shld be willing to and be recognised; reason: some of us are altruistic, but many would weigh it against their other performance measure (given LIMITED time and resources)
volunteers

From the different organization
been trained in mentoring and have understanding of role and function of mentoring, formal mentoring agreement, recognition from faculty for mentor's engagement.
The teacher mentor should volunteer to be a teacher mentor
Education specialist -- Those who obtained degrees and received traning in teaching and education
None
The *mentee* needs to recognize the mentor for teaching excellence, and have the desire to learn from the latter.
Similar modules, different school or person without intersts
The candidate should have characteristics to be a good mentor. For example he/she is interested and committed in mentorship, good EQ, recognised for teaching excellence, etc.
Mentor has to be motivated to take on this role.
Coming from similar discipline if not same faculty
Have the passion and aptitude to be a teaching mentor
There being a 'connection' between the mentor and mentee is crucial. If the mentee doen't connect with or ascribe to the values of the mentor, mentoring may well be difficult and even counter-productive.
Have reasonably high teaching scores (irregardless of whether they have teaching awards) and are keen to be a mentor and are open to new ideas.

	Valid Responses	25
	Total Responses	254

6. The Teaching Mentorship relationship should be
(Respondents could only choose a **single** response for each topic)

Legend:
- Highly Informal
- Informal
- Neutral
- Formal
- Highly Formal

Highly Informal: 10% / 26
Informal: 51% / 127
Neutral: 22% / 55
Formal: 16% / 41

7. If a mentorship agreement were to be drawn up, the following should be included:

Maintenance of confidentiality
- o   Non-use of observations for any official teaching evaluation purposes
- o   No-blame basis for all feedback
- o   How the relationship can be terminated earlier
- o   Others, please specify ____

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)
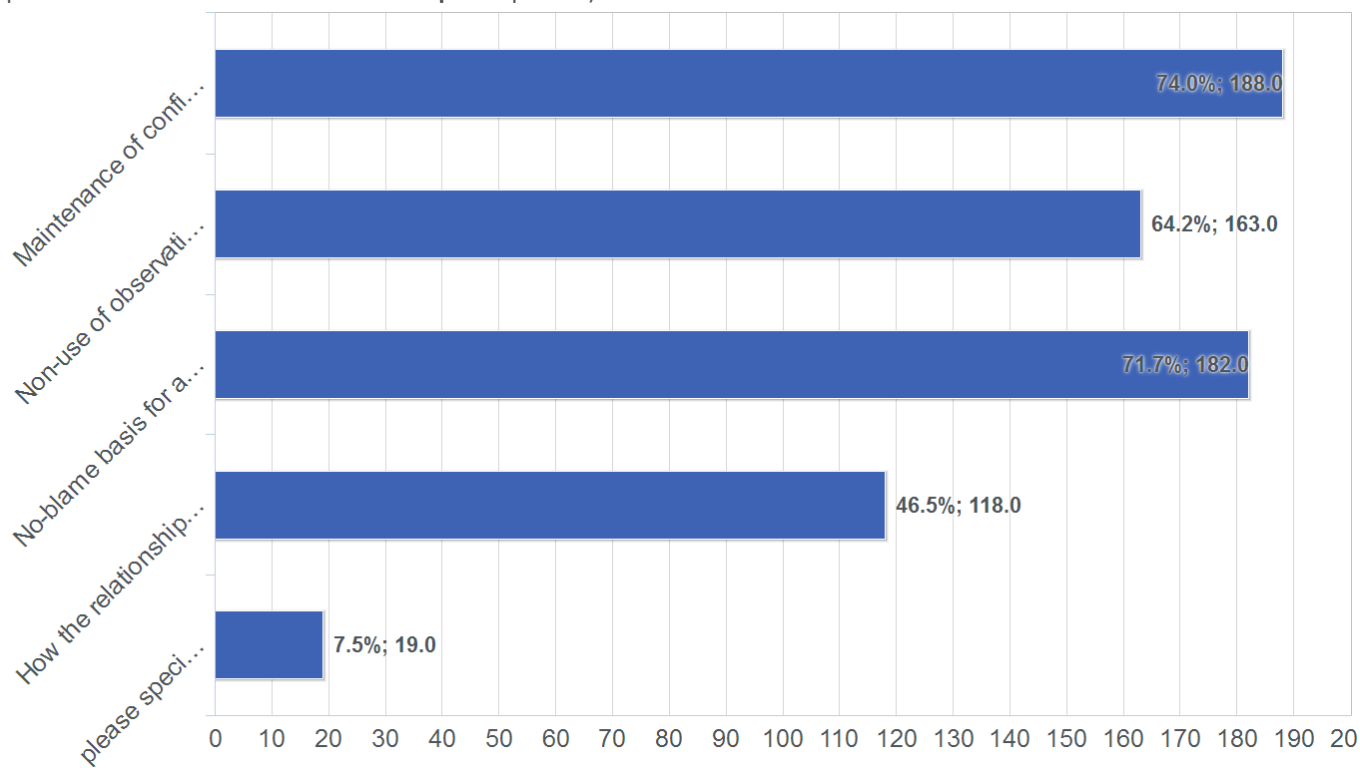
If a mentorship agreement were to be drawn up, the following should be included:

