

Mentoring program

Faculty of Law, UiT

Approved by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Law at the University of Tromsø in case FU 19/22. Last amended by the Research Committee in the case FU 10/23.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the mentoring program is to support self-development and provide safety for the PhD students throughout their PhD period. The mentors' primary role is to offer practical and social support and advice, and to introduce the PhD students to a larger network at the faculty. The mentor program includes both individual and collective mentoring. Purely academic issues, and issues related to the research questions of the PhD projects, are not the responsibility of the mentors but the responsibility of the PhD students' supervisors. The mentor program is a supplement to, and not a replacement for, supervision.

2. Individual mentoring

2.1. Appointing and assigning mentors

Every PhD student employed at the faculty shall be offered an individual mentor during their first year of employment. The vice dean for research is responsible for appointing mentors and assigning them to the PhD students. Upon request from a PhD student, the vice dean for research may decide to extend the mentoring period. Each PhD student may decide not to make use of the mentoring program.

The mentor should be a PhD student employed at the faculty, and who has completed the first year of their PhD period when the mentoring starts. If possible, the mentors should be members of the same research group as the PhD students that they are mentoring. Each mentor can mentor more than one PhD student. If it is not possible to find mentors who fulfill these criteria, the vice dean for research may appoint any other persons employed at the faculty as mentors. Upon request from either a PhD student or a mentor, the vice dean for research can assign a new mentor to the PhD student in question.

Each mentor is awarded 20 hours yearly in the hourly accounts (timeregnskapet). For incomplete years of mentoring, the hours awarded are reduced proportionally. Each mentor is expected to participate in both individual and collective mentoring, and the awarded hours include both.

The mentor has a duty of confidentiality and is subject to the ethical guidelines for supervisors at UiT and the faculty.

2.2. Mentor assignments

The mentors' general assignment is to provide practical and social support to their PhD student. The nature of the support is defined by the mentor and the PhD student collectively. As a minimum, the mentors should:

- Provide inputs on how to approach supervisors.
- Give advice on how to ensure continuous progress of a research project.
- Give advice on how to stay motivated at times when the project seems hopeless.
- Check in with the PhD students regularly, to see how it is going.

During the first weeks of new PhD students' employment period, the mentors' main assignment is to give the PhD students practical and social information so that they can get settled in their new position as quickly as possible. To achieve this, the mentors should:

- Show the PhD students around and introducing them to their new colleagues.
- Go over practical issues (printing rooms, meeting rooms, group lunches, etc.).
- Eat lunch with the PhD students, or make sure that other work colleagues do.
- Provide inputs on how to fulfill the teaching requirements.
- Provide an overview of the courses in the instruction component, and explain the purpose of each course, and when they should be completed.

The PhD students should be aware that the advice of the mentors are based on their own experiences, and that the same solutions are not always suitable for all. The mentors should point this out to the PhD students at an early stage.

3. Collective mentoring

3.1. Regular meetings

In addition to individual mentoring, the faculty's mentoring program includes collective mentoring in the form of regular meetings addressing specific issues and challenges related to working with a PhD project at the faculty of law. These meetings should be held each semester.

The meetings are arranged by the vice dean for research together with the mentors. Topics for each meeting is to be decided in collaboration with the PhD students.

3.2. Mentoring seminar

Every fall, the PhD students and mentors are invited by the vice dean for research to a mentoring seminar over two days. The purpose of the seminar is to gather the participants of the mentoring program to increase the PhD students' motivation, strengthen the social bonds between all participants, and to discuss common issues and challenges.