Articles

Empowering Untenured Faculty Through Mosaic Mentoring

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring programs have consistently demonstrated their value in assisting new and early faculty members to make successful adjustments and productive contributions to the academy. Yet, mentoring programs have failed to be consistently implemented despite their efficacy and increasing levels of job dissatisfaction reported by new and early faculty members. To extend the understanding of this issue at a research-based university in western Canada, a survey was sent to deans, department heads, and new faculty. Based on the results of this survey, a focus group of new faculty members was conducted and semi-structured interviews were held with department heads who had implemented effective mentoring programs. The results of this investigation indicate that

RÉSUMÉ

De façon constante, les programmes de mentorat ont démontré leur valeur en facilitant l'adaptation heureuse et des contributions fructueuses que faisaient les nouveaux membres du corps professoral à leur l'académie. Par contre, de tels programmes ne sont pas régulièrement mis en œuvre malgré leur efficacité et malgré insatisfaction professionnelle croissante reportée par ces nouveaux membres du corps professoral. Pour mieux comprendre cette question, dans une université de recherche se trouvant dans l'Ouest du Canada, on a envoyé un sondage aux doyens, aux chefs de département, et aux nouveaux membres du corps professoral. Suite aux résultats du sondage, on a rassemblé un groupe de consultation composé

mosaic mentoring programs, which have no agendas to preserve hierarchies and power imbalances, and which view all faculty members as continuing learners, could reduce feelings of dissatisfaction among new and early faculty members and support conditions for identity transformation.

de nouveaux membres du corps professoral et passé des entrevues semi-dirigées avec les chefs de départements ayant mis en oeuvre des programmes efficaces de mentorat. Les résultats de cette enquête indiquent que des programmes de mentorat mosaïques qui n'ont aucun but de conservation de hiérarchies ou de déséquilibres de pouvoir, où tout membre du corps professoral est considéré comme apprenant en formation permanente, pourraient réduire les sentiments d'insatisfaction parmi ces nouveaux membres du corps professoral et appuyer les conditions pour la transformation d'identité.

INTRODUCTION

Current literature within the field of higher education has brought to the fore rapid changes in the nature of information and technological innovation—all of which are transforming higher education in diverse ways. Much discussion has also revolved around the changing demographics of the student body, the removal of barriers to learning, the demand to become more competitive in this era of globalization, and the push to integrate new and emerging information and communication technologies into all aspects of academia.

Noticeably absent in much of the current literature, however, are discussions on the effect of the demographic transformations that are occurring in the professoriate—a dynamic variable that is also impacting transformations in the academy (Austin, 2002). The large numbers of senior faculty appointed from the late 1950s to the mid 1970s are moving into retirement and/or later-life careers. The result is a new wave of faculty members succeeding them and a "changing of the guard." This, according to Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin (2001), provides leaders within institutions of higher education with "a time-limited window of opportunity to influence this transformation, and in so doing to contribute to setting the future course of higher learning" (p. 1).

An overview of recent investigations on the perceptions of new and early faculty (or untenured faculty) indicates that we should be "greatly concerned with how . . . [we will] prepare the next generation of faculty members" (Austin, 2002, p. 120). Investigations have revealed that many new and untenured faculty members are experiencing unprecedented dissatisfaction in their work environment (Cawyer & Friedrich, 1998; Holton, 1995; Magnuson, 2002; Olsen, 1993). A longitudinal study by Sorcinelli (1994) found that 33% of new and untenured faculty reported being very stressed in their first year. This percentage rose to 49% in year two and to 71% in year five. More recent studies have revealed that this trend is increasing. Indeed, it is becoming so serious that the American Association for Higher Education has asked if "the best of the new generation will still find the faculty profession attractive" (Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000, p. 2; see also Austin, 2002).

An overview of the literature indicates a variety of explanations as to why new faculty experience dissatisfaction. Such explanations include time restraints on teaching and research; lack of collegial relationships; little or no feedback, recognition, and/or reward; unrealistic expectations; and insufficient resources (Sorcinelli, 1994). Feelings of disconnectedness and loneliness have also been expressed by new faculty (Cox, 1997; Johnsrud, 1994), as has the feeling that they are a neglected resource, often detached from other departmental colleagues and faculties (Boice, 1992a). These perceptions are supported by Schoenfeld and Magnan (1992), who maintained that many university departments apply a form of *Social Darwinism*, that is, "Let's throw the new kids off the end of the pier and see whether they can swim or not. *We* didn't get any survival advice, why should *they*?" (p. 7).