Others, please specify ... Responses
Number of contact hours per week and parameters of contact
I don't think an agreement is needed
no new forms!
There can be conflicts of interest e.g., mentors could also be in FTEC and the mentee can be among teaching award nominees i.e., mentor needs to evaluate the mentee for an official purpose
I do not understand what agreement means.
There should not be a written agreement.
purpose and time frame.
None of the above. Why not hire competent people from the get-go? Why are we having to train them?
Eeks. So formal. I would not be in favour or a mentorship agreement.
objectives, deliverables, what to do if things go wrong, oversight by departmental academic deeloper regadnnig scope - not too wide, not too superficial, frequency and duration of meetings, reflection of the mentoring process by both parties,
Not used as a basis for promotion
The mentee needs to observe all agreements. The mentee essentially has to put in the effort.
How to change mentor.
NO. No formal agreement to be drawn. Keep it informal.
Agreements should be entirely voluntary. A mentorship program should not be enforced.
Why would you need to make it contractual?
A mentorship agreement should not be drawn up if the relationship is informal.
should be informal and staff can approach any willing potential mentor

	Valid Responses	18
	Total Responses	254

8. The following activities should be included in Teaching Mentorship:
- o Syllabus design and learning outcomes
- o Teaching materials design
- o Effective teaching strategies
- o Class management strategies
- o Assessment design
- o How to give good formative feedback
- o Classroom observation
- o Guidance on institutional procedures and guidelines (e.g. relating to assessment, IMMS etc.)
- o Discussion of new developments (e.g. pedagogy, changes in student profile etc.)
- o Discussion of mentee evaluations (e.g. student feedback)
- o Self-reflection and discussion
- o Relationship-building
- o Ohers, please specify ___

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)
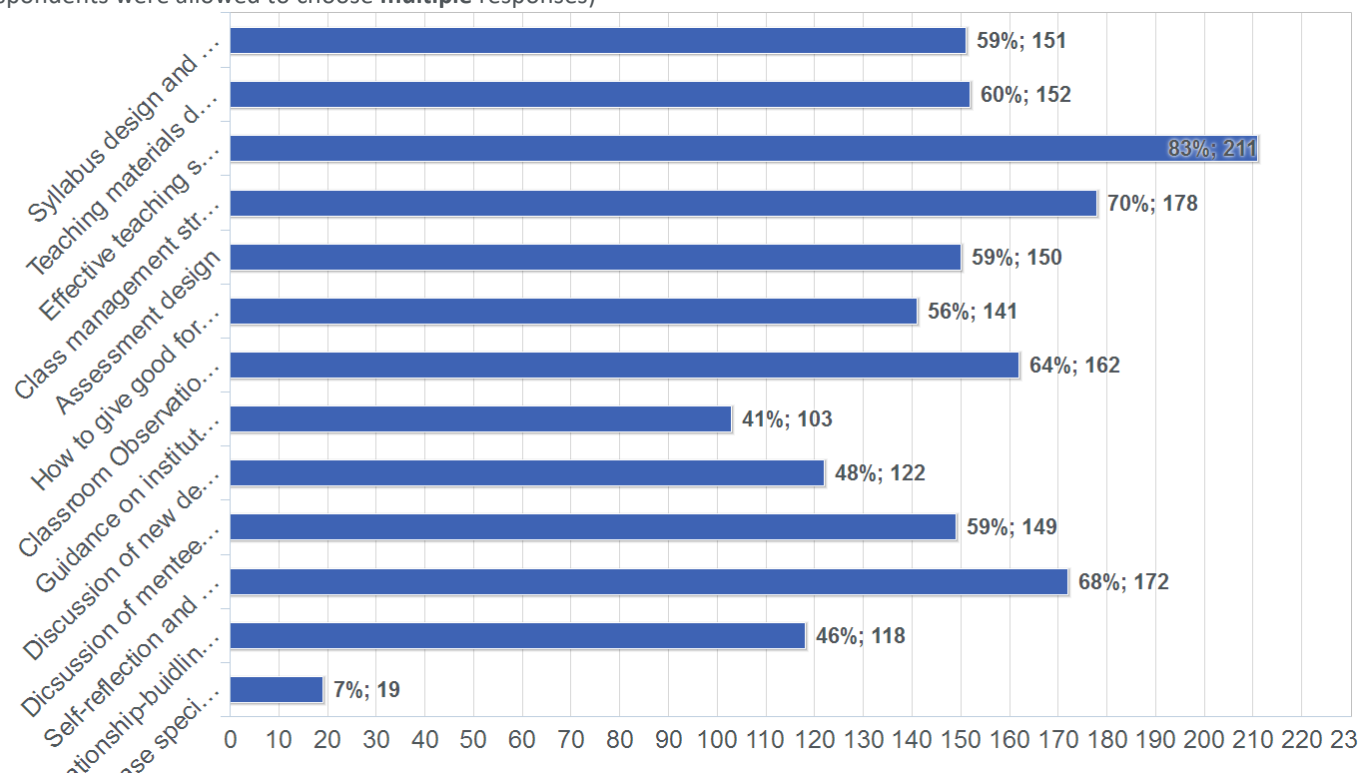
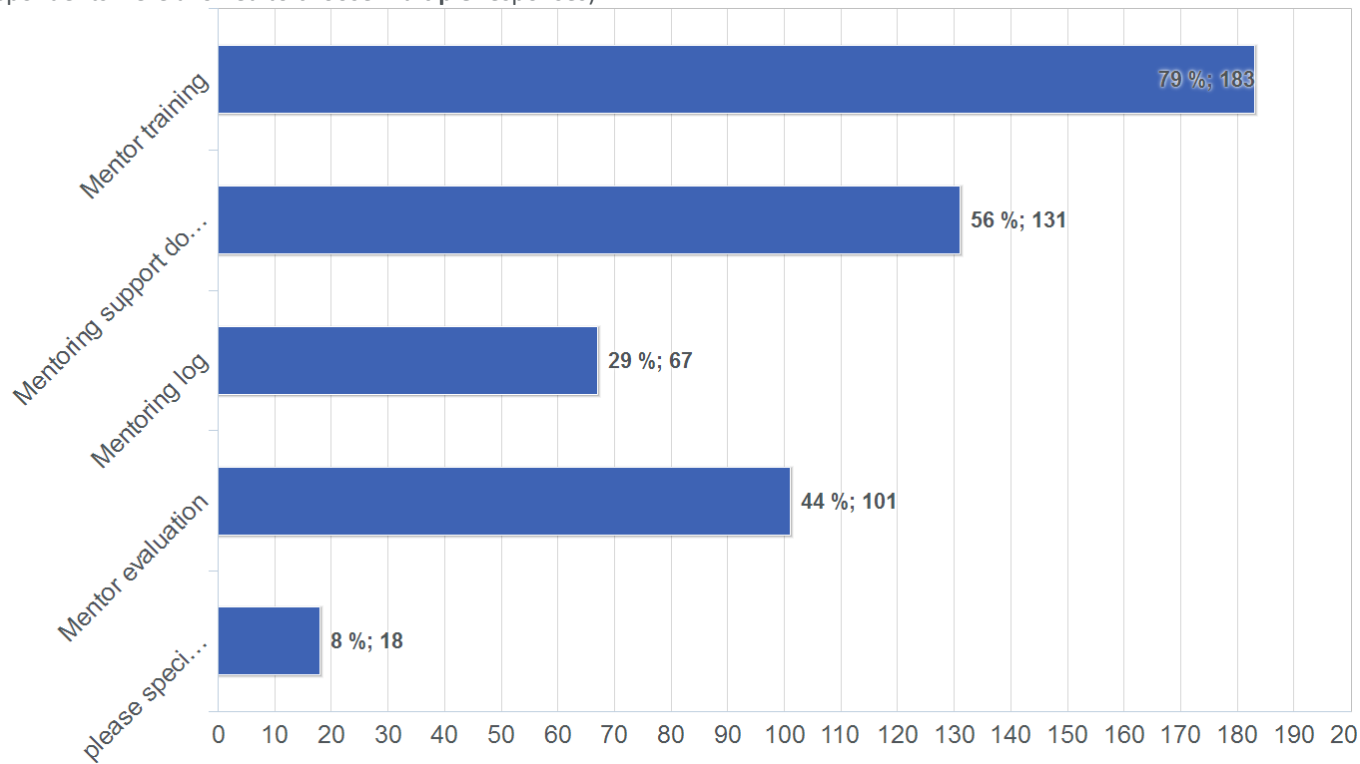The following activities should be included in Teaching Mentorship:

