Faculty Development, Annual Reviews and Mentorship in BSD
BSD Faculty Advisory Committee

In response to a request from Dean Polonsky for advice regarding mentorship and annual reviews, the FAC convened a sub-committee who talked with a variety of institutional leaders with interests in this area, sought input from COROAP members, and reviewed relevant activities at peer institutions, resulting in the following observations and recommendations.

Effective mentorship and sound career advising increase the likelihood of success in academic medicine and biological sciences, and are associated with increased work satisfaction and retention among faculty.

Faculty have a right to expect, and it is our institutional obligation to assure and provide:

- Orientation to the academic environment and resources at UC
- Clear articulation of expectations for how faculty advance academically
- Regular performance reviews, with goal setting and assessment of academic progress
- Support for development of key skill sets
- Mentorship to assist in progress throughout various stages of career development

Survey of faculty development practices at peer institutions suggests models that could potentially strengthen BSD faculty recruitment, retention, and academic progress. See examples at https://www.aamc.org/download/53332/data/mentoringprograms10.pdf

Sound mentorship and faculty development are a priority of the BSD, and the Dean’s office will work with departments and sections to implement and assure this is accomplished. The FAC Mentorship subcommittee will continue to review models and recommend specific strategies for mentorship and faculty development.

Annual Reviews:
A robust Annual Review process should take place for faculty throughout BSD. It is the responsibility of the Chair or Section Chief, or his/her designee (e.g. Vice Chair), to facilitate and document annual meetings with faculty. In general, a faculty member should prepare a self-assessment of activities, accomplishments, academic progress and goals. BSD e-forms or shorter formats (examples attached) may be used to guide for this process. The faculty member should then meet with the Chair, Chief or designee to discuss assessment and academic planning. Documentation of this discussion and recommendations should be filed and made available to the faculty member and the
Chair. The annual review process should be viewed as a formative rather than summative activity, in that faculty initiate the process by self-assessing, chairs or chiefs contribute their assessment, and plans and goals are agreed upon to guide the faculty member’s next steps in the process of academic advancement and contributions to our common missions. In contrast, documentation for the ‘up or out’ decision on RS/CS tracks would be an example of a summative assessment of accomplishments to that point.

A robust Annual Review process leads to clarity for faculty and a common understanding with the Chair regarding performance, academic progress and expectations. While units may choose to exercise discretion and flexibility in the review process with more senior faculty (with respect to format, timing, etc.), all faculty can benefit from the opportunity for intentional reflection, assessment and planning, and communication with departmental leadership around these issues.

**Mentorship:**
The Annual Review process does not equate with mentorship. Mentorship refers to an ongoing relationship which classically encompasses both psycho-social support and academic advising and assistance. The Annual Review should include assessment of mentorship – is adequate mentorship in place? Does the faculty member need assistance in identifying potential mentors?

Ideally, primary mentorship should not be provided by the Chair or the Section Chief, who is also responsible for productivity, budgeting, and other departmental interests; junior faculty may be more comfortable exploring issues with someone who is not their direct supervisor. Mentorship plans should be addressed explicitly when a new faculty member is recruited, and reviewed regularly through the Annual Review process.

Approaches to mentorship will naturally vary across the BSD given differences in size, character and focus of various departments and units. Smaller units with few senior faculty may help junior faculty find mentors outside their own unit as needed; group mentoring, peer mentoring, and distance mentoring can supplement traditional one-to-one mentoring relationships. Mentors need guidance and a robust understanding of current institutional policies for academic advancement, so as to advise mentees effectively. COROAP and COAP members can serve as a good resource in this respect. Mentoring needs to be adequately supported, valued and rewarded within our departments and throughout BSD.

**Faculty Development:**
Faculty development workshops and programs should complement career development mentoring by helping faculty develop skill sets needed for their area of work. These may occur at either the department or BSD level, depending upon the topic focus and participant ‘critical mass.’ Key topics may include grant-writing, teaching skills, running a lab, developing leadership & management skills, etc. Such opportunities may naturally arise through special interest groups that cross departmental lines, such as strengthening curricular and management skill sets for residency program directors, or through the BSD
Committees. Certain populations may benefit from dedicated structures or programs, e.g. women faculty.

Effective faculty development requires adequate support and resource allocation at the BSD and departmental levels, including leadership, staff time, budgeting, and ‘release time’ for participants.

**Proposed Action Plan:**

The Faculty Advisory Committee finalizes and forwards this recommendation to Dean Polonsky, who may accept the plan or may suggest further modifications. The final set of recommendations will be shared and implemented as follows:

At meetings of Basic and Clinical Chairs or a joint meeting, the Dean should seek Division-wide endorsement of the Annual Review and Mentorship plan. In addition to implementing the recommended Annual Review process, a next logical step could be to request further assessment at the departmental level regarding current processes and strategic planning for academic reviews, mentorship, and career development, e.g.:

1. What are departments currently providing?
2. What is needed and could be provided within the department, and a plan for implementation.
3. What is needed and should be provided within the department, but is not due to limitations of time and/or resources?
4. What is needed but would be better provided by the Division (e.g., information sessions on requirements for promotion)?
5. Mentors need to be adequately supported, valued and rewarded within our departments and throughout BSD. At both departmental and BSD level we need to identify effective ways to develop, support and reward mentoring if these currently exist and work to enhance and extend them, or create them if they do not.
6. Other suggestions regarding mentorship and faculty development.

Results of such assessment should be shared back at FAC within the coming year to guide further planning.