Given these conditions, it is possible that both renewal and vitality within the professorate are becoming threatened, and they will likely continue to deteriorate into the future. For example, Austin (2002) (see also Greyling & Rhodes, 2004) depicted the academia of the future as a place where new and early faculty members must confront increasingly complex changes that would have a tremendous impact on their work and lives. According to Austin, these increasing pressures would include:

> Public skepticism and demands for accountability, fiscal constraint, the rise of information society and new technologies, the increasing diversity of students, new educational institutions, the increasing emphasis on learning over teaching, the emergence of postmodern ways of knowing, and dramatic shifts in the nature of faculty appointments. (p. 123)

Many of us who are not new to the academy are aware of these changing conditions. Most of us also know that efforts to address these issues necessitate rethinking faculty roles, identity, and collegial relationships. Mentoring has been viewed as an effective process to facilitate restructuring of this

nature, as it not only creates but also sustains identity transformations and collegial relationships. Research on mentoring relationships has tended to support this belief and has shown it to have a significant, positive impact on career patterns, performance, and satisfaction (Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1991). Yet, despite more than three decades of well-documented research on the benefits of mentoring, few faculty members engage in it. To be sure, this is puzzling—and has not gone unnoticed. Wunsch (1994a) noted that part of the problem with failed mentoring initiatives in higher education settings arises from the practice of academic institutions adopting literature on mentoring that comes from the corporate sector. The problem with this practice is that the corporate sector supports developmental relationships and advancement, whereas academic institutions support independence. Complicating this issue, institutions of higher education value a culture comprised of personal autonomy, expressed through the provision of academic freedom and tenure.

Research into what new faculty members really want has revealed that a sense of community is of primary importance to them. Humans, as Maslow (1954) has argued, need to have a sense of belongingness, commonly referred to as community. With respect to mentoring relationships, Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin (2000) observed:

> Many early-career faculty and graduate students who aspire to join the faculty hold dear a vision of a "culture of collegiality" . . . they want to pursue their work in communities where collaboration is respected and encouraged, where friendships develop between colleagues within and across departments, and where there is time and opportunity for interaction to talk about ideas, one's work, and the institution. (p. 13)

Sometimes referred to as the mentoring triad, mentoring initiatives can meet the individual needs of new faculty for growth, recognition, support, and a sense of belongingness (Katz & Coleman, 2001), while converging with the institutional needs for stability, expansion, renewal, and an opportunity for senior faculty to influence and guide new and early faculty (Otto, 1994). Given the well-documented benefits of successful mentoring relationships, there is a need to better understand the issues involved in and the barriers to implementing mentoring programs.

OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Mosaic Mentoring

Prior research, while providing limited insights into the issues and barriers, has begun to dispel commonly held myths about successful and sustainable mentoring relationships in higher education settings. For example, a

commonly held belief is that spontaneous mentoring relationships are more effective than structured pairings. However, a study by Boyle and Boice (1998) revealed that naturally forming mentoring relationships were less effective than structured and systematic mentoring programs. In particular, spontaneous mentoring tended to be more irregular and shorter lived than planned, structured, and monitored approaches. Personality-profile matches and friendships were also found to be poor predictors of successful mentoring relationships.

The best predictors of successful relationships appeared to be: formal programs that are planned and structured and provide clarity of expectations; the regularity of meetings; and commitments by individuals who have mutual respect for each other. Perhaps the most unexpected finding in the research literature was that group mentoring, which includes cross-departmental faculty, is viewed as the most beneficial way to initiate relationships. On the matter of group mentoring, Sandler (1993) further asserted that having multiple and diverse mentors provides a number of important advantages for both mentors and mentees. For example, group mentoring gives new and early faculty members wider access to allies and alliances, as well as access to social and professional networks. Sequentially, when several people are involved in the mentoring process, the mentoring functions can be shared, thus relieving the pressure for a few experienced faculty mentors to carry the entire load. Furthermore, very few faculty members have exemplary skills and knowledge in all facets of academia (i.e., teaching, research, administration). Hence, when mentoring is facilitated by a variety of experienced faculty members who have complementary strengths and skills, it relieves the pressure on departments to find "perfect" mentors, as well as on the mentors, who often feel burdened with the task of being superior on all fronts.

Sandler (1993) warned that when mentoring is conducted as a one-on-one relationship, there can be some significant disadvantages. For example, a one-on-one relationship is often intense and, as such, has the potential for professional disruption and collegial discord if it ever becomes necessary to end the relationship. Further, reliance on a senior faculty member can result in what is commonly referred to as "grooming mentoring." That is, senior faculty who have been acculturated and entrenched in university traditions can create hierarchical, power-laden mentoring relationships that are too restrictive to provide the skills and knowledge that new and early faculty members need to cope in today's universities (Haring, Freeman, Phelps, Spann, & Wooten, 1999). In contrast, group mentoring relationships comprised of faculty members with diverse and complementary skills and knowledge can result in greater benefits than traditional mentoring dyads, while avoiding many of the potential problems. Mullen (2000) has referred to this kind of eclectic group mentoring as the *mentoring mosaic* model.

The Benefit Triad

The primary benefit of a mentoring program is helping new and early faculty to fully develop their professional careers. This can be effectively accomplished through the implementation of a support system that provides guidance from experienced colleagues. Spanning more than three decades, a fairly extensive body of literature suggests that mentoring programs lead to important benefits in higher education settings for new faculty, senior faculty, and the institution in general, which is often referred to as the "benefit triad." A considerable amount of research on mentoring was conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s; the research results on mentoring within the last decade—although not as prolific—have been remarkably consistent with the earlier research.