Others, please specify ... Responses
All of the above but on a as-needed basis
I don't think it is appropriate to hand hold our colleagues on the above issues. Once again, it is up to individuals to ask if they really have the "heart" to teach our students.
Should vary according to the goals that the mentee establishes. There can be so many things one wishes to achieve, or fewer depending on the level of difficulty.
it depends on the needs...all could be important for some people at one time or another
None. If you create boundaries, it just becomes a rote exercise.
Dealing with students who have mental wellness issues
noteworthy, the above are ALL IMPORTANT, just that give limited time/resources and ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY, those that i check are minimal requirement
content should be negotiated between mentee and mentor
all the above shoul dbe possible depending on what is needed for career mentoring, may also include SOTL research training/experience, preparing for promotion
All of the above depending on need from the mentee.
advice on career progression

Guidence on institutional structures (e.g. promotions, informal norms, unspoken practices etc.)		
Need to assess mentees needs (not prescriptive)		
As proposed by mentees in regard to areas of need		
"Should" is too strong--the above are all potential areas where a mentor can help.		
All of this is needed but it depends on each case. Frankly university professors are not trained to be teachers---they should.		
All of these are important; however, there is no "should" in a mentor--mentee relationship. The decision of what to do should be mutually agreed upon by the individuals involved based on need.		
Really! You can't approach this in a checkbox fashion or it will fail! People are not machines! These are all useful categories to choose from but specific needs will depend on the individual mentee.		
As proposed by the specific mentee (To satisfy mentee's needs)		
	Valid Responses	**19**
	Total Responses	**254**

9. The following resources are useful for facilitating Teaching Mentorship:
- o Mentor Training
- o Mentoring support documents (e.g. Handbooks, SoPs, review forms, conflict management strategies etc.)
- o Mentoring Log
- o Mentor evaluation
- o Others, please specify ____

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)

The following resources are useful for facilitating Teaching Mentorship:

