



Faculty-Mentor Roles in Online Learning at FSU

This matrix suggests a distribution of responsibilities among the lead faculty and mentors offering an online course. Not all of the functions identified are required for every course, but experience has shown that clarifying respective tasks and the instructor/mentor relationship before the course commences will improve course management and increase student confidence.

Note: The "Other" boxes provide the opportunity for lead faculty to add unique tasks for a particular course.

TOOLS	INSTRUCTORS USUALLY. . .	MENTORS THEN. . .
Section 1 — Completing Course Materials		
<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide mentors to additional resources for key content. • Identify instructor and mentor tasks; explain mentor role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research to gain additional familiarity with course content. • Review mentor tasks.
<i>Course Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss student-learning objectives with mentors. • Add mentors to course website as Teaching Assistants. • Have desk copies of texts sent to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study course materials.
<i>Syllabus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain course objectives to mentors. • Brief mentors on critical dates in course schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become able to interpret course objectives to students. • Review course schedule and create plan for sending reminders or prompts to students prior to key due dates.
<i>Other</i>		



Section 2 — Initiating and Maintaining Contact with Students		
<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe expected mentor contact with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review Mentor Notes on initiating and maintaining contact with students.
<i>Staff Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss instructor availability with mentors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set mentor virtual office hours.Post contact information.Introduction and brief welcome to the students.
<i>Announcements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alert mentors to upcoming announcements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review all announcements and clarify or explain to students as needed.
<i>Email</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduce mentors to students;Explain mentor role in course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Initiate introductions and a personal welcome to students, explaining further the mentor role in working with students.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify emails to be sent by mentors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Send scheduled emails as assigned.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Share with mentors guidelines about "signposts" that may signal student difficulties, with attention to major milestones that students must accomplish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sense and respond to students' indication of distress or lagging performance, i.e., notice when they fall behind or seem to have too much difficulty, drops in participation or grades, late assignments, requests for help.
<i>Other</i>		



Section 3 — Responding in a Timely Manner

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<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward guidelines on how and when to respond to various amounts and types of student participation and communication, including off-task or wrong content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check and respond to encourage appropriate quantity and quality of student participation and communication, including refocusing learning tasks or correcting off-task or wrong content.
<i>Email, Tabs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief mentors on correct resources for helping students to address their technology problems in a timely manner. Refer mentors and students promptly to technology support as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review resources and refer students promptly for assistance with their technology problems. Look for patterns of technology difficulties and communicate concerns to the instructor.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw attention to critical deadlines for which students may need reminders with emails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students as needed of their important deadlines.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check and respond to student emails within 48 hours or delegate timely response tasks to the mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check and respond to student questions and emails within 48 hours. If uncertain about how or when to respond, check with instructor.
<i>Discussion Board</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide mentors in when to provide "corrective feedback" and "informative feedback" to students. Provide criteria for good postings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise restraint and timely guidance as needed in order to give students the opportunity to discuss issues with one another first. Exercise sensitivity to the instructor guidance and the learning process in determining when to post "corrective feedback" and "informative feedback."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs mentors of discussion objectives for the unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post any brief summaries as scheduled. Follow instructor guidance on when to post other information and when to provide encouragement and feedback.
<i>Other</i>		



Section 4 — Facilitating Electronic Learning and Discussion Groups

<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain expected quantity and quality of content to be covered by students for different activities and assignments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review criteria for expected quantity and quality of content. Seek clarification as needed in order to understand the expectations.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If needed, organize class into groups of 2-7 with numbers or names to identify each group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review group names and structure.
<i>Course Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward roles for group members, e.g., "Leader," "Recorder," "Encourager," or others to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review roles established for group members.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward expectations for participation in group activities and assignments to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review expectations set for group activities and assignments.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward requirements for participation in small group and class discussions to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review requirements for group and class participation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward protocols for addressing major problems. Include protocols on what kinds of issues must be referred to the instructor and those that can be addressed by mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review protocols and seek clarification to understand expectations.
<i>Email</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct mentors to use personal email exchanges, not discussion or whole-class distribution, to deal with individual matters privately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use personal email exchanges, not discussion or whole-class distribution, to deal with individual matters privately. Consult with the instructor if in doubt about how to deal with students' personal matters.
<i>Groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign students to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review students assigned and their homepages or other introductory information.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct mentor to create small groups for activities and assignments, as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check participation in small groups. Check for coverage of expected quantity and quality of content. Give feedback and guidance according to the instructor guidelines.
<i>Discussion Boards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief mentors on organization of discussion boards with forums and starter threads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and clarify organization as needed to structure the discussions. Post selected questions for discussions, as needed.
<i>Other</i>		



Section 5 — Attending to Student Progress, Grading Assignments, and Reporting Grades

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<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest organizational methods for mentors to use in keeping records and folders on course and student activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and plan method for setting up records and folders.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief mentors on grading criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review grading criteria and seek clarification as needed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign grading tasks to mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review directions for assisting or completely calculating final grades.
<i>Course Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign mentors their roles in administering/posting tests and/or quizzes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review role in administering or posting tests, assessments.
<i>Email/Discussion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance to mentors on flexibility v. precision expected in applying criteria to the grading process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain grading criteria as needed to students. Give appropriate feedback to students. Monitor students' grades for signs of problems. Provide encouragement and suggestions on how to study or improve.
<i>Email</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest organizational methods for mentors to use in keeping records and folders of communication related to grading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep electronic records/folders of all communication with students (email contacts and discussion boards).
<i>Online Gradebook</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert mentors to unacceptable variances in grading procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow criteria in grading student work. Make class gradebook entries.
<i>Assignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set procedures for mentors to collect student work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect student work. Check on receipt and return of assignments.
<i>Other</i>		



Section 6 — Communicating with Faculty		
<i>Mentor Notes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review ODL evaluation form with mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review ODL evaluation form.
<i>Email</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use Faculty Handbook to establish model practices in faculty/mentor communications;Discuss with mentors and add additional course-specific practices, as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Refer to Faculty Handbook for model practices in faculty/mentor communications, as well as any additional course-specific practices, as specified by faculty member.
<i>Face-to-face, Phone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brief mentor on kinds of typical emails to be answered by faculty member and mentor, respectively.Respond or forward to mentors emails from students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Respond to emails from students and faculty.Forward to faculty as appropriate.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explain mentor evaluation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Seek clarification as needed.
<i>Other</i>		