

# CREATING AN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING IN THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH & REHABILITATION SCIENCES

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## OVERVIEW

The School of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) was established as a school in 2003.

- SHRS is a small school with 33 faculty across 5 departments: **1) Health Sciences, 2) Nutrition & Dietetics, 3) Occupational Therapy, 4) Physical Therapy, & 5) Physician Assistant.**
- From these departments, 8 degree programs are offered, including **Bachelor, Master, & Doctoral** for both post-professional & PhD.
- Faculty span all ranks from lecturer to clinical professor with long-term contract to full professor with tenure.

A recent needs assessment suggests that when considering the large number & professional diversity of junior faculty combined with expected school growth, the current informal mentoring is not sufficient to impact all faculty & reduce failure.

- More than 50% of non-administrative faculty are new to academia & are in tenure earning, clinical without long-term contract, & lecturer & senior lecturer positions (Fig. 1).
- SHRS has a history of women & minorities in lower ranks, which have previously been found to have different mentoring needs.<sup>1</sup>
- Clinical tracks** – 5 of 6 are women.
- Lecturer/Senior Lecturer tracks** – 4 of 4 are women.
- Tenure tracks** – 6 of 10 are women, with 2 minorities.
- Tenured** – 7 of 13 are men, with 4 men as department chairs or administrators.

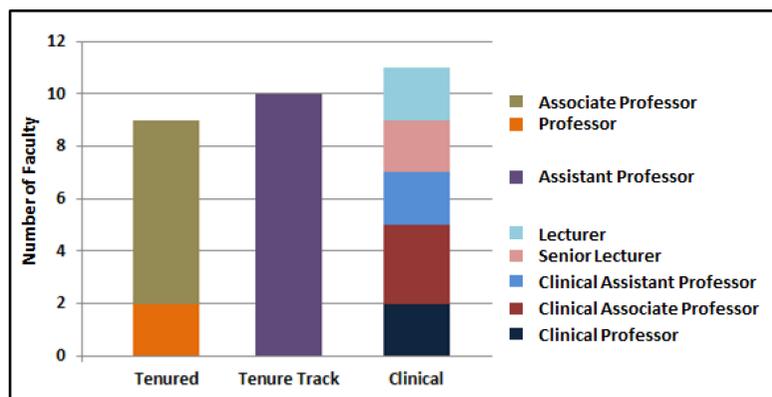


Figure 1. Diverse ranks of the 30 SHRS faculty (excluding 3 faculty in administration) classified as tenured at professor or associate professor rank, on a tenure track at an assistant professor rank, or hold a clinical rank. Clinical ranks include clinical professor, clinical associate professor, and senior lecturer all with long-term contract, and both clinical assistant professor and lecturer without long-term contract.

- The needs assessment identified faculty themes revolving around confusion in: 3-year reviews, tenure track research expectations, service expectations, & both advancement to long-term contract & advancements thereafter.
- Thus, for SHRS to continue its growth, a formal mentoring infrastructure is needed for faculty to advance in rank & for those who aspire to switch tracks to obtain a higher rank.

**PURPOSE: 1. To create an SHRS formalized mentoring infrastructure for faculty professional development, & 2. the subsequent creation of a networked mentoring system across IUPUI for the area of excellence.**

## PROGRAM, PROGRESS, & OUTCOMES

**Stakeholders:** capitalize on the strengths of the many levels of faculty and their existing expertise (Fig. 2).

- Knowledge Brokers – a tenured or long-term contract faculty within SHRS who is well versed in either research, teaching, service, or interprofessional education resources within the IUPUI system.

