Building Your Mentoring Networks: 
Make Every Connection Count

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Appreciation to “Mutual Mentors” at UMass Amherst
Jung Yun & Brian Baldi
Faculty Awardees of Mellon Mutual Mentoring Grants
Session Goals

- Identify mentoring needs of faculty & benefits of mentoring;
- Compare/contrast traditional & network-based mentoring;
- Describe innovative network-based mentoring exemplars;
- Assess the impact of network-based mentoring

Strategic Question: “What mentoring model will be most effective and appropriate for my institution’s goals and context?”
Introductions

Turn to person next to you:

Think about the people who have influenced your career—your mentoring story.

- What did your “best” mentor bring to the relationship in terms of professional and/or personal support? (3 minutes)
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
The Mid-Career Challenge

From Rockequemore (2012)
Research on Potential Roadblocks/ Priority Mentoring Areas

For Early-Career Faculty
- Get started/getting oriented
- Increase teaching, research, service skills
- Understand evaluation process
- Create work-life balance
- Develop professional networks

For Mid-Career & Senior Faculty
- Choose among “forks in the road”
- Keep up, learn new skills, “service, service, service”
- Navigate promotion to full/leadership
- Sustain work/life balance
- Build new networks, resources
Why Is Mentoring Important?

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 underrepresented faculty.
Outcomes accruing include:

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

(Bland, 2009; Johnson, 2007; Montgomery, 2017)
Compare & Contrast

Traditional and Network-Based Mentoring
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."

Senior Faculty

Early Career Faculty
Mutual Mentoring is a **network-based model** of support that encourages the development of a variety of **mentoring partnerships** to address specific areas of knowledge and expertise.
How is Mutual Mentoring Different?

Its a **hybrid** of traditional mentoring & professional networking that encourages:

- Self-identified goals and outcomes vs. “one-size-fits-all”
- Partnerships with variety of individuals
- Approaches accommodate partners’ preferences
- Proactive, empowering approach to mentoring
- Benefits “mentees” and “mentors”

In sum, mentoring that’s **faculty-driven, functional, and flexible**
What does it look like?

Poll Options:

1. Traditional mentoring program: one-on-one senior/new faculty
2. Network-based model: E.g. mentoring committee, peer network
3. No formal program, mentoring largely informal
Operationalizing
Network-Based Mentoring
How to Build a Network of Mentors

“How Mapping” Networks and Incentives/Grants
Mapping Your Mentoring Networks

1. Who do you have in your network of support?
2. What’s your goal? What do you need to take one step forward?
3. How do you build a mentoring network? Exemplars
4. Who do you need in your network of support?
5. Taking that step forward!
Departmental Mentoring
Before Team Grants
**Anthropology:** Equitable access to info and resources in department; build community; develop external networks

Diagram:
- **Senior Faculty**
- **Dept. Chair**
- **Peers**
- **Local Institutions**
- **External Mentor**
- **Professional Conference**

**Internal Mentoring Partners**

**External Mentoring Partners**
STEM Interdisciplinary Team

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

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

- Chair/Dean/Provost
- Full Professor
- Peers
- Time Mgt. Coach
- External Scholar

Internal Mentoring Partners

External Mentoring Partners
Individual Mentoring Before Micro-Grants
Off-Campus Mentoring Partner to Campus

Art & Art History: Enhance skills as a teacher and artist

Invited internationally-acclaimed artist to campus for one-on-one mentoring

External Mentor

Dept. Colleagues
Small group mentoring of junior/senior colleagues

Students
Large group mentoring of undergraduate/graduate students
Visit an Off-Campus Mentoring Partner

**Biology:** Learn new research skills and mentor students.

- **External Mentor**
  - Visited lab of senior colleague for one-on-one mentoring in lab techniques used for field study

- **Students**
  - Small group mentoring of students back in her department
Engineering: Strengthen teaching skills and network

- Team-taught course with department chair; One-on-one mentoring on teaching practice
- Small group “mentoring committee” w/two award-winning faculty in college
- External mentoring at professional development workshop at professional conference
Establish Peer Mentoring Partners

**Classics & English: Building support/accountability for writing**

- **Editor/Writing Coach**: External mentoring of pair by editor/writing coach
- **Peer**: Peer mentoring partnership met twice monthly to work on own manuscripts & student work
Reflection and Discussion

Pair (or triad) and discuss what you choose to share regarding:

- How might features of Mutual Mentoring help strengthen your own mentoring networks? How might MM address what is underdeveloped or missing at NUS? (3 minutes)
Assessing the Impact of Network Based Mentoring
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, Zepeda, Gwathmey, 2005).
Who elected to participate?

- 518 unique faculty members
- 40% of all full-time faculty
- 290 women faculty ≈ 55%
- 151 ALANA faculty ≈ 59%
- All 8 colleges, 50 departments
- 142 innovative networks
TEAM GRANTS:
EXCELLENT/VERY GOOD EXPERIENCE

Mellon Team Participants
Who Rated Their Experience "Excellent"...
TEAM 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"
MICRO GRANTS:
RELATIONSHIPS WILL CONTINUE

Likelihood of Mellon-Funded Mentoring Relationships to Continue
Faculty members who participated in the initiative were more likely to regard mentoring as: a career-enhancing activity; develop mutually beneficial mentoring relationships that continued over time; and report higher work productivity and work satisfaction than non-participating peers (Yun, Baldi & Sorcinelli, 2016).
1. Professional development needs differ significantly across individuals, departments, and between career stages.

2. Mentoring networks encourage a collaborative, reciprocal learning process that draws upon the knowledge of a variety of partners.

3. Mentoring networks are especially relevant to groups traditionally underrepresented in the professoriate, who may be reticent to “raise their hands” for more mentoring or development attention.

4. Offering small grants can make mentoring more intentional, incentivize participation, lower barriers to collaboration, and encourage goal-directed, flexible forms of mentoring.

5. Connecting mentoring partners with similar areas of interest/expertise not only within but also outside of home department and institution adds benefit.

(Sorcinelli et al., 2016)
Take-Aways?

- What did you learn?
- What questions do you have?
- What are the implications of Mutual Mentoring for you and your university?


References


References


References


Yun, J., & Sorcinelli, M. D.(2009). When mentoring is the medium: Lessons learned from a faculty development initiative. \textit{To Improve the Academy}, 27, 365-384.