Benefits to New and Early Faculty Members

For new and early faculty, research has shown that mentoring programs support professional growth and renewal, which in turn empower new faculty as individuals and colleagues (Boice, 1992b). The results of a study by Fagenson (1989) revealed that mentored individuals reported greater levels of satisfaction, career opportunity, recognition, and promotion than non-mentored individuals, regardless of sex or level. Through mentoring, new faculty are more likely to decode the organizational culture (Greyling & Rhodes, 2004; Kram, 1986), access informal networks of communication that carry significant professional information (Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, & Feren, 1988), and receive assistance in defining and achieving career goals (Bogat & Redner, 1985). Similarly, Lankau and Scandura (2002) found that mentoring facilitates career development and supports new faculty with organizational socialization and network relationships, which are necessary for understanding the culture and tacit rules within an organization. Queralt (1982) found that faculty with mentors demonstrate greater productivity as leaders in professional associations, receive more competitive grants, and publish more books and articles than faculty without mentors. And, in addition to the enhancement of research and socialization skills, teaching was found to improve when new faculty were provided with mentors.

Thus, mentoring relationships are both useful and powerful in understanding and advancing organizational culture, providing access to informal and formal networks of communication, and offering professional stimulation to new faculty members (Luna & Cullen, 1995). This, in turn, tends to increase job satisfaction and greater organizational socialization.

Benefits to Senior Faculty (the Mentors)

New faculty members are not the only ones to benefit from mentoring programs. Mentors gain satisfaction from assisting new colleagues, improving their own managerial skills, keeping abreast of new knowledge and tech-

niques, and experiencing increased stimulation from bright, creative new faculty members (Reich, 1986). They also receive tremendous satisfaction from watching new faculty members grow, both professionally and personally (McNellis, 2004). Senior faculty who mentor new faculty may also derive enhanced status and self-esteem from being seen as successful, as well as experience high satisfaction from developing interpersonal relationships (McNellis). Blackburn, Chapman, and Cameron (1981) found that mentoring relationships could provide generative stimulus and revitalization to senior scholars. Likewise, the results of an investigation by Boyle and Boice (1998) revealed that mentors find the mentoring relationship of value.

Benefits to the Institution

Institutions that have successfully implemented mentoring programs have demonstrated that these programs not only benefit new and senior faculty members, but also contribute to the general stability and health of the organization. Otto (1994) asserted that new and early faculty members who are mentored tend to develop a sense of commitment to both their profession and institution. In a general sense, mentoring programs have been found to be effective at facilitating the development of future organizational leadership and potential leaders (Luna & Cullen, 1995).

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY AND METHODS

Similar to many universities around the world, Canadian universities are facing difficult challenges, one of which is the need to transform identity from within in order to provide a more caring and collegial environment for new and early faculty members. Mentoring has been viewed as a means to facilitate change that both creates and sustains this kind of transformation (Blanford, 2000; Boyle & Boice, 1998; Nicholls, 2000). Given that implementing and sustaining effective mentoring programs is difficult to achieve in higher education settings, the objectives of the present study were twofold: (1) to gain a greater understanding of the barriers to implementing effective and sustainable mentoring programs; (2) to provide a better understanding of how to overcome the issues and barriers.

To begin investigating these objectives, a preliminary survey was sent to all department heads (chairs), deans, and new faculty at a mid-sized research-based university in Western Canada. Using the results from this survey as a guide, three months into the term, a focus group was conducted with new and untenured faculty members at the same university to gain deeper insights into the issues. An invitation to participate in this focus group was sent out to new faculty members who were in departments that did not have mentoring programs in place.

A focus group, rather than other kinds of interviewing methods, was used because it is an effective method for stimulating an in-depth exploration of a topic and a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of the members. In short, it inspires insights and solutions that are difficult to achieve with other interview methods. In particular, focus groups "allow respondents to react to and build upon the responses of other group members. This synergistic effect of the group setting may result in the production of data or ideas that might not have been uncovered in individual interviews" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1998, p. 509). An additional benefit of focus groups is that they tend to "provide checks and balances on each other that weed out false or extreme views . . . and it is fairly easy to assess the extent to which there is a relatively consistent, shared view" (Patton, 1990, p. 336).

Building on the focus-group data and the research literature, semi-structured interviews were conducted with department heads who had established successful mentoring programs at the same university. The main advantage of a semi-structured interview (over a structured or unstructured interview or focus group) was that it allowed a number of different department heads to be interviewed in a systematic and comprehensive manner by delimiting in advance the issues to be explored (Patton, 1990). More important, this method permitted a freer exploration, which allowed a conversation to be built and a conversational style to be established, while continuing to focus on the topic.

