



Early Career Mentoring

My experiences at Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Why I Needed a Mentor

- I had
 - minimal teaching experience
 - no experience obtaining research funding
 - no committee experience
 - no advising experience
 - a weak grasp of “how things worked” in academia



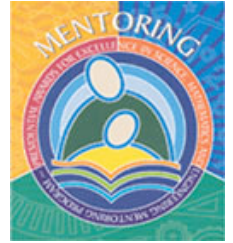
How I Found a Mentor

- My “ideal” mentor:
 - Recently tenured and in my department (ECE)
 - Good teacher and advisor
 - Pragmatic
 - Good sense of humor
- WPI Center for Educational Development, Technology, and Assessment (CEDTA)
 - Voluntary mentoring program for new faculty
 - Mentor+mentee teams formed based on preferences



Some Experiences as a Mentee

- Weekly lunches + ad-hoc meetings as needed
- General discussion topics:
 - “What do I need to do to get tenure?”
 - “What is different about WPI?”
 - Prioritization and time management
 - Keeping things in perspective
 - “Finding the bathroom”
- Introductions to other faculty
 - finding additional mentors and other opinions
 - social networking



Some Specific Mentoring Topics

- Teaching/Advising
 - Undergraduate project advising
 - General teaching strategies (workload, office hours, ...)
 - Writing better exams
 - Grading strategies
 - Working through difficult advising situations
 - Interpreting course feedback
- Funding
 - Providing copies of successful grant proposals
 - Reviewing my grant proposals
 - Dealing with rejection