Others, please specify ... Responses
Not sure
Mentor/Mentee contract
Some SoP to follow would be good to have
Please, no more documents (see second option).
Informal discussions, mentees teaching feedback, and discussion on mentee's self reflections
pay the mentors for their efforts
The most crucial is mentor training and sharing of mentor experiences and resources as necessary.
Getting out of my way. None of these things.
Workoad balance/equity
Reflections, other deliverables - change in curriculum and other evidences of quality teaching improvement
Mentee evaluation
Minimisation of cumbersome paperwork eg. log. Mentors could be tasked to write a reflection of mentoring process at certain periods eg. midway mark; end of formal mentorship period. Attention must be paid to maintaining confidentiality.
If you start mind of mentor's evaluation or training, the situation would go worse.
Informal evaluation through review and reflection with mentor.
I suggest not making mentorship too onerous to do...or people simply won't want to do it.
Mentor evaluation, yes, but not continuing. Once shown to be a good mentor there is no need to keep evaluating the mentor unless issues arise.
Official recognition in terms of workload and hours and overall staff profile

	Valid Responses	**17**
	Total Responses	**254**

10. Teaching mentors should be given the following kinds of recognition:
- o Acknowledged as contributing a form of service in Annual Reviews
- o Acknowledged as showing teaching excellence/leadership in Annual Reviews
- o Others, please specify ____

(Respondents were allowed to choose **multiple** responses)
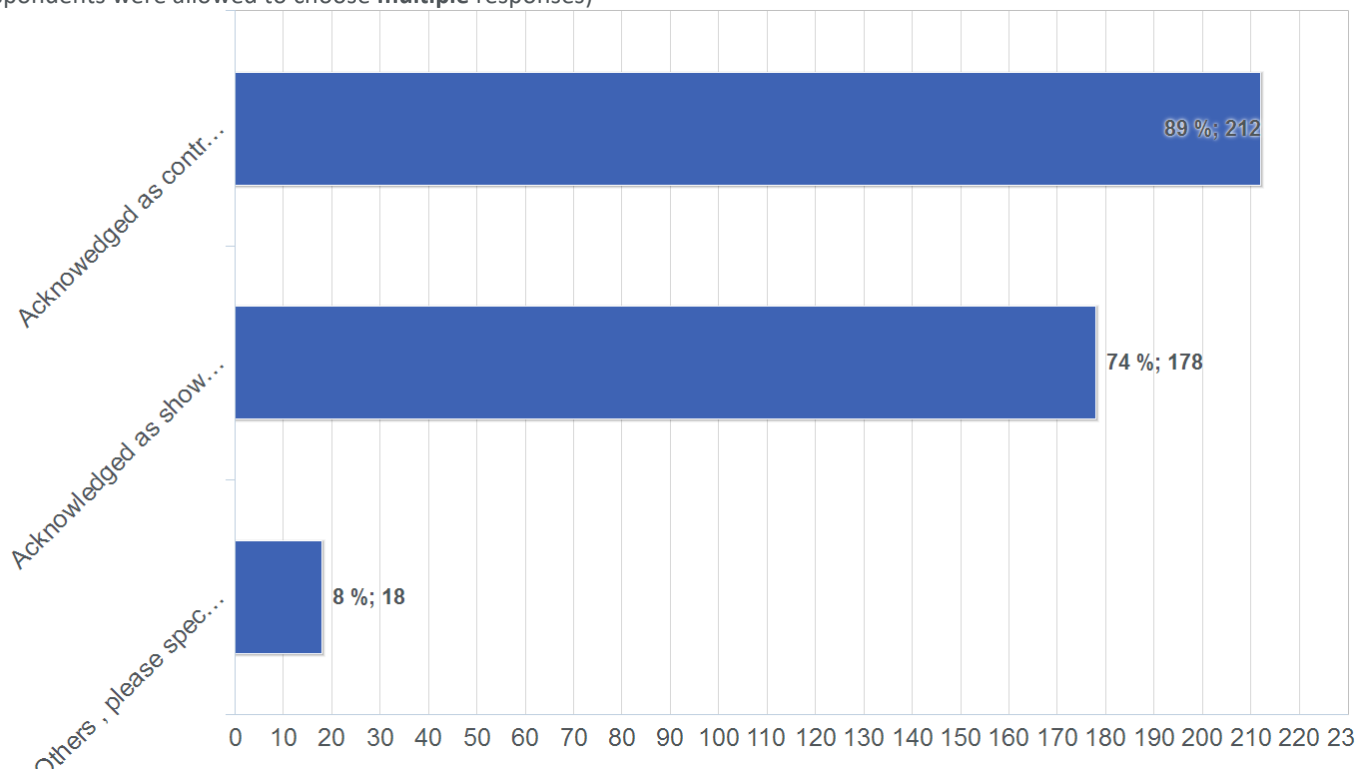
Teaching mentors should be given the following kinds of recognition:

