



Welcome, new UA faculty members! We are very much looking forward to meeting you at New Faculty Orientation and helping start your time here by sharing resources that can help you to grow into your new role.

Mentoring relationships are an important resource for faculty professional growth. Many UA departments have formal mentoring programs for new faculty that focus on learning about the norms and expectations of the faculty role, particularly focused on research and scholarship. Over the past several years, UA has developed several resources and programs that provide mentoring focused on becoming an effective instructor. The Offices of Academic Affairs and Faculty Affairs work together to support instructors as they grow their skills in teaching, helping them to collect evidence of learning that can shape their teaching practice. These programs include the [New Faculty Mentoring Program](#) and [Faculty Learning Communities](#) focused on teaching innovation, as well as the faculty-development team at the [Office of Instruction and Assessment](#).

A new collaboration between Faculty Affairs and Academic Affairs, the **Coffee and Conversations** program, will bring new UA instructors together with people who can share resources and strategies for teaching. This series will meet several times over the upcoming academic year and will focus on answering the questions new faculty have about teaching at UA. We will share more information about this program at the New Faculty Orientation.

How do we assess the quality of teaching? UA is increasingly relying on peer observation as a critical tool to provide feedback on teaching. The Office of Instruction and Assessment has developed a [Peer Observation protocol](#) that allows instructors and their teaching mentors to communicate about what aspects of a course are important. The observation often starts important conversations that open spaces for innovation and collaboration in teaching. This same instrument provides the basis for many departments' formal peer evaluation of teaching process for promotion and tenure.

Starting a new faculty job provides an exciting opportunity to grow in many areas of your professional life. It can be difficult to know how to prioritize your learning in research, service, and teaching when all are critical to your professional advancement. Having the input of mentors from within and outside your department can help you make a plan that allows you to find the right balance and retain a sense of control over your professional growth.

You are starting your career at an exciting time in our institution's history. UA is home to many innovative and dedicated instructors who take pride in their ability to design and implement engaging learning experiences. Over the past several years, a culture shift has increased recognition of the scholarship of teaching and its importance in a thriving university. We look forward to sharing some of what we have learned, and how we can help you reach your potential as a UA faculty member.

New Faculty Orientation is Tuesday and Wednesday, August 14 and 15, in the Collaborative Learning Space in the Science-Engineering Library. Click [here](#) for a map of the location. [RSVP](#) online or email Asya Roberts (asya@email.arizona.edu) for more information.

Sincerely,

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