TITLE: Diversifying for Sustainability: Repurposing a Targeted Pilot Faculty Mentoring Program
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ABSTRACT

For most junior faculty at Indiana University – Purdue University Columbus, dissatisfaction with traditional mentoring, that is, pairing with a senior departmental colleague for open-ended mentoring, was a fact of faculty life. In 2015-16, the authors addressed this ineffective reality by implementing a grant funded pilot program to provide targeted mentoring on career self-efficacy for under-represented, pre-promotion faculty. Mentors received training and were matched with mentees. Assessment demonstrated program effectiveness. Participants made measurable gains in general self-efficacy; increasing their self-confidence, establishing more robust social supports, and learning new strategies for career success. Upon program completion, we sought a sustainable modification of the program to more broadly serve all faculty. Feedback from focus groups led us to diversify the program by creating a "mentor bureau" and conducting mentee-only peer mentoring sessions. The bureau helps mentees form a local mentoring network or "map" (Rockquemore, 2013). We asked mentors to identify areas of expertise and mentees to choose from among these topics. In 2016-17, the mentoring bureau enlisted 15 mentors who mentored 11 mentees. Including program leaders, 44% (27 of 62) of full-time faculty participated in the bureau. Peer-mentoring was conducted through informal discussions at monthly mentee-only lunches. Feedback indicates satisfaction with both program components. Mentees reported that they gained expertise through the mentoring bureau and built relationships in the peer mentoring meetings. We are pleased to have the opportunity to share our sustainable and diverse mentoring model that successfully complements traditional mentoring.

CONTENT

Pilot Program

Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC) is a school of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). IUPUC serves close to 1,500 students and offers ten bachelor degree programs and two graduate degree programs. IUPUC's 62 full-time faculty members are spread across six divisions: business, education, engineering, liberal arts, nursing, and science.

In fall 2014, IUPUI established a Mentoring Academy as part of the university's strategic commitment to faculty development (IUPUI, 2014). The IUPUI Mentoring Academy initiated a grant competition among IUPUI's 17 schools to develop pilot programs meeting the unique mentoring needs of faculty in each school. The authors of this report volunteered to prepare IUPUC's pilot program proposal for the IUPUI Mentoring Academy.

In early 2015, we conducted a mentoring needs assessment that revealed that the majority of IUPUC's junior faculty members - especially those belonging to under-represented groups - were dissatisfied with the mentoring they had received. At the time, IUPUC relied exclusively on traditional intra-divisional mentoring, that is, junior faculty members are assigned a senior divisional colleague for open-ended unstructured mentoring. This mentoring model - by all

accounts - was largely ineffective and inadequate. Consequently, the authors designed their proposal to supplement traditional divisional mentoring assignments with targeted, structured mentoring on career self-efficacy for under-represented, pre-promotion faculty. IUPUI and IUPUC funded the proposal for $9,284 and the pilot was implemented in 2015-16.

Pilot program mentors were provided with readings (e.g., Johnson 2015, Muzzatti & Samarco 2005, Schlossberg 2008, Turner & Gonzalez 2015, Zachary 2012) and received training on mentoring best practices. Additionally, they were paired with mentees based on interests in teaching, research, or campus culture and provided with a suggested structure (e.g. frequency and duration of mentoring meetings) by which to conduct their mentoring experience.

Expanded Program

Our pilot program was outcome-oriented: it was designed to increase career self-efficacy for under-represented pre-promotion faculty. Statistical analysis of a battery of assessment instruments demonstrated that this goal was met. Mentees made measurable gains in self-efficacy; increasing their self-confidence, establishing more robust social supports, and learning new strategies for career success. Based on the success of the pilot, we sought a sustainable expansion of the program to serve all faculty and to meet mentees' self-identified goals.