Underpinning this investigation was the assumption that the data-collection process incorporated a holistic portrait of the culture of university settings and that this portrait integrated the study participants' views and the researchers' interpretations of their views. As such, reliability and generalizability did not play a role. In an effort to maintain the trustworthiness of this study, the findings were built upon existing research that looked for common emergent themes and a triangulated approach to data collection (focus group, interviews, survey) with multiple perspectives (university administrators, new faculty, coordinators of successful mentoring programs). Peer debriefing followed the focus groups and interviews, as did member checks. The peer-debriefing process involved the researchers and the research assistant retelling the participants' stories from the interviews and focus groups. This process provided them with an opportunity to identify the shared opinions and perspectives of the new faculty and administrators. It also allowed the researchers to reflect on emergent themes and topics. The member check involved e-mailing the data transcripts to each participant to check for accuracy, as well as to confirm the researchers' summarized data on emergent themes and topics.

RESULTS

Survey Results

The survey consisted of three questions about mentoring programs and two demographic questions. In all, 145 surveys were distributed to deans (16 sent; 5 responded), department heads (36 sent; 17 responded), and new faculty (93 sent; 53 responded). The overall response rate was 52%. In an effort to ensure relatively high-return rates, a one-page survey was designed.

Table 1 provides analysis of the survey data for each question and corresponding comments provided by participants. As Table 1 shows, the survey results indicated that, while there is overwhelming agreement that mentoring programs are important, there are issues and barriers to implementing and sustaining effective mentoring relationships. Such issues and barriers include: finding a balance between structured (organized) and unstructured (spontaneous) mentoring programs; defining the purpose of the program; selecting suitable mentors; and developing appropriate reward/recognition procedures.

Table 1: *Survey Results*

Question 1: I believe a mentoring program for new faculty is worthwhile (agree / disagree)

Faculty (n=75)	Agree	Disagree	Comments
New Faculty (n=53)	52	1	• *There is too much variety among departments for an external mentoring program to be effective.*
Heads of Departments (n=17)	16	1	• *Mentoring is important BUT a program (i.e., trying to organize it) is counter productive. You can't mandate this or force a fit – it needs to be more spontaneous.*
Deans (n=5)	4	1	• *What is the purpose of a mentoring program? To deal with admin? Teaching? Research? Everything?*

Q2: How do you think mentors should be selected?

		comments
New Faculty (n=53)	Selected by department heads 27%	*• Head of department selects a mentor for new faculty from a list of potential candidates, including his/herself, and discusses who the people are and gives some background.*
	Self-select (volunteers) 25%	*• Collaborative decision between new faculty and individuals interested in mentoring.*
	New faculty select their own mentors 29%	*• It is good that when the new faculty member arrives, she/he already has a mentor, but after 2-3 months, new faculty become more familiar with others and should select his/her own mentor.*
	Other 19%	*• Heads should nominate/request mentors and it is important that it is managed.*
Heads of Departments (N=17)	Selected by department heads 65%	*• All of the above, whoever is best.* *• A combination of all.*
	Self-select (volunteers) 12%	*• All options are possible; there should be no prescription, although it is a head's responsibility.*
	New faculty select their own mentors 23%	*• In a flexible way, maybe both self-selected and pre-selected "offers." Some might have a clear idea who to select, some not.*
	Other 0%	

Deans (n=5)	Selected by department heads 40%	• *Dean or department head, in combination with potential mentor and mentee.* • *Combination volunteers are vetted by heads according to program.* • *Mentors should be restricted to high performers with very good records.*
	Self-select (volunteers) 20%	
	New faculty select their own mentors 40%	
	Other 0%	

Q3: How do you think mentors should be rewarded for their time commitment to a mentoring program?

	Most frequent suggestions	**comments**
New Faculty	- Recognition in the services component of the annual review. - Free campus services/goods (faculty club/gym/micro store/bookstore). - Annual award/ participation certificate.	• *A mentoring program is a valuable idea and I would benefit. There are benefits for the mentor too. So I'm not sure there needs to be a reward for it.* • *It is important that a mentoring program does not take up a lot of the mentor's time.* • *Everyone is busy, maybe too busy for this.* • *It is essential both the mentors and mentees are willing participants. But mentors often don't get recognition for their time spent.*

Heads of Departments	- Recognition in the services component of annual reviews. - No reward (mentoring is its own reward and the duty of senior faculty).	• *Many new faculty will do a better job if they receive some orientation and training.* • *The problem is, who will do the mentoring and why would people choose to mentor instead of publish or apply for grants? High performers are the most suitable mentors, but they are also very busy people.* • *Mentoring will work best when designed as an informal process. When informal, there would be no formal recognition process.* • *Mentoring programs should be a shared responsibility. When it is shared by everyone, there is no need to reward it.* • *It should be a 'within' departmental program.*
Deans	- A letter to the mentor's file from senior administration for the annual merit exercise. - Formal recognition through annual merit reports. - Recognition as an administration load/ duty.	• *Mentoring programs should only be implemented if they are not onerous for either the mentor or the mentee.* • *Mentoring programs should be restricted to high performers with good records.* • *Mentoring programs are, by and large, an excellent concept, but often go unrecognised.*

Not surprisingly, the results for Question #1 showed that 96% (across the three groups) of respondents agreed that mentoring programs are worthwhile. The most informative aspect of this question, however, was the participants' comments. In particular, the survey respondents perceived that formal and structured programs are less effective than spontaneous and naturally forming mentoring relationships.

