Network-Based Mentoring Programs to Support Faculty Connections: A Fresh Approach for Academic Leaders

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Session Goals

- Identify the mentoring needs of faculty;
- Distinguish between traditional and new models of mentoring;
- Describe how network-based mentoring can be operationalized;
- Assess the impact of network-based mentoring;
- Follow-up resources on network-based mentoring

Strategic Question: “What mentoring model will be most effective and appropriate for my department/college goals and context?”
Potential Roadblocks/Priority Mentoring Areas

For Early-Career Faculty
- Getting started/getting oriented
- Increasing teaching, research, service skills
- Navigating the tenure track
- Creating work/life balance
- Developing professional networks

For Mid-Career/Senior Faculty
- Choosing among “forks in the road”
- Keeping up, learning new skills, “service, service, service”
- Navigating promotion to full/leadership, retirement
- Sustaining work/life balance
- Building new networks, resources
The Early Career Challenge

“The hardest thing is to do a good job with a career that could consume all available time, pay attention to a partner and children, publish or perish, teach well, lead an examined life, and keep out of debt.”

- Early career faculty member at UMass
Top Ten Roadblocks for an Early Career Investigator

10) Getting a grant
9) Getting a grant
8) Getting a grant
7) Getting a grant
6) Getting a grant
5) Getting a grant
4) Getting a grant
3) Getting a grant
2) Getting a grant
1) Getting a grant
The Mid-Career Challenge

- Full Professor
- Disciplinary Super-Star
- Master-Teacher
- Investing Energy Elsewhere
- Institutional Change Agent
- Public Intellectual
- Administration

TENURE

From Rockequemore (2012)
Mentoring is key to addressing these “roadblocks.” It has been proven to be one of the common characteristics of a successful academic career, particularly for women and faculty of color.

Outcomes accruing include:

- Improved socialization to department, college, university
- More effective teaching
- Stronger record of scholarly productivity
- Increased rates of retention/tenure/promotion
- Sense of community and belonging

(Bland et al., 2009; Johnson, 2007)
Traditionally, mentoring in academia has taken the form of a one-on-one, hierarchal relationship in which a senior faculty member takes a junior faculty member “under his/her wing.”
Mutual Mentoring is a **network-based model** of support that encourages the development of a wide variety of **mentoring partnerships** to address specific areas of knowledge and expertise.
How Is Mutual Mentoring Different?

Mutual Mentoring is a **hybrid** of traditional mentoring & professional networking that encourages:

- **Focus on self-identified goals**, rather than “one-size-fits-all”
- **Network** of multiple, diverse mentors
- **Variety** of mentoring approaches
- **Proactive, empowering** approach to mentoring
- **Opportunities** to be mentored and mentor others

In sum, mentoring that’s **faculty-driven, functional, and flexible**
Quick Poll

In your department/college, what does mentoring look like?

A. Traditional mentoring program: one-on-one senior/new faculty

B. Mutual Mentoring: E.g. mentoring committee, peer network

C. No formal program, mentoring largely informal
If you have a formal mentoring program in your department/school, what are some of the benefits and/or challenges that you’ve encountered as a participant or administrator?

If you don’t have a formal mentoring program, what obstacles or impasses have prevented you from offering one, or prevented others from supporting the development of one?
How to Build a Network of Mentors
Team Grants and Micro-Grants
Departmental Mentoring

Anthropology Mentoring Before

Ad Hoc Mentor
**Anthropology:** Equitable access to info and resources in department, to external networks; build community
**Internal Mentoring Partners**

**External Mentoring Partners**

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**Life Sciences Women**: Address isolation; exchange best practices in full range of work and life; sponsorship
**Affinity Team**

**Mid-Career Women:** Understand midcareer challenges; gather data on promotion to full; personal, institutional action

**Internal Mentoring Partners:**
- Chair/Dean/Provost
- Women at “Full”
- Time Mgt. Coach

**External Mentoring Partners:**
- Peers
- External Scholar

**External Mentoring Partners**
Individual Mentoring Before Micro-Grants
Art & Art History: Enhance skills as a teacher and artist.

Brought internationally-acclaimed artist to campus for one-on-one mentoring to foster two sides of career.

External Mentor

Dept. Colleagues
Mentoring on creative activity with junior/senior colleagues

Students
Mentoring on teaching practices/studio critiques with students
**Biology:** Learn new research skills and mentor students.

Visited lab of senior colleague for one-on-one mentoring in techniques for field study

Small group mentoring of undergraduate and grad students back in department
Individual Mutual Mentoring

Classics & English: Building support/accountability for writing

External mentoring of pair by editor/writing coach

Peer mentoring partnership met twice monthly to work on own manuscripts
Assistant professors with “multiple mentors” have significantly higher levels of career success than those with a single or no mentor (Van Eck Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000).

“Mentoring constellations” are positively associated with career satisfaction. Individuals with more mentoring constellations seem to gather greater career benefits than those with just one mentor (Van Emmerik, 2004).

A “networking model” of mentoring may be more inclusive of women and minorities than the “grooming model” of traditional mentoring. Combining both models in mentoring programs can take advantage of the strengths of each (Girves, Lepeda, Gwathmey, 2005).
Who elected to participate?

- 142 innovative networks
- 69 Team and 73 Micro Grants
- 518 unique faculty members
- 40% of all full-time faculty
- All 8 colleges and 50 departments
Team Grants: Relationships Will Continue

Likelihood of Mellon-Funded Mentoring Relationships to Continue

- 2006-07: 71%
- 2007-08: 87%
- 2008-09: 95%
- 2009-10: 94%
- 2011-12: 92%
- 2012-13: 96%
Team Grants: Excellent/Very Good Experience

Mellon Team Participants Who Rated Their Experience "Excellent" or "Very Good"
Micro Grants: Relationships Will Continue

Likelihood of Mellon-Funded Mentoring Relationships to Continue
Micro Grants: Excellent/Very Good Experience

Mellon Micro Grant Recipients Who Rated Their Experience "Excellent" or "Very Good"
Female Faculty

- Female UMass Faculty Who Have Participated (267) - 55%
- Female UMass Faculty Who Not Have Participated (221) - 45%
Faculty of Color

UMass Faculty of Color Who Have Participated (146)
UMass Faculty of Color Who Not Have Participated (100)

59%
41%
“Faculty members who participated in the initiative were more likely to regard mentoring as a career-enhancing activity; develop mutually beneficial mentoring relationships; and report higher work productivity and work satisfaction than non-participating peers (Yun, Baldi & Sorcinelli, 2016).”
Why Mentoring Works

- Open to all faculty vs. targeted groups
- Expands vs. diminishes “traditional” mentoring model
- Customized/faculty-driven projects vs. generic/imposed from above
- Invests in faculty through GRANTS! With PIs! With guided, streamlined proposal process, “mapping” goals & networks
- Lowers the barrier for collaboration
- Makes mentoring intentional, purposeful, empowering
Start with the premise that faculty members have a variety of needs, and YOU don’t personally have to meet each need.

The most effective mentoring you can do is to help your faculty identify THEIR needs and how to get them met with on-and-off campus resources.

Start by assessing needs (focus groups, discussion). What skills do you need to develop? What support systems do you need to be successful?

Key to implementing the Mutual Mentoring model is to give faculty a sense of autonomy and agency to develop their own context-sensitive mentoring relationships and activities, within a programmatic structure that promises equitable access to resources and support.

- Sorcinelli, Yun & Baldi, 2016
Take-Aways?

- What did you learn?
- What questions do you have?