



*“The best part of the mentor program was being able to talk with someone who is completely impartial. The fact that they [mentor and fellow mentee] were unfamiliar with my department was the best aspect. It helped me gain perspective and learn about ‘how things are done’ at Villanova.”*  
-- Newly-Appointed Faculty, Spring 2019

### **VITAL Faculty Mentor Program: Suggestions, Recommendations**

Welcome and thank you for serving as a university-wide VITAL Faculty Mentor and investing in colleagues' socialization to our institution, the academic profession, and Villanova's Augustinian heritage! We look forward to working with you and the mentees and supporting you in this important role. The following suggestions, grounded in feedback from the past programs, are intended to offer guidelines and possible activities. Mentoring can be envisioned as a way to pass on what we know and what we have experienced and, at the same time, learn from our mentee's diverse perspectives and life experiences, i.e., we grow together in knowledge and experience, become enriched by sharing our stories.

**What is the role of a VITAL Faculty Mentor?** You offer collegial mentoring support by providing guidance, feedback, information and/or outline opportunities to colleagues to help them acculturate to our campus and their teaching role, familiarize them with the Augustinian tradition, aid their professional instructional development, and familiarize them with Villanova and its surrounding region. You serve as a sounding board, navigator of institutional culture, resource, and supportive/responsive colleague. Please consider the faculty experience at large; i.e., talk about issues that **all** faculty have in common **not** issues that are department- and/or College-specific, such as rank and tenure and/or promotion process.

You will be paired with two colleagues outside of your department to support confidential, non-evaluative interactions. Following the initial meeting during the 2024 New Faculty Program (8/19), you will meet with your mentees a minimum of two times during both fall and spring semesters, participate in fall dinner (date TBD) and spring social, and meet virtually with fellow mentors for reflection once per semester. At the beginning of the semester, you will receive two vouchers to Villanova Dining Services for you and your mentees.

#### **Suggestions / recommendations:**

- **Regular group get-togethers are key: Schedule group meeting dates/time in advance/at the beginning of the semester** as we tend to get very busy during the semester. VITAL will send you vouchers for lunch/coffee; use them to visit different dining locations on campus, explore the different cuisine that is offered (e.g., tasty food options in St. Mary's cafeteria) over conversation. Meeting as a group has been perceived as most helpful and enjoyable as participants get exposed to different experiences and perspectives and learn from each other. We advise you limit one-on-one meetings with mentees in case of ongoing schedule conflict and/or need to discuss personal issues.
- View the time to get-together as a time for all of you to **“stop”** from your busy lives, to be present to each other and to attend to each other's experiences.
- View mentoring as a **reciprocal relationship; encourage your mentees to reach out to you and each other** and to suggest dates/times/places to get together.
- Please **refrain** from sharing specific information on promotion and tenure as the process differs by department and/or College.

### ***Ideas for lending mentoring support / connecting the mentees with the university community:***

As you think back on your first year(s) at Villanova, who and/or what helped you acclimate to this institutional context, you will recall different experiences, opportunities that may not be represented on this list – please do not feel constrained by this list but rather liberated.

- Invite mentees to join you for *campus events* that you are involved in or that you like to attend, e.g., [St. Thomas of Villanova celebration](#), Special Olympics, [Faith and Learning Lunches](#), [Villanova University Mendel Medal](#), watching a student’s sport event, [Villanova theatre](#) performance.
- Go to *Faculty Fridays* together (first Friday of the month, Refectory).
- *Open your class to your mentees*, invite them to observe one of your classes and offer to observe one of their classes as a colleague and discuss your observations.
- Discuss *academic career choice*: Hopes, trepidations, successes, joys.
- The *mentor-mentee relationship is symbiotic*: You may inquire what new technologies the colleagues use in their teaching, to what extent they may use social media in communicating with her students, or how they might be thinking about the use of A.I. in their courses.
- Inform your mentees of *on-campus professional development opportunities* and invite them to join you; e.g., programs offered by [VISIBLE](#) to support inclusiveness and build leaders, programs focused on innovation and entrepreneurship at the [IDEA Lab](#), or programs offered by VITAL.
- *Connect the mentees with colleagues, offices*, as appropriate; e.g., [Writing Center](#) or [Villanova Institute for Research and Scholarship](#) (VIRS) programming/services to work on articles for publication, develop a grant proposal.
- Support your mentees in developing a *feeling of belonging* to the Villanova community. Help them uncover VU culture and values that are implicit (e.g., concept of “community”) and how, based on your experience, these implicit values may play out in student-faculty relations, committee service, university citizenship. For example, student expectations/interpretation of grades. You might lead into conversation with questions such as “What implicit expectations have we observed and/or experienced?” “How do we perceive your prior academic culture to interface with the academic culture at the department, college, university-level?” “How might we have adjusted to Villanova’s culture?”
- Share in conversation about *academic journey, identity*: What brought us to Villanova? How do we see ourselves as academics? What matters to us and why?
- Encourage mentees to form and/or continue to *build a professional relationship web with Villanova individuals/colleagues* who are invested in your success/happiness. Some questions to explore: Who is in your professional relationship web? How are they invested in your success/happiness? Who should be in your professional relationship web and why? Who could be in your professional relationship web? What opportunities may present? What are you learning about yourself from these professional relationships?
- Share your experiences regarding *living in the greater Philadelphia area*, schools, shopping, housing, arts, travel, recreation, your favorite supermarket, your favorite restaurant.

We are committed to supporting you and your mentees; please reach out, as you find helpful: [gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu](mailto:gabriele.bauer@villanova.edu) or 610-519-5628. We will reach out to you to offer the opportunity to meet virtually via Zoom for ongoing support.

A heartfelt Thank You for all you do in support of our newly appointed colleagues!

Developed by Gabriele Bauer, VITAL based on the following resources:

Nelson, M. (2019). *Report based on results from mentor/mentee surveys*, VITAL and OSPIE, Villanova University, 2019.

Bland, C., et al. (2009). *Faculty success through mentoring*. American Council on Education.

Johnson, B. (2015). *On being a mentor* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Zachary, L. (2012). *The mentor’s guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.