The responses to Question #2, which asked how mentors should be selected for a mentoring program, were diverse. Table 1 notes the responses of new faculty, department heads, and deans. Similar to the first ques-

tion, the comments revealed opinion differences among the three groups. Specifically, although the majority of department heads and new faculty believed that the mentor-selection process should be flexible (with department heads initiating pairings), they also believed that new faculty should have the option of changing mentors as the relationship progressed. In contrast, the deans believed that mentors should be assigned and restricted to high performers with exemplary achievement records.

Question #3 asked survey participants how mentors should be rewarded. If mentoring programs are to be sustainable, it is particularly important to recognize those who participate as mentors. The commitment of high-level administrators (e.g., deans and department heads) and other key faculty is necessary for any mentoring program to succeed. On this question, deans and department heads shared a similar view that formal recognition need only be provided through annual merit reports—if at all. As one department head noted, "There is no need for recognition; mentoring is its own reward and the duty of senior faculty." There were numerous comments relating to the added burden that mentoring places on senior faculty members. And although there was recognition from new faculty members that mentoring could be recognized on annual merit reports, there were also a considerable number of comments suggesting that recognition should be provided in a more public way (e.g., a president's lunch for mentors, mentoring t-shirts, annual mentoring awards).

Focus Group

Seventeen new faculty members agreed to participate in the focus group. Those who participated were from the faculties of Education, Communication and Culture, Social Sciences, Engineering, Business, Humanities, and Medicine. They were asked: *Where – within the areas of teaching, research, and service – did they need the most help?* As with the survey, reactions to this question were diverse and varied between departments and faculties. Table 2 provides an overview of the responses from new faculty.

Table 2: *Focus Group with New Faculty*

Question	New faculty need:
Where – within the areas of teaching, research, and service – do they need the most help?	• Help developing research programs • Help understanding expectations for tenure and promotion • More feedback on their teaching performance and research activities – prior to annual reviews • Less collegial incivility; more collegial communities

On the topic of research, the participants indicated that they wanted, and needed, more help with their research programs. Some specific examples of where help was needed included meeting grant application due dates, having someone with expertise review their grants, and having a pool of examples of successful grants to review. In more general terms, many of the new faculty expressed a need for help in other areas related to conducting research, such as access to library materials, to labs and computers, and to support staff. As one new faculty member noted, "I've been here for a couple of months now and I am still not exactly sure as to what the function is of research services and why I have to submit my grant application there instead of mailing it myself." Another participant commented on that remark with a question: "Does anyone here know if there are staff resources available to edit and review my grant application?" As the conversation ensued, it became clear that some new faculty members were at an advantage because they had knowledge of certain university resources, including the knowledge that research services will review research proposals for all faculty members. Other new faculty members were aware of "new faculty starter grants," while many others said they had never heard of them.

Approximately half of the focus-group participants stated a need for greater clarity with respect to expectations. In particular, they perceived expectations by their department heads as unclear and/or impossible to achieve. One new faculty member expressed how the high standards required for tenure were causing her considerable anxiety and stress:

> I've moved my two children and my husband to [this city] and now I wonder what I have done. I asked my husband to support me during this cycle of my career, as I supported him when we were first married. Now I wonder what the future holds. I think it is impossible for me, as a professor and mother of two young children, to ever achieve tenure. I hear from some of the other faculty in my department that I must publish two or three refereed papers a year, as well as a book, before I can go for tenure. Oh yes, and I have to get grants too. I believe my future here is very uncertain. I've shared this with my husband and it has caused considerable strain on our marriage.

Others expressed that there was little, if any, ongoing feedback on their teaching performance and research activities. One participant stated: "It is a mystery to me how and why I was asked to teach a course in environmental engineering when my area of expertise is in mechanical engineering." Another participant who had also been assigned a course that was not in her area of expertise said that "on top of teaching courses that I have to prepare for, and also learn about, I am hearing from other new faculty in my

department that I am expected to apply, successfully, for grants—and publish 3-5 papers a year." For many new faculty members, the only feedback they received on their performance was through their annual reports. When asked, many of the focus-group participants could not state the criteria/expectations required for promotion and tenure—only "hearsay" from other faculty members, which tended to be inconsistent. One consistent concern, expressed by all focus-group members, was the "publish or parish" credo and the long days required to achieve both publishing and teaching expectations.

Many of these participants also wanted more supportive and collegial approaches that would help them gain greater research and publishing skills. Moreover, some indicated that as a result of the annual review process, they ended up competing with their colleagues, which contributed to their feelings of isolation and loneliness. On this note, one participant shared this concern:

> When I was offered, and accepted, this position my family and I were very excited about moving here. I was really looking forward to working with other academics in my field and making new friends. I had a vision of a research team, where we would work on research projects together, apply for grants together, publish together – and have some fun in and out of work. I have made no new friends. Everyone does their own thing in my faculty, which is hard for me because I am a very social person. I am wondering if I have made a serious blunder in my choice of career.

