Building an Effective Mentoring Network

Michigan State University
ADAPP – ADVANCE Project
East Lansing, MI
January 10-11, 2011

Mary Deane Sorcinelli,
Associate Provost for Faculty Development
Professor of Educational Policy, Research and Administration
University of Massachusetts Amherst

msorcinelli@acad.umass.edu
www.umass.edu/ofd
To identify potential roadblocks to professional success and personal well-being of faculty;

To explore both traditional and emerging models of mentoring, with an emphasis on a “Mutual Mentoring” model;

To examine practices that encourage faculty to build their own mentoring networks;

To assess the impact of Mutual Mentoring.
Potential “Roadblocks” in Academia

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- and Senior” Faculty

- Choosing among “forks in the road”/ legacy
- Keeping up with discipline and learning new skills
- Navigating promotion and shifting expectations
- Sustaining work/life balance
- Building new networks, resources, support
“The hardest thing is to do a good job with a career that could consume all available time, pay attention to a spouse and children, publish or perish, teach well, lead an examined life, and keep out of debt.”

-- Early career faculty member
Mentoring is a key to addressing these “roadblocks.” It has also been proven to be one of the common characteristics of a successful academic career, particularly for women and faculty of color.

Outcomes accruing include:

- Stronger commitment to a career in academe
- Stronger record of scholarly productivity
- More effective teaching
- Increased rates of retention/tenure/promotion
- Benefits to the mentor

(Johnson, 2007)
Formal Mentoring Programs

- If you **have a formal mentoring program** in your department/college, what are some of the **benefits and 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?
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 & Under-Represented Faculty
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, of formal & informal mentoring that encourages:

- A broad network of multiple, diverse mentors
- A variety of mentoring approaches
- A focus on areas of experience or expertise, rather than “one-size-fits-all” knowledge;
- A more proactive approach to mentoring
- Opportunities to be mentored and mentor others
- Benefits the “protégé,” and the “mentor”
Multiple Points of Entry… and Exit

Campus-Wide

Departmental/Interdisciplinary

Inter-Institutional

Individual

(Gilles Trehin, 2006)
Departmental Mentoring

Anthropology Mentoring Before

Ad Hoc Mentor
A Department-Wide MM “Team”

Anthropology Mentoring After

- Senior Faculty
- Dept. Chair
- Peers
- Five Colleges
- External Mentor
- Alumnae/i

Internal Mentoring Partners

External Mentoring Partners
Departmental Mentoring

Microbiology Mentoring Before

Chair Mentor?
A Department-Wide MM “Team”

Microbiology Mentoring

- Senior Faculty
- Dept. Chair
- Spouses
- Program Officers
- Peers
- External Mentor

Internal Mentoring Partners

External Mentoring Partners
A School/College/Interdisciplinary “Team”

Life Sciences Women Faculty:

- Large Group
- Small Group
- STEM Women
- Carol Gross
- External Mentor

Internal Mentoring Partners

External Mentoring Partners
Individual Mentoring Before
Art & Art History: Enhance skills in teaching and creative activity.

Brought 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 MFA graduate candidates and undergraduates in department
Biology: Learn new research/teaching skills and mentor students.

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

Small group mentoring of students/peers back in his department
Individual Mutual Mentoring cont’d

Engineering: Enhance teaching skills.

Dept. Chair

Team-taught course in Thermodynamics with department chair; One-on-one mentoring on teaching practices after each class

Dept. Colleagues

Small group mentoring from two award-winning faculty in department

External Mentor

External mentoring at career development workshop at professional conference
**Individual Mutual Mentoring cont’d**

**English:** Further work on book writing and student writing.

External mentoring of pair by editor and writing coach

Peer mentoring partnership that met twice monthly to work on own writing, discuss student writing
Institution-Wide Points of Entry to “MM”

Office of Faculty Development Programs

- Orientations and Welcoming
- Scholarly Writing
- Tenure Preparation
- Time Management/Work/Life Balance
- Mutual Mentoring Initiative
- Leadership Development
- Redesigned OFD website: www.umass.edu/ofd

Campus Partners: Center for Teaching, Library, Research Affairs, Academic Computing
Questions?

- How might “Mutual Mentoring” enhance your department/school/college mentoring programs?

- How might “Mutual Mentoring” complicate your department/school/college mentoring programs?

- Others?
Does Mutual Mentoring Work?

- 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).
Does “MM” Work at UMass Amherst?

**Assessment:**

Included collecting, analyzing and responding to quantitative and qualitative data in the following ways:

- Intake Meetings
- Designated Liaisons to Teams
- “Logs” of Team and Micro Grant Activities
- Mid-term Formative Assessment
- Standardized End-of-Year Survey
Global *evaluation scores* for the Mellon team grants have increased annually.

- **Likelihood of Mellon-Funded Mentoring Relationships to Continue**
  - 68% in 2006-07
  - 71% in 2007-08
  - 74% in 2008-09
  - 79% in 2009-10

- **Mellon Team Grant Participants Who Rated Their Mentoring Experience "Excellent" or "Very Good"**
  - 71% in 2006-07
  - 87% in 2007-08
  - 95% in 2008-09
  - 94% in 2009-10
Global evaluation scores for Mellon individual grant recipients have also increased annually.

- Likelihood of Mellon-Funded Mentoring Relationships to Continue
- Mellon Individual Grant Recipients Who Rated Their Mentoring Experience "Excellent" or "Very Good"
UMass tenure-stream women have also participated at high rates (49% of their total population on campus).

- Female Faculty Who Have Participated (163)
- Female Faculty Who Have Not Yet Participated (176)
Faculty of Color

UMass tenure-stream faculty of color have participated in the Mellon Grant Programs at significantly high rates (54% of their total population on campus).

- Faculty of Color Who Have Participated (104)
- Faculty of Color Who Have Not Yet Participated (90)
Why Mutual Mentoring Works

- Open to all tenure-track faculty vs. targeting groups
- Expands vs. diminishes “traditional paradigm” of mentoring
- Projects customized/faculty-driven vs. generic/imposed from above
- Invests in faculty through GRANTS! With PIs! (the coin of the realm in research universities)
- Created streamlined grant proposal process and budgeting
- Pilot, pilot, pilot and continuous assessment
- Created multiple entre and exit points for mentoring
"Mutual Mentoring is such a commonsense approach to learning…it mirrors the academic mission in that it encourages discourse and values the experiences of everyone in the room, no matter their rank."
Based on this session, what is one idea for building a mentoring network that you can take with you?
Mutual Mentoring Guide

http://www.umass.edu/ofd/mentoring/resources.html