

Faculty Mentor Program Handbook



Palomar College
San Marcos, CA

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Faculty Mentor Program Handbook

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Program Overview

Palomar College has a strong commitment to teaching excellence and to its faculty. The Mentor Program facilitates the orientation and induction of new faculty members by teaming new faculty with experienced faculty in a non-supervisory relationship. Faculty mentors are experienced full-time faculty who have been recognized as having special knowledge or skills.

The goals of the Mentor Program are as follows:

1. To provide instructional support for new faculty,¹
2. To improve communication of curriculum guidelines,
3. To strengthen professional relationships, and
4. To provide experienced faculty the opportunity to develop their instructional support skills.

Selection of Mentors

The success of the Mentor Program depends on the selection of experienced faculty to serve as mentors for new faculty. Mentors are expected to allot sufficient time to the mentoring relationship to ensure a successful and valuable experience for the new faculty member.

The Professional Development Coordinator will send a call out to all full-time faculty, asking them to recommend colleagues to serve as mentors. Individual faculty may self-nominate to serve as a mentor. The Professional Development Coordinator will collect a list of names of recommended faculty and will contact them to learn if they are willing to serve.

¹ New faculty refers to new full-time faculty.

Mentor Program Recommendation Form

TO: Professional Development Coordinator

FROM: _____
Faculty Member/Department

DATE: _____

RE: Recommendation of Faculty for Mentor Program

The following faculty are recommended as mentors:

	Mentor Name	E-mail Address	Phone Number
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

I wish to serve as a mentor.

Mentor Program New Faculty Form

TO: Professional Development Coordinator

FROM: _____
Instruction Office

DATE: _____

RE: New Faculty for Mentor Program

	New Faculty Name	E-mail Address	Phone Number
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

Invitation Letter to Mentor Program

DATE

Dear (New Faculty Member),

Welcome to Palomar College! We are pleased to have you join us as a full-time faculty member this academic year. In order to make your first semester of teaching with us a successful experience, we have designed a special program for you.

Palomar College offers a Mentor Program for new faculty members. In this instructional developmental program, new instructors are paired with experienced instructors. The purposes of the program include the following:

1. To help you acclimate to Palomar College,
2. To discuss teaching techniques and other pertinent issues, and
3. To facilitate development of professional goals.

The program is designed for flexibility to meet your needs, schedule and interests. It is neither supervisory nor evaluative. The main goal is to make you feel a part of Palomar College.

We are excited about this program and believe it will be beneficial to you. Your mentor will contact you prior to the start of the semester. If you have not been contacted by the end of the second week, please call the Professional Development Coordinator at 760-744-1150, extension 2250.

Sincerely,

Professional Development Coordinator

Mentor Guidelines

Responsibilities

The mentor is the key to the success of the program. If at any time there are problems, questions, or a need for assistance, please contact the Professional Development Coordinator. If professional development hours will be used for these activities, please provide a summary and/or log of hours attached to your final Professional Development contract. **The following recommended list includes ideas, but it is up to the mentor's professional judgment to decide what to include and when.**

The responsibilities of the mentor may include the following:

1. Plan an initial meeting before classes begin, if possible.
2. Schedule two meetings within the first month of classes.
3. Schedule two meetings in the last two months of the semester.
4. Make classroom visits, by invitation only, of new faculty member.
5. Schedule a final meeting two weeks before the end of the semester.

The Planning Meeting

The planning meeting may be the first contact the mentor has with the new instructor. First impressions tend to be lasting; as a result, the planning meeting should be carefully organized. The primary objective will be to establish mutual agreement on the objectives of the program and establish a plan for accomplishment. The objectives that are established should reflect the following considerations:

1. The new faculty member should have a chance to become familiar with the administrative requirements of teaching at Palomar College, including:

Attendance records
Class roster
Department policies
Faculty eServices
Field trip procedures
Final grade report procedures
Instructor absence procedures

Instructor evaluations
Payroll procedures
Student Code of Conduct
Student withdrawals, incompletes
Use of course syllabus
Use of guest lecturers

2. The mentor should familiarize the new faculty member with instructional resources available through Palomar College, such as the Academic Technology Resource Center, Assessment Center, Counseling Services, Disability Resource Center, English Writing Center, Library, and Math Lab.
3. A copy of the current student evaluation of faculty should be reviewed with the new instructor, as well as evaluation procedures, such as Tenure and Evaluation procedures.
4. Professional Development policies and procedures should be reviewed with the new instructor.

In addition to setting objectives, a schedule or calendar should be agreed upon for additional meetings, reciprocal classroom visits, phone conferences, and any other mutually agreeable program elements.