This quote illustrates the desire of new and early faculty to be part of a community and to have a sense of belongingness. This is also consistent with research conducted by Austin (2002) and by Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin (2000).

Another concern expressed by a few new faculty members was collegial incivility. A number of the focus-group participants nodded in agreement after hearing one participant relate the following experience:

> It's clear to me now that I was hired – or at least perceived to be hired – because I am a female and a visible minority. My white male colleague who also applied for this position, and his supportive friends, seem to be on a mission to make it clear to me that I am not welcome within the department and I cannot possibly be a successful faculty member. They make it their mission, at every given opportunity, to point out in public how utterly stupid I am. I have no desire to work in this kind of place and I have begun to actively search for another position.

Although not all participants said they experienced this kind of "un-welcome," it was agreed that a workshop on how to deal with collegial inci-vility would be appreciated and useful.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews with four department heads who had successfully established mentoring programs were conducted with the aim of gaining further insights into implementing and administrating effective and sustainable mentoring relationships. These departmental programs were created as a faculty-wide initiative, with the deans of each faculty mandating the mentor-ing program for each department.

An interview guide consisting of five questions drawn from recurring issues identified in the literature was used. Each interview lasted from 30 to 60 minutes and was later transcribed and e-mailed to each participant for member checks. Table 3 provides an overview of the questions and responses. It is followed by a discussion of each question and the responses to it.

Table 3: *Semi-structured Interviews with Department Heads*

Question	Responses
1. How are mentors assigned and why?	• Department head assigns mentors • Pairings are made on specific characteristics such as similar research interests, availability, good citizenship, and years experience
2. Are there scheduled and regular meetings with mentors and mentees? (Probe: If not, why?)	• Meetings are not scheduled or mandatory • How often and when to meet is the responsibility of the new faculty member (do not want to make the process too structured or militant)
3. Are pairings within the department? (Probe: If so, why not use cross-departmental pairings?)	• All pairings are within departments • The success of the pairing depends on it being a within department program • Within departmental pairings strengthen the department
4. How do you deal with the two perils of mentoring relationships: sexual harassment and dependency?	• Sexual harassment has never been a problem, nor has mentee dependency
5. What are the benefits that you think are gained through mentoring programs?	• A strong department • Helps new faculty prepare for their new roles • Better success rates with research grants

How Are Mentors Assigned and Why?

The responses to this question revealed that, although there tends to be some negotiation, the department head assigns mentors. Typically, mentor selection is based on a number of specific characteristics, such as common research interests, availability of faculty, and experience. One department head, for example, makes efforts to pair new faculty with full professors, based on common areas of expertise, while another looks for good citizenship qualities in a mentor. One department has taken a more formal approach and identified specific characteristics of mentors in a departmental document developed for its mentoring program:

Mentors should be experienced, knowledgeable and willing. Typically, they will hold the rank of Professor, Emeritus Professor or they will be at the senior level of the Associate rank. They should have the ability and character to offer wise confidential counsel that is consistent with the intent of the mentoring program. This requires that, in providing counsel, the mentor balance the interests of the mentee against the larger interests of the University and its students.

Are the Meetings with Mentors and Mentees Scheduled (If Not, Why)?

Consistent with the responses to the survey of new faculty, meetings between mentors and new faculty members are neither scheduled nor mandatory. For the most part, department heads initiate the pairing, but the responsibility for how often and when to meet is left to the new faculty member. As one department head observed: "There is a concern about being too structured. We are all adults, and it seems to work well when the mentor and mentee set the meetings themselves."

Are the Pairings Within the Department? If So, Why Not Use Cross-Departmental Pairings?

Without exception, the pairings were done within the departments. Although some literature on mentoring programs indicates that cross-departmental pairings have a number of advantages (with the number one advantage being confidentiality), the department heads who were inter-viewed indicated, overwhelmingly, that the success of their mentoring program rested on it being a "within department" program. According to one of them, "Keeping it within the department results in the least amount of fuss possible." This department head asserted further: "When we work together within the department, it strengthens the department. When the department succeeds, we all benefit." However, three of the four department heads interviewed did add that finding appropriate matches with senior faculty members who have the necessary characteristics is a challenge. As one department head lamented:

> I have a problem with finding mentors – and in our department, because it has traditionally been a male dominated discipline, finding female role models and mentors is a problem. I might add, too, that the female faculty here are already overburdened and two of our best are retiring this year. And, I'll add further, that I am losing three other senior faculty to retirement this year. It is a problem. I have had to begin including high-performing associate professors to the list of potential mentors. I have mixed feelings about this.

How Do You Deal With the Two Perils of a Mentoring Relationship: Sexual Harassment and Dependency?

All those interviewed indicated, without hesitation, that sexual harassment was not a problem. However, three of the four department heads who were interviewed noted that female faculty members and some non-traditional faculty members have unique needs and careful efforts are made in the pairing process. One department head observed:

> Women have different issues. Many take on the role of parent in addition to faculty member. A mentoring program by women for women would help women in that it could provide them with additional tools . . . and support each other's career development.

