

## **RESEARCH MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR NEW(ER) FACULTY**

### **Guidelines/Suggestions to Assist in the Establishment and Maintenance of Personalized Research Mentorship Teams (PRMTs) for New Faculty (2014)**

#### **Background Materials/Information for starting a PRMT for New Faculty:**

1. Short and Longer Term Goals of Personalized Research Mentorship Teams for New Faculty
2. Guidelines in Establishing Research Mentorship Teams for New Faculty Hired
3. Suggested Role of the New Faculty Member (Mentee) in (A) establishing the Mentorship Team and (B) once PRMT has been formed
4. Suggested Role of the Research Mentors in Established Research Mentorship Teams
5. Suggested Role of the College Administrative Head (i.e. Department Head and/or College Associate Dean Research, or Vice Dean) of New Faculty Member (Mentee) in establishing and managing the PRMTs.
6. Questions/Concerns Often or Potentially Raised by new faculty during Mentoring Sessions
7. Importance of Research Mentorship Team Initially Knowing Specific Background Strengths/Weaknesses of Mentee
8. Annual Review of efficacy of PRMT for each new mentee by each member of the PRMT

#### **Short and Long Term Goals of Personalized Research Mentorship Teams (PRMTs) for New Faculty**

Overall, the PRMTs at the University of Saskatchewan are a customized research team support system to help plan and subsequently help implement the research vision and plan of the new mentee for the next five years. The team approach is to give constructive advice so that the new member has every opportunity to be as successful as possible in reaching their research goals.

The PRMTs will assist with the short term goals by helping in the planning and implementation of the 5 year research vision/plan of new mentee via:

- a) Providing research culture/expectations/workload for new mentee; this could include a full understanding of Departmental/College/University promotion and tenure guidelines and timelines of teaching, research and administrative service for career advancement.

- b) Information regarding instructional assistance via Gwenna Moss Teaching & Learning Centre and, in particular, Research Services' research assistance that is available for assisting the research program of the new mentee. This research assistance could include information regarding Tri-agency internal review system for grants being submitted to CIHR,SSHRC and NSERC competitions, College research facilitators to assist with local networking and grant submissions, Research Mentorship workshops twice a year for new mentees, Canadian Foundation of Innovation program for new equipment, other?
- c) Knowing current specific research strengths and weaknesses of new mentee by full understanding of background research career development/ training/ interests/ productivity/ aspirations/ work-life balance of new candidate
- d) Establishing local, national and/or internationally - appropriate research experts for potential future research interaction by new mentee.
- e) Answering specific research questions of the new mentee

**The longer term goals of the Research Mentorship Program for New Faculty include:**

- a) A successful, productive, sustained research program for mentee
- b) Retention of a successful new faculty member to our University
- c) Willingness of mentee to mentor future mentees coming to our University
- d) Becoming a willing and active University/community citizen

**Suggested Ideas/Guidelines in Establishing Research Mentorship Team for New Faculty Hired**

It is being asked that a PRMT be established for each new tenure track (TT) hire at the University of Saskatchewan at the time of hire. Please remember that the PRMT is to be supportive to the new candidate in help developing and potentially implementing their research program; it is not to be punitive in any way. It is asked that the Department Head (DH) and/or Associate Dean of Research (ADR), or Vice Dean of the College work with the new hire in forming the PRMT, and subsequently be a member of the team. It is suggested that a research mentorship team consist of 3-4 members. Ideally, with time, discussion and establishment of the PRMT members can be started before the mentee starts their new TT position at the University of Saskatchewan. In forming the PRMT, the DH/ADR can discuss the objectives of the University RMP with the new faculty member before they arrive at the University, get an initial understanding of what the candidate has done and wants to do for their first 5 years of research, perceived research strengths and weaknesses of the candidate, form an

understanding of the current research networks of the mentee and potential future research “experts” (local, national or international) that they would like to be asked to be part of their PRMT to assist them with their research plan once they arrive at the University of Saskatchewan. The DH/ADR will probably need to be involved in asking local and outside research experts to become part of the PRMT for the mentee. The OVPR and Provost’s Office can work with respective Departments in assisting with finding appropriate research experts for the PRMT.

Once the mentee has arrived, the DH/ADR is asked to be part of the PRMT for the new candidate and arrange for the PRMT to meet at least twice a year for the mentee (more often if needed) and chair the meetings. Minutes could be taken in the meeting, mostly to ensure that any action items, timelines, concerns are known for the next meeting. The PRMT could also include a College/ University research facilitator to assist with arranging the meetings and/or logistics and implementation of the research plan. It is suggested that the PRMT meetings continue until tenure has been achieved, and hopefully afterwards, if needed or wanted. If research mentors need to be added, or substituted, this can be discussed between the mentee and the DH/ADR, and if deemed appropriate, new research mentors added or substituted to the team, with no apologies needed to a research mentor that is no longer required as part of the PRMT.

**Suggested Role of the New Faculty Member (Mentee) in establishing the Mentorship Team and once PRMT has been formed.**

The new candidate (mentee) should work with DH, ADR, Vice Dean of College, as appropriate, that hired them to discuss and, in time, finalize research mentors for their PRMT when they arrive at the University. This process can occur before they begin their faculty position at the University of Saskatchewan, if time allows. They can relate top global, national, local research experts in their field of study to DH/ADR and who of that list of research experts might be approached as being part of their PRMT. The mentee can start on a draft of their 5 year research vision/plan before they start their faculty position at the University of Saskatchewan, if time permits. If time does not permit a written draft of a 5 year research plan to be started before their position begins at the University of Saskatchewan, the mentee hopefully can have verbal discussions with DH/ADR of their thoughts about their future 5 year research vision/plan before they begin their new position.