Others, please specify ... Responses
not sure
While I personally am driven by the desire to help my colleagues become more effective teachers, there might be monetary incentives to help with recognizing teaching mentors
No need for recognition. For me, I am happy to see my colleagues improve and students benefit. But I prefer to help on an informal basis.
extra pay
Given teaching credit for teaching in the same module but in the role of a mentor.
As mentors should not exist, no recognition is necessary.
Depending on the number of mentees, a possible reduction in other activities (e.g. teaching, research, or service), or reasonable incentive pay.
Time off if more than one mentee, or done every semester, and financial incentive e.g. contributes toward bonus, or professional development for mentor if regular mentoring donw in an academic development course or conference
Acknolwedged as contributing to part of their teaching workload, e.g. 1 mentee = 1 hr of class per week
Teaching Mentor Day - to acknowledge and even give out some awards.
acknowledged for time spent as part of education
Nominations by past and/or present mentees for a mentoring medal or most inspiring mentor award. This has been done for PhD supervisors and the same/similar could be done for teaching mentors.
Mentors are mentors, because it is beyond loss & gain and recognition. Totally its idea is so poor as teachers/educators
Given an award and bonus just like a teaching award.
Financial reward in the form of bonus for good mentors.
I hesitate here. I think mentoring is a form of giving and is part of being a decent colleague. However, in an era of competition when everything has to be recorded and analysed to gain recognition I can see this is probably naive.
Relief from teaching/admin service (where appropriate)

	Valid Responses	17
	Total Responses	254

11. Please share with us your experience as a mentor or mentee, and/or any other comments and suggestions related to the Teaching Mentorship process.

Others, please specify ... Responses (identifying info deleted)
Dont make it compuslsory.
I think it is difficult to force a mentor/mentee relationship. If the relationship is too formal, it induces unnecessary stress to both parties. Also, every individual has their own strength. It is impossible to learn every single aspect of education from one mentor. However, I think having too many mentors at 1 time may result in lack of depth in learning skills, so I propose having shorter periods of mentoring (1 year?), and possibly changing mentor every year.
make sure this does not generate new bureaucracy. There is already peer review. Merge this with it.
I kind of have an unofficial mentor by discussing teaching issues and developments with a leader in teaching.
I teach in the different faculties for different programmes. I now serve as a teaching mentor for two colleagues. I would like to the university to ensure my department recognizes my work as a mentor in the department for promotion and annual review.
I was a mentee many years ago in another non-teaching organisation. The mentor system was in a way imposed onto both mentors and mentee, but the mentor was not interested and I was not very proactive. I don't think I was very open with the mentor and I didn't gain much from the process.
I think this is long overdue. Expecting new faculty to be able to teach well is a shot in the dark and an experiment at best. A good teaching score does not mean that the undergraduates are taught well. Having a formal teaching mentor in the same dept who taught similar course for the first time teacher is a must. If NUS values undergraduate education, then it should value how undergraduates are taught.
I have never been an official mentor but constantly give suggestions to a few so that they could improve their teaching. Since I do not think I am an outstanding teacher myself, I would not think it is appropriate for someone like me to be officially a mentor. Furthermore, I spend a lot of time on teaching and have other administrative duties. As such, I don't want to have another official duty. Informal is fine.
Never had a formal mentor nor formally appointed as a mentor Learning was opportunistic, unstructured and self driven Mentoring is essential now because of disruption of traditional teaching and the inadvertent focus on securing high feedback scores
Creativity in teaching approaches by the mentee will be negatively affected if there are too much menthorship
INITIALLY, I was given a mentor that was not a good fit, by the HOD. SUBSEQUENTLY, this was changed. At this point, some bad blood already existed. Mentees should get to choose their mentors. Very important!
I have been a program mentor for residents with variable experience but would like to learn more. Most challenging experience for me was being a mentor for residents undergoing remediation.
It has been rewarding watching and helping to mould new staff become better teachers. In some instances, my mentees were from fields different to mine. Although I was able to provide general guidelines, it would have been even more beneficial if there was a mentor from the same domain as the mentee.
I have found informal teaching mentorship to be absolutely essential to the development and improvement of my undergraduate modules. Although I eventually received the advice and support I required this process could have been more efficient had I received more guidance at an earlier stage. I am concerned that a too formal relationship requiring much documentation by all parties or something imposed from above could become a burden, whereas a friendlier interaction without a lot of external documentation would serve my needs well at this time. However, with new faculty or those receiving bad scores I realize that a more organized and formal process may be desirable or necessary. My departmental overall/tenure mentor is a also a valued teaching mentor. It was extremely valuable to receive direct help from faculty who have taught the same or similar modules in the recent past.
Most important is maintaining a low-key informal relationship between mentor and mentee. There should be no tension; the mentee should be encouraged to seek out the mentor rather than the mentor attempting to impose himself/herself on the mentee.
Matching is crucial. Timing is crucial. It is not possible to cover mentoring over a single semester. Important to diagnose and assess needs before the actual mentoring takes place.
There are often two types of mentors - a longterm personal/career mentor and a "functional" mentor that focuses on a specific purpose/function. The purpose, length of time, communication strategy should be jointly negotiated between mentor/mentee. Mentee should want to be mentored.
I've come across mentors who do not take their jobs seriously. As not all mentors are on correct/conventional, a few mentors for a mantee to consult is needed, so that the mantee can triangulate the advice given by a mentor.

The best teacher is the one that can get student to realize his or her potentials to do great things for the society via e.g. work. Hence, the goal os the mentoring should be the eventual outcome and not simply the classroom outcome (which is short term).

Teaching is a key pillar in Education. The attitudes, skills and knowledge required in pedagogy and andragogy should be developed in parallel to domain expertise.

I have won numerous teaching awards. When I arrived at NUS, I could already teach my subject. The real issue is that you are having to deal with a broken hiring process. Why are we hiring people with no teaching skills for a job that mainly involves teaching? What kind of graduate training did they receive? Just because someone can conduct research (the main criteria for hiring) does not mean they should have these jobs. This entire program should be abolished, and all resources put into reforming the hiring process at NUS.