Likewise, all of the interviewees indicated that dysfunctional dependency of a new faculty member on a mentor had never been an issue. According to one department head, he did not have this problem because of departmental hiring procedures. Specifically, he noted, "I think we avoid this kind of person [who would be dependent] based on our hiring practices."

What Are the Benefits That You Think Are Gained Through Mentoring Programs?

The greatest benefit of a mentoring program is having a strong department. As one department head stated: "When we hire new faculty and when we help them through a mentoring program, new faculty have a fighting chance. It is really a waste of our time (and theirs) if they do not succeed." Moreover, three of the four department heads who were interviewed provided examples of how mentoring programs can help both a department and new faculty. Two of them stated that, as a result of their mentoring programs, their new faculty have had 100% success rates with their NSERC [a Canadian federal funding agency] applications.

A final piece of advice for departments and/or faculties who are wondering about the benefits of mentoring programs was provided by one of the department heads:

> I can still remember what a challenge it was when I was a new faculty member because I felt singularly unprepared to be a faculty member with new expectations. Therefore, my only advice is to be sure that mentoring is available.

DISCUSSION

Before beginning a discussion of this present study, its limitations need to be acknowledged. Although three decades of research have shown, with consistency, that mentoring relationships benefit new faculty, experienced

faculty, and the institution, the literature has yet to reveal why institutions of higher education experience difficulties in implementing and sustaining effective mentoring programs. The aim of this exploratory study was to gain an understanding of the complex issues and barriers involved in facilitating mentoring relationships in higher education settings; its outcomes have provided insights into the issues and barriers to implementing effective and sustainable mentoring programs. However, since the data do not represent feedback from a large and/or randomly selected population, the conclusions drawn from this investigation are not generalizable and should be transferred with caution.

There is a need to build on the issues and barriers identified in this study with a larger and more-diverse group of participants. Further research should also include the perspectives of senior faculty members who have engaged in mentoring relationships. Many important insights could be gained from experienced mentors. Conversely, senior faculty members who have had unsuccessful mentoring relationships should also be included in further research. Important lessons could be learned from failed attempts to initiate mentoring programs and/or relationships.

What can be concluded from this study is the perceived value of and need for mentoring programs from the perspectives of administrators, new faculty, and coordinators of successful mentoring programs. Study participants recognized the need to help new and early faculty to better integrate into the larger university culture, as well as the need to provide them with opportunities and support not only for professional growth leading to successful tenure and promotion but also for personal growth, including a balance between personal and professional commitments and the increasing demands placed on them to publish and secure grants.

Consistent with prior research on designing mentoring programs, the outcomes of this study indicate that to be effective and sustainable, mentoring programs must include these essential components: mentor selection; mentor and mentee preparation; department and institutional support; and accountability (Kajs, 2002). However, this study also revealed the existence of barriers to implementing and sustaining effective mentoring programs. These barriers include reward systems, time, resources, and structuring of mentoring programs.

A ***Reward System*** is, perhaps, the easiest barrier to overcome. The results of the survey indicated that mentoring can be formally recognized in a number of ways, with the most frequent suggestion being recognition on annual reports as a service to the university community. Although some survey respondents noted that recognition and reward for mentoring are not necessary, acknowledgment of mentoring activities on annual reports establishes a clear recognition of value for those who participate as mentors and ensures

it is recognized by high-level administrators. The commitment of high-level administrators and key faculty is necessary for any mentoring initiative to succeed.

Time Barriers, which some survey respondents indicated can hamper mentoring relationships, are likely more of a perceived barrier than a real barrier to facilitating effective mentoring relationships. The time commitment necessary to develop and sustain a meaningful relationship is a one-year partnership between a new and a senior faculty member, which is focused on the first year of appointment. During this year, there should be frequent contact for guidance at agreed-upon intervals; this often amounts to one to two hours per month or 15 to 30 minutes per week. Admittedly, this extra time commitment may be a problem for some faculty members, but it is not an onerous amount of time for most. The use of group mentoring may reduce this time commitment further.

Resource Barriers, however, are real and not so easily overcome. The main resource concern, which is critical to effective mentoring programs, is the mentor pool. Identifying mentors with the necessary critical attributes and creating a mentor pool to draw from are essential to developing and sustaining effective mentoring relationships. Effective mentors are experienced faculty members who have successfully achieved tenure and promotion, as well as other traditional milestones of academic achievement. Additionally, mentors should be interested, supportive, knowledgeable, competent, giving, non-exploitative, and involved in research (Cronan-Hillix, Gensheimer, Cronan-Hillix, & Davidson, 1986). According to a recent study by McNellis (2004), the picture of an effective mentor is one of:

> . . . a highly vital professor, committed to actively maintaining a high level of performance, who cares about interpersonal relationships, and who values an interactive life-long process of learning. Inherent qualities of effective mentors included: empathic, perceptive listening; a passion for learning; collaborative/collegial style; high self-esteem; trustworthiness; and flexibility. The patterns of shared experience included: sharing in the teaching/learning process; growing; rethinking work; valuing the interpersonal relationship; giving back to the institution/discipline; and being a guide/watching the mentee grow. (p. 2)

Senior faculty members who possess these characteristics are frequently difficult to find and are often already taxed with too many university service committees. As one of the interview participants in this study noted, the problem of finding a critical mass of suitable mentors is becoming even more of a quandary as large numbers of senior faculty members retire.

