Annenberg School for Communication (ASC)
Faculty Mentorship Program for Untenured Standing Faculty
April 5, 2007

Consistent with University policy, ASC recognizes its responsibility to provide untenured standing faculty with access to constructive support and guidance from senior colleagues. As a small school with no separate departments, much of this support and guidance occurs through informal interactions. All untenured faculty are encouraged to get to know and seek the advice of all our more established faculty members, as well as faculty in other Schools at the University. In turn, established ASC faculty are encouraged to reach out to our untenured colleagues.

In addition to these informal interactions, ASC provides more structured mentoring (see below). It is important to note, however, that while we seek to support untenured faculty through this mentoring program, we recognize that the ASC dean retains the responsibility of formally reviewing the performance of each faculty member annually, and of providing candid feedback to tenured and untenured faculty members on their performance. Ultimately, each individual faculty member is responsible for compiling a record of scholarship, teaching and service that merits promotion.

Specifically, our mentoring program includes the following:

1. Each year the ASC dean appoints a member of the tenured standing faculty to serve as the Mentoring Program Liaison (MPL). The MPL’s primary responsibility is to assign mentors to new faculty.

2. Before or upon their arrival, all new faculty are introduced to key staff members (e.g., in Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources, Facilities, the Dean’s Administrative Assistant) who help with the logistical and bureaucratic aspects of their transition;

3. Before or upon the arrival of a new untenured faculty member (and new tenured faculty should they request it) a member of the ASC tenured standing faculty is selected to serve as his or her faculty mentor. Selections of faculty mentors are made, in consultation with the new faculty member him or herself, by the MPL. Faculty members are free to request a change in their mentor for any reason. If such a request is made, the MPL will, in consultation with the faculty member, select a new mentor.

4. The faculty mentor’s responsibility is to help with the new faculty member’s transition to Penn and their subsequent development as a scholar, teacher and member of the ASC and Penn community. These responsibilities include (as appropriate): advising the assistant professor on his or her professional development (including research, teaching, and service); answering any questions (or directing him or her to the appropriate person who can answer the question) raised by the new and/or assistant professor; and generally being available to help
with any other issues that may arise. Mentors are expected to be both responsive to outreach by the new assistant professor and pro-active in reaching out to them.

5. As needed, but at least once a year, the MPL meets separately with individual mentors, the faculty member being mentored, and the dean to assess the mentoring program and adjust as appropriate.