For a new faculty who is employed to take over a module, it helps to have proper handover of the contents etc. of that module. What I felt when I first joined was there was no proper handover of the module - just some power point lecture slides. I needed to find out no. of hrs involved in the module - proportioning for lectures, lab, test, manuals etc. All modules should have a module folder to be handed over to whoever is taking over - this should include hrs for module, lecture topics, no. & type of assessments, lesson plan for each topic and so on. Whoever takes over will have a good idea of what's been taught and can change it according to their style without missing out the important stuff. All staff in charge of modules must handover the updated folder when they leave NUS (both hard & soft copies) to their dept head. This can then be handed over to replacement staff. All staff need to realise that all materials prepared during their employment belongs to NUS and not themselves.

It is based on succession planning. What I did in the corporate world I applied to have new faculty take over after a period of two years as co-teacher, a consultant on-call for discussion.

I have been working now for 30 years and, while honoured to be invited to join the Faculty of Engineering as an Adjunct, was astonished to received almost zero induction training. While I value the old-school collegiate respect this perhaps implies for my experience, as a CEO of several companies I am frankly amazed that the quality of NUS' teaching, and by extension its reputation, is monitored so weakly. It's like the Shangri-La hiring a chef and then giving him or her no guidance on what to cook and no checks on his or her hygiene standards in the kitchen.
I listened to the Provost put a solid case for expanding CET participation earlier this week and, given his desire to not impact research commitments, many more adjuncts like me will probably need to come on board. I urge NUS to take the issue of mentoring staff in all tracks to teach effectively otherwise the university risks the very core of its business falling apart as it tries to adapt and expand in a competitive market.

I have had no formal mentoring experiences at NUS. I have sought out some informal mentoring, but it has been inconsistent and unclear as to whether it is 'mentoring' or just two colleagues talking. A formal process would be extremely helpful. Formalizing mentoring would also go far to mitigating one of the main reasons I have not reached out for more mentoring since arriving at NUS: the attitudes expressed by some colleagues in positions of power who have said things like "anyone who needs mentoring doesn't belong here, either you can make it or you can't" (this is a direct quote made by a senior colleague who now also occupies a significant administrative position).

I've found that the most effective mentorship experiences/relationships develop organically. I am not a fan of a structured "pick a mentor, here's the menu of services" approach. Perhaps it is enough if mentorship (when it happens organically) is known by colleagues to be something that they can cite (backed up by their mentee) and that they know WILL be taken into account as per question 10. I.e., we just provide an avenue of recognition, as a way of signaling that we support such efforts. And to signal what we think goes into good mentorship, we can use the "menu of services" as a template of criteria.

Matching mentor and mentee important. Relationship needs to be built and nurtured. Training for mentors also would be helpful.

As a former Head, I know that mentoring teaching is important, especially for junior staff who does badly. If nipped in the bud early and the mentee is willing to put in the hard work and humble enough to learn, very significant improvements can be made before it is too late (I've first hand knowledge and experience of specific cases). However, most of the time, those who need teaching mentoring most badly are the ones who do not care for it because they are too proud and think too highly of their own abilities, despite evidence to the contrary. These guys think only research matters, especially if they are on tenure track. As the saying goes, you can lead the horse to the water, but you can't make the damn horse drink...

For me personally, I'd love to have someone mentoring me on teaching even now, even from someone more junior than me if possible. In my over 20 years career at NUS, I have never been mentored in teaching - mostly I learnt through my own trial and error!!

The Faculty/Department, or Mentors, need to be clear (and fair) in how they decide who undergoes a mentorship program. When I joined NUS, I was assigned a Mentor by the management office. I am not opposed to the program as I view it as a way to become oriented and acculturated to a new workplace. However, the reasons provided disregarded my past work experience. I had joined NUS from another university with almost a decade of teaching experience and with a good teaching track record. I found this quite confusing as I had in mind that I was hired partly because of my teaching experience at the same educational level, albeit in a different context. Perhaps a well-thought through framework should be in place when selecting who undergoes a mentorship program.

I want to thank my mentor many years ago so that I can upgrade myself from average level to ATEA level. Currently I am informally mentoring my (part time) TAs.

We are working on a mentoring on demand concept, it would be helpful to be able bounce off ideas off someone in order to improve our concept.

Its success depends very much on the personal fit and chemistry of the mentor and mentee. For this reason it should not be compulsory. Lots of "mentors" are in fact very poor, whatever their on paper qualifications.

I do not have experience with either been a mentor or mentee.

It should be quite helpful to conduct teaching mentoring to new faculty members as well as those had 3-5 years of teaching experience. In addition, with most of the students attracted to the social media most of the time now, how to teach and learn effectively is a big challenge issue all of us must resolve. Teaching and learning should be THE MOST important task for academic staff, but now research practically takes the top position on the priority list.

'New'/'long-standing' status in the institution does not correlate with mentoring needs or mentoring ability. New faculty is sometimes misunderstood as being 'inexperienced' and in need of mentoring. New faculty often joins NUS with a wealth of knowledge and experience: assigning basic mentorship programmes to these staff is wasteful. All that new staff may require is a buddy system which helps them with the NUS context. The mentee should be allowed to select his/her mentor to ensure that they will gain something from the programme.

