

It's about asking the right questions, learning to pronounce your new colleagues' names and sharin Rockquemore.

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By Kerry Ann Rockquemore

We've come a long way in this series on how to mentor new faculty members. I kicked off by s start, (https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/07/15/essay-starting-mentoring-relamodel of mentoring, (https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/07/22/essay-calling-seniormentoring) and last week we covered how to reposition yourself as a coach instead of a guru. (https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/07/29/essay-coaching-style-mentoring) As imposition a positive mentoring relationship, I want to put all of it in a larger context.

Having worked with many faculty transitioning from graduate student to professor, it feels clear the wide variety of needs

(https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/mentoring/debut of new column on mentoring in hig important, there's a hierarchy to those needs. In other words, upon arrival on a new campus, new with their most basic needs: Where will I live? Where do I shop for food? How soon will my moving Good, bad or ugly, the relocation stage will pass, new faculty will get settled in, faculty orientation will be written, initial mentor meetings will take place, classes will start, and the first year will get and that's when many mentors make the mistake of shifting into "hands off," "leave the new persc (https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/mentoring/essay on the problems with the sink or sy

I want to suggest that mentors take the opposite approach. First and foremost, the first semester faculty because once they get settled in, that's precisely the time that all kinds of new needs (inforwill surface. But, even more important, the first term is exactly when the new person will be seeking acceptance, and a place within the department. In other words, it's a time when a critically important emerges: the need for belonging.

So how can a mentor cultivate a new faculty member's sense of belonging, encourage their ongoir department, and socialize the new person into the culture and practices of the campus? To answer source by asking a group of tenure-track faculty: What makes you feel a sense of belonging in you suggestions (from simple to complex) straight from their feedback:

**Know how to say and spell the new person's name.** This sounds painfully obvious, but one of the heard from faculty about what makes people feel a sense of belonging in their department was to

pronounce their names. One person said: "This sounds simple, but SPELL MY NAME CORRECTLY. P colleague of four years who still doesn't address me appropriately. Ugh!!!!" Mispronouncing, miss; someone by something other than their actual name communicates a lack of respect. While it's his



questions like "How is your transition to \_\_\_\_\_ going?" "How is your partner liking the area?" "How kids/goats/chickens/cats/iguanas?" You're very likely to do this as an assigned mentor, but it's gi department to do the same.

Proactively schedule time with the new faculty member. I know everyone is busy, but it only ta "hi" when a new faculty member's door is open. It only takes 30 minutes to have coffee or take a v hours to invite someone over for dinner, it sends a message that you want to get to know your new have lunch," actually follow up to make it happen. It's the informal conversations, coffee dates, an members as an important way that colleagues made them feel welcome.

Celebrate and acknowledge achievements. During the first year, new faculty members are findir on reassurance while the new person is building confidence and finding a place in the group. It co celebrating their achievements (publishing an article, winning a grant) or as simple as acknowledg new person's contributions to the department such as statements like "I appreciated your commer admire the way you \_\_\_\_\_\_."

Tell your new colleague why you're glad they have joined the department. Given that the new hundreds of other candidates, it may feel obvious to you why you're glad they have joined the department. Saying so directly, is simple, quick and powerful. One faculty member said it bes community when scholars approached me about collaborative projects and commented about how helped fill gaps in research coverage and teaching. In other words, I felt most connected when col my presence mattered and were specific about how and why my presence mattered."

Take your new colleague seriously. Most new professors' sense of belonging is catalyzed by ser for them as a colleague (as opposed to condescension or treating them as children). This can be d asking for their opinion, incorporating their ideas, offering to read their early-stage work, or shari One faculty member summarized it by saying: "Approaching junior and new colleagues with the at something useful and necessary to the department. Not approaching their presence with the attituthere/have a job or that they are trouble-making radicals threatening to overhaul the department

Make the unspoken rules explicit. Department cultures vary dramatically on flexibility (from high (from disengaged to enmeshed). New faculty members need to know quickly whether it's "normal' socially or whether people come and go with minimal interaction. And they need to know if the gropen to new ideas or if there is rigid adherence to the way things have always been done and new challenges. One of the most powerful ways you can make a new faculty member feel welcome is to rules visible and transparent. Having this conversation before or after faculty meetings may be parterm.

I hope that as you're reading this it's becoming clear that the first semester isn't just about adjust colleagues, it's a time of adjusting to a new professional identity. Your mentee will need extra sup from graduate student (or post-doc) to professor. New faculty members make this transition most



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This week I challenge you to:

- 1) Remember how you felt during your first semester in your first tenure-track job and how easy (a new department. Try remembering specifically what types of behaviors helped you to feel welcon the space.
- 2) Review the list of behaviors that faculty shared with us as nurturing their sense of belonging an their new department and ask yourself: Which of these am I already doing and which ones will req
- 3) If you haven't set up your initial mentoring meeting with your new faculty mentee, go ahead an
- 4) Consider sharing this column with your colleagues who could use some gentle encouragement things that foster belonging in new faculty members.

I hope this week brings you a willingness to experiment and openly discuss how your department lets them know how much you value their presence and contributions.

Peace and positive mentoring,

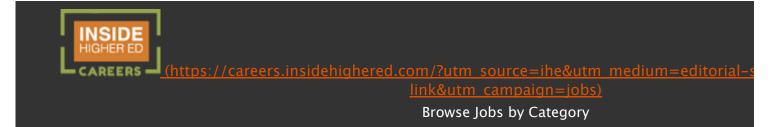
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