

## **Associate Graduate Faculty (AGF) Roles & Responsibilities**

Mentoring is an important and critical aspect of the LT Ph.D. program and students' doctoral experience. Students entering the distributed offering program (and all residential and distributed students, starting fall 2022) are assigned, based on their input, both a faculty member in the Department of Learning Technologies and an Associate Graduate Faculty (AGF) Mentor.

AGFs are valuable members of the Department of Learning Technologies. AGFs are encouraged to participate in the full academic life of the department by participating in periodic celebrations, attending faculty meetings (without voting rights), sharing notable achievements, and responding to university requests for information.

AGFs are professionals (i.e. terminal degree with academic experience) in the field who oversee the student's work toward his or her dissertation. An AGF's role during course work is to actively engage and speak with the student throughout course work in order to 1) ensure the student is doing well academically, 2) keep the student focused and successful regarding short term outcomes, 3) position the student for success at later stages (portfolio, dissertation proposal, dissertation), and 4) provide additional communications back to the program concerning student progress and retention.

AGFs must be available to students and other program faculty during the regular workweek (Monday – Friday) throughout the semester of employment (16 weeks in Fall/Spring and 10 weeks in Summer based on the published UNT academic calendar). Absences during the workweek may be no more than three (3) days in length; all absences from duty must be pre-approved by the department chair.

AGFs are required to do the following:

- 1. Have consistent contact with their mentees during each semester (weekly or bi-weekly).**
  - Talk to mentees regularly (no less often than bi-weekly meetings) via email, phone, Zoom, etc. and let them know that they are welcome to contact you at any time during your office hours.
  - Do not rely on the mentees to initiate contact. Although they are adults, they are also subject to embarrassment and avoidance if things are not going as well as they might like, and that is the very time when they need a mentor the most (even when they do not realize it themselves sometimes).
    - If mentees don't schedule or reschedule a call/meeting within a reasonable time, AGFs need to reach out to them to ensure they continue to be on track with studies.
    - Calls might or might not take place during the breaks between semesters.
  - Respond to emails in a timely fashion (within 48 hours).
  
- 2. Help mentees understand the program requirements and develop a degree plan.**
  - Help mentees in understanding the program's requirements from the beginning.

- Help mentees draft their degree plans and ask them to take the degree plans to the major professors for final discussion and approval.
  - Check on mentees' portfolio progress and ensure that mentees are on track for graduation.
  - Provide advice to mentees with the selection of courses in the upcoming semester(s).
  - Work with mentees to create a plan to work on mentees areas of need.
  - Encourage interaction and teamwork within their cohort.
  - Provide honest feedback, both positive and negative, to help mentees establish realistic goals. They will provide mentees advice on opportunities that increase the visibility of the mentees' knowledge and skill.
- 3. Keep separate records of mentoring interactions, including a call schedule/log of student appointments for each student.**
  - 4. Report any student issues or troubles so that appropriate actions can be discussed and taken.**
  - 5. Attend the Annual LT Ph.D. Meeting and other required meetings.**
  - 6. Stay up-to-date with the latest version of LT Doctoral Handbook.**

AGFs are also encouraged to do the following:

- 1. Serve as role models, provide career advice, and support the mentee's professional advancement.**
  - Share experiences, expertise, and advice on research, teaching, and other professional concerns.
  - Help mentees with exploring careers, setting goals, developing contacts, and identifying resources.
  - Help mentees explore various career choices and help learn how to translate their graduate education into various kinds of professional opportunities.
  - Explain to mentees how to accept criticism professionally, and help them understand that accepting criticism does not necessarily mean agreeing with it but rather reflects a willingness to consider others' points of view.
  - Encourage mentees to take initiative.
  - Provide guidance, motivation, and emotional support, as appropriate.
- 2. Support the mentees' research.**

While AGFs can serve on dissertation committees as and when their expertise aligns with the dissertation topic, they are not automatically added to the dissertation committees of the students they mentor. Students must specifically ask an AGF and get consent if they want an AGF on their dissertation committee.

- Provide mentees with clear guidelines for starting and finishing the dissertation work, including encouraging the dissertation research's timely initiation.
- Brainstorm possible research ideas.
- Monitor progress toward selecting and developing a dissertation topic.
- Help mentees to develop protocols for the IRB, as needed. Where warranted, they may co-author publications with mentees, to help them build a strong foundation of writing, research network, and find resources.
- Guide mentees to make ethical and legal choices, understand publication practices and responsible authorship, and understand the basics of intellectual property, patents, and copyright.
- Offer mentees ideas on how to manage their time better, for example, show them how to break large tasks, such as research papers, into more manageable components, and set short-term realistic goals to complete each component to prevent burn out.

## Resources

- LT Ph.D. Handbook: [https://lt.unt.edu/sites/default/files/doctoral\\_handbook\\_end\\_of\\_fall\\_2020.pdf](https://lt.unt.edu/sites/default/files/doctoral_handbook_end_of_fall_2020.pdf)
- Important Forms: <https://lt.unt.edu/important-forms>
- Courses and Schedules: <https://lt.unt.edu/current-student-doctoral-program>