

**Teaching and Mentoring Innovation Grant
Litt_Proposal_2018-19
Emeriti-Junior Faculty Mentorship Program**

I. Specific educational aims: The goal of this project is to improve the quality of mentoring of junior faculty by tapping an underutilized and highly qualified resource, Emeriti. This project will contribute to improving mentoring by pairing active faculty with Emeriti faculty who are knowledgeable about the University, experts in their fields and generally more available to provide timely and non-judgmental advice than peer-mentors. The project seeks to address the funding priority section entitled “impact and sustainability”.

II. Project rationale: Mentorship is critical to the intellectual and professional growth and psychologic support of academic faculty. The positive impact of mentorship is well-documented (1,2) yet availability of well-trained mentors is often limited by their own pressures and obligations. Their relationship may also be constrained by knowing that one’s departmental faculty mentor may one day sit in judgement of his/her mentee in matters of promotion. Many Emeriti faculty, on the other hand, absent a role and space in their respective departments, have become disenfranchised from the SOM and its faculty and students. Having retired for personal, not academic, reasons, many would enjoy closer ties, the intellectual stimulation of departmental activities and colleagues and, especially, the opportunity to mentor younger faculty. There are currently about 600 retired faculty, approximately 200 living on the Stanford campus. Among them are Nobel Prize winners, recipients of the Medal of Science, winners of Pulitzer Prizes, etc. Many still contribute to the scientific literature, consult to other universities, boards and even start companies! Making this repository of wisdom and institutional experience more available to Stanford’s active faculty and directly or indirectly, to their students and trainees would clearly enrich the educational experience of all, including the Emeriti themselves. The latter would benefit, not only from the continued stimulation of intellectual discourse, but also by learning technologic skills that would facilitate real-time communication with their mentee. The hypothesis to be tested by this project is that the quality and frequency of mentorship of junior faculty will be improved by Emeriti Mentors and that they, in turn, will benefit by such a meaningful role as well as from access to the academic Community and a sense of renewed Purpose, factors associated with improved quality of life and longevity (3). The literature (non-peer-reviewed) on Mentorship by Emeriti faculty has largely focused on non-Medical Schools settings (e.g..UC Berkeley; UCSD; UCLA) and only one medical school (4,5,6,7). The use of technology to enhance mentorship is particularly relevant here owing to possible mobility or geographic limitations of Emeriti. Web-based mentorship has been evaluated in other contexts (8). Methodology for evaluating the short and long-term efficacy and satisfaction of the mentorship dyads will be adapted from that used successfully in research on other groups (9). This project will extend the existing research/literature by critically evaluating the potential role of Emeriti of the SOM as Mentors for Junior Faculty, as well as the reciprocal beneficial effect on the Emeriti. It will also evaluate newer conferencing technology such as Zoom to augment traditional face-to-face mentorship sessions.

III. Approach: Potential subjects will be recruited differentially for the two groups. Mentors will be contacted through email and telephone, while Mentees will learn about the program at Departmental meetings and emails. Those who express interest in participation will attend an orientation meeting. Emeriti will attend Mentorship “refresher” sessions and another about use of Zoom. Junior Faculty will be randomized to Control (traditional mentorship) or Study Group (Emeriti mentorship). Dyads will be created consisting of an Emeritus Mentor and a Junior Faculty Mentee (Study Group). After meeting in person, a schedule of monthly meetings (either by Zoom or in person) will be scheduled. Every quarter, the Faculty member’s departmental advisor will be invited to join the meeting. The dyads will create a work plan focusing on topics for discussion and overall goals as well as those for each session.

IV. Timeline and plan for implementation: Subject recruitment, orientation and instructional meetings will take place in October. Initial meeting of dyads will be scheduled for November. After creating a plan and goals for each session, the monthly meetings will begin no later than December.

V. Anticipated work product: This pilot project will form the basis for establishing an ongoing program of mentorship for Junior Faculty members by Emeriti Faculty that will help advance the careers of the former and well-being of both members of the dyad. It will also serve as a model for using “distance” mentorship.

VI. Evaluation plan: There will be both short and long-term outcomes to evaluate the impact of this intervention on both members of the Mentorship dyad. The following survey instruments will be administered at the beginning and completion of the study to members of Control and Study groups: 1) Purpose-PEP (9); and 2) Satisfaction (10); and for Junior Faculty, in addition, impact on career advancement (11).

VII. Dissemination of results: Results will be disseminated through publication in relevant academic journals; Stanford Report; departmental meetings; AROHE (the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education).

Appendix

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