With the PRMT in place, the mentee should ensure they have a draft 5 year research vision/plan done and submitted to the team for discussion at the first PRMT meeting, with potential priorities and timelines of their research plan. This is suggested to save time at the first meeting as the research mentors will be aware of your research vision/plan and ready to help you. It is also suggested at first PRMT meeting, that you provide a brief background of your

research training, and research interests going forward, and your perceived research strengths and challenges in reaching your research plan.

At each PRMT meetings, you will need to be patient and optimistic as some questions from research mentors may require your time, clarification and substantiation as research mentors begin to understand the direction, novelty and significance of your research plan and how they can best assist you in reaching your goals. It is suggested above that summary notes/action items be taken at the meeting by Chair, or designate, but the mentee may wish to keep detailed notes of those constructive recommendations made by research mentors that you deem important to pursue in going forward with your research plan.

### **Suggested Role of the Research Mentors in an established Research Mentorship Team**

First, ensure meetings set by Chair are times available to you. At the first meeting, try to understand the research culture/expectations of the Department, College, University that mentee is hired into, as outlined by Chair of meeting (DH/ADR/Vice Dean of College) so that your recommendations fit the research context of the Department and University. Please provide constructive comments of research vision/plan, as written or voiced by mentee (e.g. novelty, significance, feasibility, ethics, methodology, timelines, etc.). Provide, if applicable, other expert research connections, besides your own, that might help the mentee or their research plan. Forming research networks is extremely valuable for mentees to start/accelerate their research program and is an extremely important feature of the PRMT concept. If the question is raised, please provide your expert opinion as to the degree of readiness that the mentee displays toward pursuing external grant support (i.e. being ready now to submit vs. taking time to build CV). Also, please provide potential conferences/workshops that the mentee might wish to attend, as these events are important venues to build research networks and communicate research findings to appropriate audience for the mentee to build research momentum.

### **Suggested Role of the College Administrative Head (i.e. Department Head and/or College Associate Dean Research, or Vice Dean of College) of New Faculty Member (Mentee) in establishing and managing the Research Mentorship Team.**

There are several suggestions towards forming a PRMT that can be easily done before new candidate arrives at our University, if time allows. The mentee can be asked of names of global, national, local research experts in their field of study that might be approached in the future to be part of their PRMT with their new position at the University of Saskatchewan. Review and finalize a potential list of research mentors with the mentee for their PRMT, if time allows. It is deemed important for the DH/ADR to try to gain a good understanding of mentee's research training, background, potential research strengths and weaknesses, so as to inform the rest of

the PRMT members at the first meeting. Again, it does not harm to ask the new candidate before they arrive, if they have time, to begin a draft of their 5 year research vision/plan that they wish to embark upon when they begin their position at the University of Saskatchewan. Beginning to contact potential research mentors for their willingness to be part of PRMT for new mentee can be started at anytime. In an ideal situation, the PRMT could be finalized before new starts new position at the University of Saskatchewan.

Once the mentee arrives at the University of Saskatchewan, we ask you, or with secretarial or research facilitator assistance to start to arrange twice a year PRMT meetings. You may also wish to introduce the mentee to the College/University research facilitator and determine if the research facilitator is to be part of the PRMT meetings. We feel it is best that the DH/ADR chair the PRMT meetings; and, if needed, take summary minutes at each meeting to ensure memory of important concerns, directions, or action items for the next meeting. It is also suggested at the first meeting that the Chair gives a brief background of research (and other academic) expectations/culture of Department/College/University to assist all team members, but especially helpful for external research mentors of the PRMT. You may wish to ask the mentee to give a brief summary of 5 year research vision/plan. Ensure a positive atmosphere throughout the meeting and that the PRMT members provide constructive comments of 5 year plan provided by the mentee. You could distribute brief summary minutes of the PRMT meeting to all members after the meeting.

**Questions/Concerns Often or Potentially Raised in Mentoring Sessions by Mentees:**

- a) Clarification of academic expectations and workload?
- b) What Departmental/College/University committees does/should the mentee join when they start?
- c) What University resources are available to assist with teaching?
- d) What University resources are available to assist with writing? With grant submissions? With team grant submissions? With equipment grant submissions?
- e) How do I recruit graduate, undergraduate, post-doctorate students?
- f) Does the University have a pool of research technicians?
- g) Strategies for balancing academic and home life? How should they set academic priorities and timelines?
- h) Suggestions of potential organizations/conferences to attend?

### **Importance of Research Mentorship Team Initially Knowing Specific Background Strengths/Weaknesses of Mentee**

To provide the best, specific assistance to the mentee, members of the PRMT need to know the research background training and interests of the mentee, information that would allow mentors to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the mentee. Having a copy of the mentee's CV and a draft of their 5 year research vision/plan sent to research mentors before the first PRMT meeting would be ideal to help mentors coordinate their research comments to best fit the research context of the mentee. As well, knowing the background of the mentee ahead of the first PRMT meeting will expedite the review of the research plan by the research mentors, and should allow mentors to provide greater specificity in reviewing their research plan. Alternatively, time could be taken at the first PRMT meeting for the mentee to provide a brief background of their research interests and prior academic training.

### **Annual Review of all Members of the Personalized Research Mentorship Team of New Mentee**

It is asked that the Chair of the PRMT make all members of the team aware of the new Research Mentorship Program (RMP) for new Faculty at the University of Saskatchewan. In particular, they need to make all members of the PRMT aware that the PRMT are being evaluated annually for its efficacy not only to the mentee but also to the research mentors and research administrators. In addition, the RMP for new faculty seeks annual input from all PRMT members of ways to improve the process and efficacy of the PRMTs as well as the whole research mentorship program.