

## **Creighton University Distance Education Mentoring Initiative (DEMI)**

Faculty members teaching in the distance learning environment are dedicated to providing quality instruction. With the increase of course offerings in this relatively new teaching and learning environment, the number of faculty members and other instructors facing challenges and opportunities that are unique to this form of course delivery has also grown. One avenue of support for these individuals is peer mentoring. The Distance Education Mentoring Initiative (DEMI) is designed to provide peer mentoring opportunities for individuals new to teaching in the distance format at the University. Facilitated and supported by the Center for Academic Innovation (CAI), the DEMI initiative is described below:

### Objectives of the Distance Education Faculty Mentoring program include:

- the association of new distance learning faculty with instructors experienced in teaching distance learning courses
- the exchange of ideas regarding effective distance teaching styles and strategies
- the collaboration of faculty teaching distance courses to promote a sense of collegiality and support

### Participants of the Distance Education Mentoring Initiative include:

Mentees – all instructors new to teaching in the distance learning environment, including both full-time and non-full time faculty members, regardless of in-classroom teaching experience.

Mentors – identified faculty members with successful teaching experience in distance learning courses. Mentors will be selected by distance program directors based upon their level of experience, willingness to serve, and evidence of satisfactory distance course evaluations.

### Term of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentor and mentee will meet at least 1 week prior to the start of the term to initiate the mentoring process and meet periodically throughout the term. Mentor and mentee will meet within a week of the conclusion of the term to reflect on the distance education experience and discuss what went well and opportunities for enhancing the distance course.

### Mentee Responsibilities

- Participate in all scheduled mentoring sessions.
- Provide the mentor access to their distance course at the beginning of the term to enable the mentor an opportunity to observe a course in progress.
- Engage their mentor for advice and feedback as needed throughout the relationship.
- Complete the DEMI Feedback Survey at the conclusion of the term

Mentor Responsibilities

- At least one week prior to the start of the mentee's distance course set up a meeting with the mentee to identify a process for the mentoring relationship during the term.
- Promote an open dialogue with the mentee to encourage an effective mentoring relationship.
- Review the best practices of instructors teaching at a distance and related procedures addressed in the CU Online Guide.
- Observe the mentee's distance course(s) during the mentoring relationship and provide general feedback to the mentee as needed to promote effective course delivery.
- Provide strategic and philosophical guidance to the mentee during the delivery of distance course.
- Provide technological and delivery system suggestions for course facilitation as needed.
- Complete the DEMI Feedback Survey at the conclusion of the term.

Mentor Resources

- Each mentor will be provided with \$500.00/2 mentees from the Center for Academic Innovation mentor development fund. These funds may be used to purchase professional development resources directly aligned with promoting the use of best practices for teaching and learning at a distance. To access these funds, mentors will send a Request for Distance Education Mentor Initiative Development Funds form to the Center for Academic Innovation office.
- All mentors will be provided with some key literature offering pragmatic best practices for teaching at a distance.
- Mentors will be helping mentees translate theory to practice and therefore the lived experiences of the mentors will be a valuable resource.
- The Center for Academic Innovation personnel are available to assist in the mentoring process.

### **Request for Distance Education Mentor Initiative Development Funds**

The purpose of this form is for mentors participating in the Distance Education Mentoring Initiative (DEMI) to request the purchase of professional development resources. The funds allocated to each mentor for the purchase of these resources are equal to \$500.00/mentee. The Center for Academic Innovation office will purchase the resources and notify the mentor when they have arrived. If funds are being requested for conference registration fees, the Center for Academic Innovation will work directly with the mentor to complete the registration process.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Program in which Mentee is teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Mentee is teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Term of the Mentoring activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of funding requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Description of resource being requested:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Books: please include name of book, author, publisher

\*Conferences: Please include name of conference, location, dates