

**From:** Powers, Joshua

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 28, 2023 11:45 PM

**To:** ACADEMIC CHAIRS <chairpersons@wpunj.edu>

**Cc:** AcademicDeansAndAssocDeans <AcademicDeansAndAssocDeans@wpunj.edu>; Christensen, Wendy <CHRISTENSENW@wpunj.edu>; Brown, Elizabeth <BROWNE28@wpunj.edu>; Cammarata, Miki <CAMMARATAM@wpunj.edu>; Kacenga, George <kacengag@wpunj.edu>; Feingold, Deborah <FEINGOLDD@wpunj.edu>; Barrows, Mary Alice <BARROWSM@wpunj.edu>

**Subject:** Faculty as Mentor Next Steps now that it is approval by Faculty Senate

Chair Colleagues –

As I believe you know, the Faculty Senate approved the Faculty as Mentor Undergraduate Initiative at its February 28 Meeting (see attached). This is an exciting moment for the University to further enhance our distinct student success commitment. A substantial literature notes the importance of faculty-student relationships to a student in college, and for post-college success. By being collectively intentional in the design, support, and implementation of the new Faculty as Mentor model, we can further assure such impact.

Given the frequency with which I hear students and alumni comment about how a faculty member made a difference in their life in a way that transcended just what may have occurred in a classroom, I'm especially encouraged by this initiative. The creation of a specific role, faculty mentor, as part of a student's Success Team and identified as such in Navigate, will formally roll out this Fall in a phased way, starting with just sophomores for 2023-24. It will also include one representative from each department to serve as a Faculty Liaison for entering first year undergraduates with a declared major in the department. This latter person would be a resource to a new freshmen with any questions, as well as to Will Power 101 & 102 instructors.

We are excited to plan a convocation for all Success Team Members, including fall faculty mentors, faculty liaisons, professional advisors, career counselors, and financial aid counselors on the morning of May 23 (Ballroom B/C; 8:30-12noon). We have a need now for each department that enrolls undergraduates to select who will serve in a faculty mentor or liaison role in AY23-24. As an augment to what you will read about the role in the document linked document, here are a few additional points of guidance:

- The Faculty Mentor role is not intended to be highly time consuming or onerous, but one that has the potential to be very rewarding. The time matter is aided by keeping one's mentee roster modest, no more than around 30 students, with a number of departments having less.
- The Faculty Mentor position was framed by the Faculty Senate to be directly relevant and consequential to one's service portfolio, in other words, to be highly valued as a form of service contribution and as informed by how many mentees one has.
- The second attachment maps how many mentors should be identified to match the estimated number of sophomores within a department. In all cases, it is substantially fewer than all of the faculty in the department.
- You, in collaboration with the department, determine who best matches for this role. How you wish to consider that is up to you. Hence, for example, you might consider who

already has high contact with undergraduates in your department, or specific undergraduate majors, but does not have to be considered that way. Note also that additional mentors than the number indicated is also acceptable should the department wish to distribute across more persons than are indicated.

- The faculty liaison for freshmen with declared majors in the department can be the Department Chair (or in the case of departments with WP Online programs, that person that already exists), but does not have to be. Furthermore, it could be one of the faculty mentor's in the department (or the singular one where that is the case). Most departments as you will see in the attached sheet will have fewer than 30 mentees per mentor.
- WP Online Undergraduates have their own set of supports and thus are not part of a mentor's portfolio. This initiative is for main campus students.

I respectfully request that you determine your department faculty mentor(s) and your department faculty liaison **by no later than April 28**. Please enter this information through this Qualtrics site: [https://wpunj.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cN2izFo3jxnAPJA](https://wpunj.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cN2izFo3jxnAPJA)

As the planning team further develops details, including preparatory guidance and support for mentors, we will be in communication.

Many thanks for your help in facilitating this next step.

Sincerely,

Joshua Powers  
Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

*Planning Team:*

Liz Brown, Chair, Advisement Council, Faculty Senate & Director, Center for Teaching Excellence  
Miki Cammarata, Vice President, Student Development  
Wendy Christensen, Chair, Faculty Senate  
Deborah Feingold, Coordinator, Pesce Family Mentoring Institute  
Carmen Ortiz, Executive Director, Advisement Center  
Joshua Powers, Provost  
Linda Refsland, Executive Director, Academic Success Services