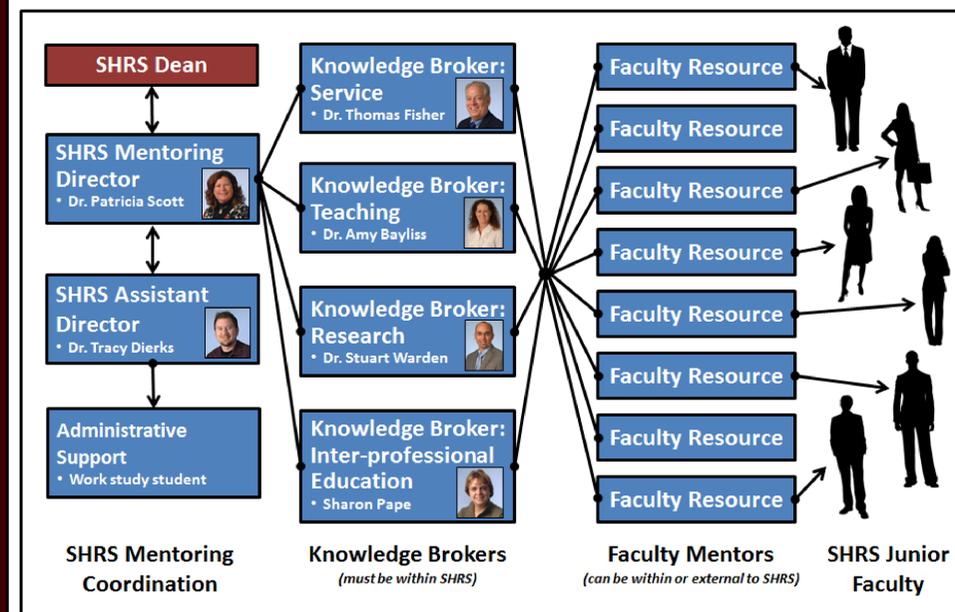


Figure 2. Current SHRS Mentoring Program organizational structure. All 4 Knowledge Broker positions have been filled and have been active in Professional Development.

**Professional Development Series:** modules (with food provided) presented by the mentoring program directors and the knowledge brokers (Fig. 2) on topics designed to meet the needs of the many new and junior faculty with very diverse backgrounds and training.

- Overview of the SHRS Mentoring Program:** presented by the SHRS Mentoring Program Directors.
  - Program initiated at the SHRS Faculty Retreat in August 2015 – guest speaker on the topic of the importance of mentoring, presented the program, and conducted a needs assessment (pre-post surveys).
- Overview of the Academy:** by the Service Knowledge Broker.
  - Issues of rank, discussion of clinical versus tenure track expectations and avenues to meet both. Discussion centered on the differences between clinical practice expectations and academic expectations and how to become socialized into the ways of the academy.
- Teaching Knowledge & Skills:** by the Teaching Knowledge Broker.
  - IUPUI and SHRS criteria for satisfactory and excellence in teaching, with examples and a quiz on ways to achieve these standards for all tracks. A follow-up is planned for clinical track and lecturer rank faculty. Post survey 73% strongly agreed, and 27% agreed that the session was relevant and interesting.
- Promotion & Tenure Q&A:** with SHRS Mentoring Program Directors.
  - Three informal sessions with the Mentoring Directors where faculty can freely ask questions, engage in discussion, and seek guidance on all matters related to promotion and tenure/long-term contract.

## LESSONS LEARNED / ACTIONS TAKEN

**Lesson 1:** New faculty hires were inconsistent and less informed than anticipated.

- Action:** We are creating an orientation manual for all faculty who are pre-Tenure review and will be distributing this manual to all new hires. This manual will be consistent with the Canvas site.

**Lesson 2:** There is clear need for a single reliable source of information regarding promotion and tenure.

- Action:** A site on Canvas was established and modules were created with resources related to the Professional Development Series. Materials will be added on an ongoing basis and communicated with all faculty. Modules include:

- Overview of the Academy
- Teaching Knowledge and Skills
- Professional/ Scholarship Knowledge and Skills
- Research Knowledge and Skills

**Lesson 3:** Faculty mentored in area of excellence outside SHRS also need a mentor inside the school.

- Action:** Working with the Deans office we have identified those faculty either with NO mentor, or an area of excellence mentor outside the school. Through education and networking many faculty now have mentors within SHRS.

*For all solutions breed new problems...*

- Many of the available mentors in SHRS are also on the SHRS Promotion & Tenure committee; potential conflict of interest?

### Summary of Year 1 for the SHRS mentoring initiative:

#### Positive Developments:

- It is clear a mentoring initiative is needed within SHRS.
- Support from the Dean's office has been excellent; it is truly a school initiative.

#### New Challenges:

- Having 2 faculty members leading the mentoring program with no release time is insufficient for the needs of the school.
- SHRS is a small school and faculty are located in 3 buildings, 1 of which is 3 miles away. This makes scheduling and any spontaneous interactions difficult.

*Despite the barriers, SHRS faculty members are highly supportive & appreciative of the Mentoring Initiative.*

### REFERENCES/ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

(1) Collins, M. Enrollment, recruitment, and retention of minority faculty and staff in institutions of higher education. *Action in Teacher Education*, 1990;12(3):57-63.

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