I am a new Teaching Assistant and do not have experience as a mentor or mentee. I just learnt of Teaching Mentorship through the email invitation to this survey. I would welcome some aids, guidance, or sharing on teaching - in addition to a mentorship process, possibly through different means, including workshops/courses on teaching (e.g. "Developing a Teaching Portfolio" by CDTL), helpful strategies compiled in a support document, etc. These could be made available for reference or for registration.

The training of a mentor is very important - explicitly in the area of Implicit Bias. Many faculty do not know that they are critiquing women and minorities differently then those who are stereotyped as being more agent, ambitious and masculine.

Mentorship can be helpful, but it can also impose a conservative model of teaching, undermine the independence of the mentee and encourage a culture of bland conformism. It should be approached with care, not imposed, and not subject to a boiler plate implementation.

My role as a mentor is to be a trusted guide. The relationship is developmental in nature. Not evaluative at all.

Mine was informal where a colleague gave me honest feedback on my lectures.

Rewarding but the 2 must be able to click. And often mentee choosing mentor is more effective than arranged too formally.

Mentoring is an 'art' and it is difficult to promulgate a one-size-fits-all approach. There must be willingness and interest on the part of the mentee, and the mentor, at the same time, must have the time and interest in providing the mentoring. It is better to identify specific areas for improvement rather than a broad objective of 'improving teaching skills'. This requires the mentee to be candid about areas where he/she feels there is room for improvement. Successful mentorship is based on good chemistry between mentor and mentee.

I have served as a mentor informally to my colleagues who have come to ask for help or you are going up for tenure. I have personally benefited from having an informal mentorship. Hence I am of the opinion that this is a highly beneficial system to have in place. Informal mentorship allows the mentee to ask questions that they may not be so comfortable in a larger group/seminar/workshop setting. For the mentor, he/she has a lot to learn from the interaction, including keeping up to date on teaching and pedagogical issues.

I have little experience of the formal Teaching Mentorship process, but having had the benefit of an informal teaching mentorship with my co-lecturer, I see the substantial value in a teaching mentorship process for developing teaching skills.

Regarding teaching-related training, helpful sessions already exist through PDT-L, taught by education specialists. It would be desirable that such available, dedicated resources gets utilized further in case additional training for teaching is needed.

Not all staff can be a good mentor. Identification of a suitable mentor should be from the mentee. Thank you

I have a few informal mentors- I approached them very informally, just for brief discussions about specific queries. Nothing in terms of overall strategic development. So most of how I teach is through observation of good teachers. Not ideal, because no one is observing my teaching and giving me feedback. Unless I ask my peer to do me a favour and observe my teaching.

Teaching mentorship, including participation in the CDTL teaching seminars and workshop, MUST NOT be mandatory to anyone. Pedagogy is something individual teachers have to figure out themselves through trial and error and experimentation. No one size fits all model to teaching exists. Any institutionalization of rules that mandate participation in mentorship programs are bound to only add to unnecessary burden, rather than being of any substantive value.

I have been and will continue to serve as a mentor in FASS (and beyond). But please, please recognise mentoring for annual reviews and teaching awards. Please.

I am fine with teaching mentorship.

The mentoring process is a natural and organic one - unforced, honest, opportunistic, and based on trust and mutual respect. A teaching mentorship programme, if implemented, should not be overly demanding or rigid in terms of documenting deliverables or activities. However, certain practices such as informal evaluation (non-summative) of the mentor and mentee at regular intervals may be helpful.

The overall object of such a programme should not be to document the extent to which mentoring is performed in faculties but rather to establish a culture of mentorship and to facilitate and acknowledge good mentors. Hence parameters for documentation and 'evaluation' should be carefully considered.

Suggestions:

1. It may be as simple as encouraging junior faculty to write reflections on their effective mentors within the department and faculty as a sincere acknowledgement; noted by dept/faculty leadership.

2. Providing ready access to mentorship training for interested faculty.

The process should not be rigid and weigh down both mentor and mentee. Eg. Excessive documentation would kill the spirit and enthusiasm. Mentees also require mentoring in different aspects as they evolve, hence the whole process should be flexible. Thought should be given to evaluating real outcomes vs. outcomes which can be 'gamed'. Whether it is a 1:1 or few:1 ratio of mentors to mentees depends on many factors eg. what the mentee needs to teach, who they teach and in what format. Hence the allocation should also be flexible.

My experience as being a mentee was largely informal but it was always good to have more senior colleagues to sound out ideas with. Also they could share some insights when I had difficulties handling my teaching team (TAs). I have acted as a mentor twice- both informal situations. Once was to my TAs. I do this informally, often co-teaching a class with them and/or allowing them to sit in on my class. I often share how I develop the draft C.A. materials and discuss my pedagogical approaches with them. The other instance was when I was asked to co-lecture with a new colleague who was being eased into our department. He asked me for advice and feedback on a number of instances in the semester and as we were co-lecturing we could talk through and the development of the module and our C.A. materials. These informal relationships are important and I believe they've made me a better educator as I've been able to reflect and share my teaching strategies and experiences.

