USC Social Work Mentoring Activities

Faculty Mentoring
The School of Social Work provides structured and non-structured mentoring across types and ranks of faculty to assist individual faculty members in actualizing their potential in the classroom, in their scholarly pursuits, and in the advancement of their academic careers. Mentoring promotes high quality instruction and vitality and innovation in the curriculum of the School. In addition, students at the doctoral and MSW levels receive mentoring and advisement.

Instructional Mentoring for Faculty
The Director of Instructional Enhancement provides individual instructional guidance, support, and coaching to new faculty on the ground and in the Virtual Academic Center, to part-time, clinical, and tenure-track faculty who request it, and to faculty whose student evaluations suggest it could be beneficial. Development of the teaching role is supported by seminars and webinars focused on instruction, student learning, faculty-student relations, and teaching dilemmas. Classroom observation and feedback are available to faculty upon request, or if a need is reflected in student evaluations.

Professional Development Mentoring for Faculty
All junior faculty on the tenure line are paired with a senior faculty mentor, and are assigned a development committee of three tenure-track faculty to provide support and mentorship regarding career goals and professional development. Junior non tenure-track faculty are mentored by the Director of Instructional Enhancement, as well as by course lead instructors and chairs of concentrations.

Research Mentoring
The School has established four research clusters which bring together faculty who share research interests to support the expansion of scholarship and innovative research. The clusters (behavioral health, military social work, homelessness, and child development and children’s services) allow mentoring of both junior faculty and doctoral students by senior researchers in their areas of mutual interest.

Mentoring for Doctoral Students
Doctoral students are assigned an advisor whose research interests are aligned with theirs soon after the admissions process, and often work with their advisors on research or teaching projects. Advisors work with students and the Chair to develop course plans, focus of second year study, and qualifying examinations. Changes in advisor assignment can be made as student interests and plans take shape; those who act as advisors during the qualifying examination usually become the Chairs of dissertation committees.

Mentoring for MSW Students.
The Alumni Mentor Program (AMP), now in its 4th year, provides one-on-one mentoring to graduating students as they prepare to enter the social work profession. Alumni offer help with networking, share experiences with the job search, job changes and career building strategies, and provide personal support and guidance. AMP’s Professional
Development Committee “matches” students and alumni, utilizing information forms and applications. Mentor-mentee relationships begin at a Kick-Off Reception in November, and continue through July, via monthly “check-ins” in person, via email, or by telephone.