# Notes from a discussion at department chairs’ training workshop

# “Department Chair as Faculty Mentor” on May 23, 2017

Team suggestions with other participants’ comments/reactions on how to mentor a senior faculty member Wex who has become disengaged and isolated from the Department.

# Team A

* Praise, praise, praise!
	+ “Yes, he needs some encouragement.”
	+ “Needs to be genuine – do you know where he is ‘today’”
* Would he like to mentor junior faculty?
	+ “Good way to reinvigorate teaching. Try new methods jointly with a new faculty member?”
	+ “He may not think he is capable/well suited for this.”
* Would he like to mentor first-year students or student organizations?
	+ “Love this idea! Would he need support initially?”
	+ “Desensitize about generational differences.”
* Who do you want to be? What do you want to be?
	+ “Identifying goals is important.”
	+ “Yes, back to mentoring conversation.”
* Administrative tasks to test out administrative roles?
* Send to dean’s level. Mentor to think about higher ed. administration?
	+ “Why does he want to go to administration?”
	+ “What does the department lose if he does go?”
	+ “Is it just an ‘out’ or is he really interested?”
* Exposure to new technology
	+ “What if he resists?”
	+ “How? What if he doesn’t want to?”
* Ask what he enjoys about current position
	+ “Teaching? Scholarship? Good to engage him more with his likes.”
	+ “And what he doesn’t enjoy/ frustrates him?”
* Explore opportunities that fit what he enjoys
* Identify his strengths and brainstorm ways to utilize them within the department
* Create mentoring roles that match strengths
	+ Or that “strengthen weaknesses”
	+ “2-way mentoring”
	+ “Deans’ level mentor”
* Explore his interest in learning new strategies/technology and help search for internal/external professional development
	+ “Goals are important. Professional development is important.”
* Ask about any collegial relationships he may still have
	+ “Or that could be developed – new collaborations?”
	+ “I like this one.”
	+ “Professional as well as within college.”
* Sabbatical to enliven research
	+ “Good idea.”
* Reorient from focusing on internal institutional factors to reengaging with research field to enliven and distract
	+ “Do sabbaticals sometimes lead to further disconnections?”

# Team B

* How are you doing? (Nonjudgmental invitation to talk)
* “Wex, I’ve noticed you are less excited about your work. Want to talk?”
	+ “What if he says no?”
* What do you want to leave as your legacy?
* “I’m meeting with each of the faculty to see what they need.”
	+ “This is a better way to phrase it than above!”
* Consider: attending conference to address new teaching approaches
	+ “Where will funding come from? Will you make this a priority?”
* Mentoring to reconnect with students
* Independent research/research course with a few highly motivated students
	+ “Good idea – looking for a positive spin?”
* Teach more advanced courses
	+ “Explore interests related to the field – topics course? Advanced course?”
	+ “Any suggestions to motivate him to do this?”
* Team or collaborative teaching
	+ “With whom? He seems to be feeling isolated and intimidated – outside department?”
	+ “Collaborative teaching is a great idea.”
* Reinvigorate research with summer in research field
* Apply for sabbatical
	+ “Sabbaticals can sometimes further isolation?”
* Study abroad – ask questions, listen, facilitate

# Team C

* Help him articulate his goals
* Arrange informal, targeted professional development
	+ “Encourage him to connect his life’s passions to teaching and scholarship because now he has the most freedom.”
* Motivational interviewing – what is important and why?
* Make connections/ find ways to work together
	+ “Good idea, can you provide more operational options on how to go about this?”
* Set up space to discuss issues as a department (formal) and with other mid-career faculty (informal)
* What is possibly appealing about an administrative role to him?
* Find resources to support professional development travel – make the case for senior faculty
* Engage him as a mentor – he has skills that are needed in the department by others
* Culture of development activities/culture of mentoring
	+ “What would this be?”