Class Visits

Classroom visitations can be extremely valuable when approached in the right manner. For the record, the role of the mentor is **not** evaluative or supervisory, nor should a critique be volunteered unless it is specifically requested by the new faculty member. The primary purpose of the classroom visit is to provide the opportunity for non-directive dialogue about the teaching process. The follow-up discussion should focus upon such things as problems in following the course syllabus, answering questions, discussion of the subject matter, and strategies for teaching future topics.

Two things should be emphasized:

- Be non-authoritative in discussions.
- Be positive, supportive and constructive.

Mentor Checklist

This recommended list includes timelines and ideas, but it is up to the mentor's professional judgment to decide what to include and when.

WEEK 1

Prior to the first week of the semester:

- _____ Call the new faculty member and identify yourself and the mentor program.
- _____ Arrange a convenient time to meet with new faculty member.
- _____ At the first meeting, discuss the course to be taught, as well as Palomar College administrative and instructional policies. Describe community college students; there are many different "typical" ones.
- _____ Give the new faculty member any necessary materials, such as the Faculty Manual, the mentor's class schedule, etc.
- _____ Cover any other duties and questions which are usually covered during the New Faculty Orientation if the faculty member has missed that event.
- _____ Review the Professional Development policies and procedures as outlined in the PD Workshops and Events booklet. Review the PD contract as specified in the PFF contract.

WEEK 2

- _____ Call the new faculty member to arrange a meeting.
- _____ Discuss the first week of classes and share ideas.
- _____ Give the new faculty member contacts (other faculty) who could be of assistance.
- _____ Arrange a set meeting time for discussions. Fill out the Mentor Program Goal Setting form. If a regular meeting is not necessary, let the new faculty member know that you will keep in contact during the semester.

WEEKS 3 & 4

- _____ Continue to maintain contact with the new faculty member.
- _____ Discuss joint classroom visitation with the new faculty member and invite him/her into your classroom.
- _____ Discuss student evaluations and other forms of feedback for instruction.

WEEKS 5 – 7

- _____ Invite the new faculty member to any appropriate college activities.
- _____ Keep the new faculty member apprised of workshops that would be helpful.
- _____ Discuss instructional techniques that have worked for you.

WEEKS 8 - 11

- _____ Continue to maintain phone, personal, or written contact with the new faculty member.
- _____ Continue discussion of instructional techniques that have worked for you.

WEEKS 11 - 13

- _____ Make sure the new faculty member understands proper procedures for turning in grades at the end of the semester. Provide a walk-through of Faculty eServices.
- _____ Discuss the administration of final exams and Palomar College's scheduling system for finals. The final exam schedule is found in the class schedule booklet.

WEEKS 14 & 15

- _____ Make sure the new faculty member knows you are available for any last minute questions or assistance.
- _____ Schedule a final appointment to review the semester.

Because each mentor relationship will be unique, you may find it necessary to change specific tasks to maintain the mentor relationship.

New Faculty Guidelines

The Mentor Program is designed to assist the new faculty member in the adjustment to community college teaching and its unique policies and procedures. Ideally, the Mentor Program will help to improve instruction and enhance communication between new faculty and experienced faculty. All new faculty are encouraged to participate in the program.

A new faculty member may be defined as an instructor who has:

- Never taught for Palomar College,
- Never taught a specific course or subject area, or
- Any special circumstances that would warrant participation, as mutually agreed upon by instructor and the Professional Development Coordinator.

The mentor is chosen for his/her demonstrated experience and availability. Therefore, it is up to the mentor to be available at the new faculty member's convenience. The program is designed to be flexible and convenient for the new faculty member. During the first meeting, the mentor will determine a convenient schedule and means of communicating with the new faculty member. If either participant anticipates any problems with maintaining regular contact with the other, the Professional Development Coordinator should be contacted immediately to facilitate the proper adjustments in the mentoring process.

In no way is the Mentor Program intended to be supervisory or evaluative. The mentor relationship should be collegial, informative, and flexible.

Professional Development Coordinator Guidelines

Administrative Responsibility

The primary responsibility of the Professional Development Coordinator is to facilitate the successful matching of experienced full-time faculty with a new faculty. Therefore, it is necessary for the Professional Development Coordinator to do the following:

1. Work with full-time faculty to select mentors;
2. Maintain all administrative records for the program;
3. Serve as liaison between the Mentor Program participants;
4. Offer guidance to the mentors; and
5. Be responsible for effective communication between all mentor program participants and instructional administrators.

Recommended Procedures

1. Contact all full-time faculty for nomination of mentors prior to the start of each semester.
2. Send letters to new faculty explaining the program and its guidelines. This should be done at least one week prior to the new semester.
3. Contact the new faculty members to discuss mentor assignments.
4. Maintain the Mentor Recommendation and New Faculty Forms.
5. Troubleshoot any administrative or relationship conflicts should they occur.