The *Structure of Mentoring Programs* is the final barrier revealed by this study. The results of this investigation have shown that approaches to

implementing and sustaining effective mentoring relationships should take on a loosely structured format (rather than spontaneous), initiated through faculty departments (rather than the institution). In particular, because the responsibility for hiring new faculty members rests at the department level, the most effective mentoring programs are found at the department level. Further, effective mentoring programs fit the culture and environment of the department in which new faculty members reside. Nevertheless, although the department will have the greatest impact on initiating effective mentoring programs, the culture of the faculty and the broader institutional policies and values will also affect what mentors do and what new and early faculty members learn. Thus, although mentoring programs should reside within departments, there is a need to provide formal institutional support for mentoring programs and opportunities for the development of interdepartmental relationships.

As mentioned, reward systems and time constraints are the easiest barriers to overcome when initiating mentoring programs; securing resources and determining the best way to structure the programs are the most difficult. These two difficult barriers might be overcome by rethinking traditional models of mentoring, what Haring et al. (1999) referred to as the *grooming mentor* model. Haring and colleagues rejected this model, arguing that traditional models do little to support a collaborative and collegial environment that fosters the new ways of thinking that are needed in increasingly diverse and postmodern university environments. Further, pairings within a department serve the interests of the department administrators more than the interests of new faculty members.

Mullen and Lick (1999) also cautioned against traditional mentoring pairs. Instead, they advocated mentoring models that embrace reciprocal partnerships in ways that value the contributions of both mentors and mentees, which, in turn, can result in much-needed changes for the institution. According to Mullen (2000), a co-mentoring relationship, or a *mentoring mosaic* model, involves recursive relationships, which result in synergistic interactions and which can be characterized by practice that is dynamic and "has no agenda to preserve hierarchies, power imbalances, or institutions as we know them" (p. xi). Sandler (1993) has also argued that the commonly held beliefs that the best mentors are older and that the relationship should be structured as a dyad are myths. Sandler maintained that a person does not have to be older, or middle-aged, to be an effective mentor and that having multiple social networks can expand a mentee's ability to develop allies and alliances. On this note, Sandler cautioned:

Relying primarily on a mentor for emotional support, as well as for information, evaluation, coaching, and introductions, means that a mentor has to be superior on all fronts – a hard task for any human being. Relationships in

social networks, however, often involve reciprocal exchanges of information and allow people to draw information and support from a number of quarters. (p. B3)

Using a mosaic mentoring model that involves peer networking, partnership support groups, and communities of teachers/researchers, according to McNellis (2004), is part of a new pedagogy for continuing education. Such a model of continuing education can address the resource barrier identified in this study by relieving the pressure to locate mentors who have both experience and expertise. A mosaic mentoring model is also effective for structuring mentoring programs that support the conditions necessary for identity transformation—viewing all faculty members as lifelong learners. Further research into the effectiveness of mosaic mentoring is needed. In particular, research is needed to address how to develop institutionally appropriate models.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Despite the very positive impacts of mentoring documented in three decades of research, not all mentoring relationships are successful (Sandler, 1993). Co-operative and group mentoring models, such as the mosaic mentoring model, offer a structure for mentoring programs that have a greater likelihood of overcoming the barriers identified in this study. Problems that tend to cause traditional mentoring relationships to fail often arise from the unstructured and spontaneous hierarchical dyads that characterize them. Boyle (1996) maintained that successful mentoring begins with institution-wide programs that provide support and resources to achieve a sense of connectiveness for new and early faculty members. Later research by Boyle and Boice (1998) revealed a strong justification for systematic mentoring and institution-wide programs: "Less than a quarter of new faculty found mentors on their own; few of those pairs persisted; most were restricted to white males" (p. 176). Research by Kalbfleisch and Davies (1993) supported these findings. Kalbfleisch and Davies concluded that those individuals who need help the most (e.g., visible minorities, non-traditional faculty, and women) are the least likely to find it. Wunsch (1994b) advanced this argument further by asserting that when individuals agree to enter into a mentoring relationship related to academic and career goals, the relationship moves from the personal to the institutional realm; this can result in inequity of opportunities, which the institution must address. To be exact, when some individuals have access to certain career advantages (e.g., mentoring relationships) and others do not, inequity of career opportunities (e.g., advancement, promotion) occurs. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that all individuals have equity of access to the same career opportunities. Structured mentoring relationships, such as the mosaic mentoring model, are key to ensuring equity of access to mentoring relationships.

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