I was informed that I would be assigned a mentor when I joined NUS as this was to be part of the new changes but until now nothing has been done. I have had to consult disparate senior colleagues on various issues blindly without knowing who may be the best approach. On this mentoring support system supposedly to help new faculty settle in, it has been utterly disapointing since the structure is non-existent

If mentors cannot be nominated by mentees especially when mentees are newcomers to the department, then the department must ensure the quality of mentors through rigorous criteria setting and screening. Newcomers may not be new to teaching, so it is absolutely essential to take regard of their starting points and to work from there, instead of making blanket assumptions about newcomers being unable to write learning outcomes etc etc. The same principles and philosophies for differentiated instruction apply to teaching mentorship. Higher order outcomes such as reflective teaching, connected learning, and the dynamics of classroom interaction etc should be considered for more experienced mentees; currently there seems to be too much focus on the fundamentals like clarity of instruction, delivery and exposition, etc.

My best mentoring relationships have been informal ones based on mutual trust. It has involved my reaching out to senior colleagues whom I respect and admire as teachers, to ask them for advice. There was never an evaluative component mixed within it.

They work when they are mainly informal, growing out of a mutual desire--to improve and to share what. I would be opposed to something more formal. (Even the formal ones I know of, if they work, it's because the people involved have a relationship already.)

I am an informal mentor to two of my junior colleagues. One of them I do by offering advice when needed (syllabus design, slide design, assessment, etc.). The other one I co-teach an introductory module every other semester. Working together for a few years has improved both of our teaching skills.

The teaching mentorship scheme should be an informal one where the style of teaching should not be stiffled to only acceptable norms. There should be room for experimentation, creativity and innovation but at the same time not penalize the teacher for attempts at approaches that did not work as expected. Our current system is rather unforgiving in that sense, and student feedback scores and comments are often taken too seriously to force conformance and intolerance of weak scores or comments. When the latter occurs, there is a greater need to help the teacher to do better in a supportive and encouraging manner.

I appreciate what I have learnt from AMEI programs and through discussions during their events. Apart from that, my experience being mentored (i.e., as a mentee) [] has been very poor and painful.

I have provided informal mentorship to NUS colleagues plus PMETs working in the computing industry.
NUS should seek outside advice or assistance

Happy to share more in person.

did not have mentor

Bedside tutorials is something unique to Medicine and comes with its own challenges. New tutors should be given a chance to be mentored. I have never been mentored in teaching, and would love to have been mentored in my early career

I learned a lot from a colleague who "mentored" me by allowing me to observe his classes on a subject that was somewhat new to me. He also gave me his teaching materials and lesson plans. I taught the same subject subsequently with confidence as I had seen how my colleague used his materials, conducted his classes and managed the students. There was no formal mentoring relationship or contract between us. It was just one colleague sharing his teaching with another and it worked beautifully.

I found mentoring to be very useful in the very beginning of my teaching days. I chose a mentor in my Department based on two criteria: (1) the mentor was recognized as good teacher and (2) the mentor was someone I was very comfortable working with.

The greatest reward is knowing that the mentee is doing well and no longer needs further "mentoring".

The formal mentorship and informal mentorship should be clearly defined. Formal mentorship in view of evaluative purposes for promotion and career development should be differentiated from an informal mentorship for personal improvement. Both play very different roles towards the educator's overall development.

It's been difficult to really get time to work with my formal mentee. I am working with four to five other faculty informally and it is so much easier! Firstly, the other relationships evolved organically. Secondly I don't feel so responsible for the mentee's teaching scores (and why should I be held accountable?). Thirdly, in my desire to make this work, I probably think about it too much. Fourthly, I'm not sure my mentee really wants this - I think it is a matter of checking a box. Fifthly, I think the mentee needs time to adjust to the habitus of NUS and Singapore. Sixthly, as a teaching track staff mentoring a tenure track one, our priorities are different. Finally, as we don't work in the same department there are subtle cultural differences (e.g. the amount of support given the students) that make this challenging Cross-department mentoring is workable - I think it is better in fact. I just think an earlier discussion recognising differences would have helped.

The best mentorship I have experienced are characterized by
1. A very light touch -- non-interventionist and non-invasive
2. One that does not presume to teach
3. An insider-outsider: able to value the mentee's subjectivity while relating it to external factors
4.   A good listener

It is quite specific and individual. I do not want to set it as very formal or rigid. Motivated mentors and mentees will work out a way of this mentorship.

The credibility of the mentor matters a lot. Seniority in the university should not be the sole bases for the selection of mentors. There are some of us who may be new to the university, but have had considerable experience in higher education institutions.

I think this is a great idea. I strongly feel that the selection for mentors should not only be confined to those who are recognized in teaching awards, as these awards are not always reflective of real teaching excellence. The faculty/university should look into what each individual faculty defines as teaching excellence and appoint people accordingly so that the newer generation of "teachers" are guided towards greater peaks

This works very well in Residential College setting, I'm not sure it would work as well in the typical NUS Department where teaching may not be so highly valued.

Mentoring should be done by those who teach in the same way as the mentee. For example many people still use lectures as their main teaching method, in which case the mentor should be someone who is good at giving lectures. If the mentee wants to use cases, the mentor should be someone who has used teaching cases. Incidentally, if the University just allocated more funds for us to take courses (Stanford offers a course on design thinking) Harvard offers courses on case teaching, there would be less of a need to devote internal resources (CDLT courses are not always relevant and they are not taught by people who teach themselves & they are offered at the wrong time - at the beginning of the term everyone is busy). Having a mentor is mandatory for new faculty at Harvard Business School.

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