



NATA Foundation Faculty Mentor Program

What is mentoring?

- A shared professional experience forged between two individuals, one with more experiences (mentor) than the other (mentee), in which the more experienced individual helps the novice learn to navigate the world and the world of work.

What is the purpose of the NATA Foundation Faculty Mentor Program?

- To support and facilitate the transition of new athletic training faculty member into the faculty culture as they navigate their development as a new faculty member in higher education.
- To provide a supportive external environment for the athletic training faculty member as they develop as a teacher, researcher, and professional while seeking tenure and promotion.

Overview

The NATA Foundation Faculty Mentor Program pairs junior faculty members with established faculty who will provide guidance, advice and assistance in navigating the first several years of employment within higher education.

The goal is to form a lasting relationship to help the mentee build a solid knowledge base and acquire an understanding of the balance necessary to becoming a successful researcher and educator. Direction of the relationship and areas of focus will be built upon the mutual interests and goals of the pairings. Each mentor and mentee will work together to set expectations for the relationship. Potential ways a mentor can assist his/her mentee include:

- Advice (phone calls/email)
- Counsel regarding promotion and tenure processes (suggestions on compiling the portfolio)
- Grant review or assistance (confidential review)
- Manuscript review or assistance (confidential review)
- Technical assistance
- Hosting the young investigator at his/her facility
- Research or other Fellowship
- Active collaboration on a project or grant (co-investigator)

Mentor Prerequisites

- Completed doctoral training
- Currently working as a faculty member in higher education
- Minimum of 6 years experience as a faculty member
- An academic rank of associate professor or higher
- Active scholarship and research agenda
- Current NATA member and BOC-certified athletic trainer in good standing

Mentor Expectations

1. Commitment to mentee through communication and collaboration.
2. Keep an open mind.
3. Provide mentee with knowledge and information on aspect that can help them grow professionally. Pre-tenured faculty may desire support in one or more of the following areas:

- a. Help them establish a research plan that includes timeframe, realistic projects and goals, and information on grant agencies/opportunities. Many previous mentor program participants believe collaboration on a project or paper lead to the success of their mentoring relationship.
 - b. Provide feedback on and strategies for effective teaching, including assistance with digesting teaching evaluations and strategies for ongoing development.
 - c. Act as a resource for questions they may have related to administration (e.g. program director or clinical education coordinator duties) and service obligations, if applicable. Mentees may appreciate you expanding their professional network and connecting them to potential professional service opportunities.
 - d. Provide support and advice for work-life balance and finding a balance of work roles and responsibilities.
4. Listen to your mentee.
 5. Discuss expectations with mentee.
 - a. Your expectations of the relationship and mentor experience.
 - b. Their expectations of the relationship and mentor experience.
 6. Establish specific goals with mentee that can be realistic, measurable, and attainable.
 7. Maintain consistency with communication with mentee, as established in initial meeting.
 8. Make time to invest in, as well as reflect and improve the mentor relationship.

Mentee Prerequisites

- Completed doctoral training
- Currently working as a faculty member in higher education
- Less than 6 years of experience as a faculty member
- An academic rank no higher than assistant professor
- Active scholarship and research agenda
- Current NATA member and BOC-certified athletic trainer in good standing

Mentee Expectations

1. Commit to mentor experience by asking questions and reaching out to mentor.
 - a. Demonstrate initiative and professionalism.
2. Communicate to your mentor what you are hoping to get out of the mentoring relationship. In what areas of your roles and responsibilities are you seeking support?
3. Share and review your professional goals and aspirations.
 - a. Include a research plan and ideas.
4. Discuss expectations with mentor.
 - a. Your expectations of the relationship and mentor experience.
 - b. Their expectations of the relationship and mentor experience.
5. Establish specific goals with mentor that can be realistic, measurable, and attainable.
6. Maintain consistency with communication with mentor, as established in initial meeting.
7. Make time for the mentoring process.
8. Make time to review mentor relationship in regards to achievements and working toward goals and objectives established.

Mentor Program Networking Event

The Faculty Mentor Program begins each year at the NATA convention with a presentation and networking event designed to offer participants a chance to learn more about the program, network, and hear a presentation from a top athletic training researcher.

Program: 30 minute presentation on what to expect as a faculty member, including strategies for balancing the demands of research with work, family and other obligations
10 minute informational talk about the Mentor Program
20 minute networking session to allow mentors and mentees to meet in-person and establish goals

Mentor Timeline

1. Mentor pairings in late April/early May.
2. Attend Foundation Mentor event at the NATA Convention for face to face meeting with mentor/mentee
3. Establish timeline with mentor/mentee for planned, frequent communication that meets the needs and expectations of each pair.
4. Consider scheduling a meeting every 2-3 months where you check in to discuss your progress, goals, and plan of action for the following 3 months. Allow this to be an open conversation where each individual can reflect upon how the mentoring relationship is going thus far and what each individual's goals are. Suggested discussion points include:
 - a. Discuss your overall level of satisfaction with your mentoring relationship at this stage. What characteristics do you value in your mentor/mentee?
 - b. Discuss your interactions with your mentor/mentee since you began the program. How frequently and in what way do you interact? Discuss what is going well and what areas may need to be improved.
 - c. Discuss where you are at in the process of meeting your goals of the mentor relationship. What road-blocks have you faced and how have you/do you plan to overcome them?
5. Mentor program participants are invited back to the Mentor Luncheon at the conclusion of their first year of participation to meet with their mentor and network with other participants.

HOW TO APPLY

Those interested in participating in the program should complete and submit an application, **along with a current CV** to Kathryn LaLonde at fndnstaff@nata.org by **March 15**. Applicants will be notified of their selection and pair by late April/early May.

Questions: Please contact the program Co-Chairs:

Dr. Stephanie M. Singe at stephanie.m.singe@uconn.edu

Stephanie currently is an associate professor in Athletic Training at the University of Connecticut, in the department of Kinesiology. Her research interests are focused in work-life balance practices, mentoring, faculty development, and role transition. Dr. Singe serves on several national committees, including the student writing and fellows committees.