We designed our expanded program to deliver a mentoring process based on relationship building and networking instead of the specific outcome of career self-efficacy. Our shift in emphasis follows qualitative pilot program assessment. In follow-up focus groups, participants called attention to the pilot's pairing of mentees and mentors from different disciplines and divisions. These pairings were necessary due to IUPUC's small number of faculty spread across a broad scope of disciplines. While we expected that participants would perceive unfamiliarity with each other's fields to be a drawback, they reported that networking with colleagues from other disciplines proved valuable. They learned about different academic cultures and the importance of interdisciplinary mentors. When asked for suggestions for program improvement, mentees proposed creating a "bureau" of mentors offering guidance on teaching, research, service, and university culture. In their focus group, mentees envisioned that building relationships with multiple mentors would continuously refresh their knowledge and skills. To further ensure effective networking, mentees also suggested that the program include peer mentoring.

Pilot program feedback parallels the consensus in the mentoring literature that mentoring networks are more effective than mentoring dyads. For example, Kerry Ann Rockquemore, President and CEO of the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD), has publicized that the traditional assignment of a sole mentor rests on the unrealistic assumption that mentors are "gurus" who omnisciently address all of their protégé's needs (Rockquemore 2010, 2013). Instead, the NCFDD's mentoring "map" flips the traditional mentoring script by asking mentees to identify their professional needs and then find separate mentors to guide them in each area (Rockquemore 2016).

The changing landscape of higher education has increased the advantages of establishing mentoring networks (Beane-Katner 2014). As traditional assurances of academic job security erode, a senior faculty member imparting their mastery of the local university landscape becomes

less valuable than a team of mentors each imparting transferable knowledge and skills (de Janasz & Sullivan 2004). To operationalize network-based mentoring, we took the advice of our pilot program participants and the experts in the mentoring field and replaced the dyadic mentoring model we employed in the pilot with a mentor bureau and a peer mentoring program.

We anticipated that the mentor bureau and peer mentoring would produce two broad outcomes: relationship building and achievement. Relationship building reflects and reinforces self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Johnson 2015, Niehaus & O'Meara 2014). Empirical research also confirms that networking also leads to externally recognized achievements (Lumpkin 2011, van Emmerik 2004). For example, benefits from networking include better job opportunities, higher salaries, and enhanced prestige (Johnson 2015, Niehaus & O'Meara 2014). Networking is particularly valuable for professors in the early and middle stages of their careers and to those from under-represented groups (Peluchette & Jeanquart 2000, Turner & Gonzalez 2015).

Mentor Bureau

The bureau localizes the NCFDD's mentoring map. Through our mentor bureau, we hoped that mentees and mentors would make multiple mentoring matches on topics of mutual interest. We solicited faculty participation with an announcement that included the following description of the bureau:

> To augment the holistic one-on-one mentoring typically supplied by divisional mentors, mentors will offer guidance in their areas of expertise to one or more mentees. The bureau will give mentees targeted mentoring and, by limiting the scope of mentoring, lighten mentors' responsibilities.

Of IUPUC's 62 full-time faculty, 15 served on the mentor bureau. As in the pilot, mentors were provided with readings on mentoring. After an orientation session, they identified the topics they would offer to mentees. The number of topics per mentor ranged from one to eight with an average of 4.5 and a median of 5.

We then distributed a list of mentors and their topics to the 11 faculty who enlisted as mentees (two participated as both mentors and mentees). Mentees returned their prioritized selections of mentors and topics. Based on mentees' preferences and mentors' availability, we made tentative matches. Participants then confirmed or readjusted these suggestions. Three of the mentees worked with one mentor, seven had two mentors, and one had three mentors. Therefore, there were 20 matches on specific mentoring topics.

Teaching topics – for example, online course development, teaching philosophies, time management, grading strategies, teaching controversial topics (race, gender, etc.), and class presentation techniques - were most common and represented half of the pairings (10). Navigating tenure and/or promotion was the second leading category with five matches. Discussions involved succeeding with the promotion and tenure process, promoting self during the process, establishing research agendas, interdisciplinary research collaborations, research trajectories, writing IRB protocols, publishing, and collaborating with other disciplines. The remaining matches focused on service and campus culture. For example, mentors and mentees discussed participation in faculty governance with a focus on faculty senate. Conversations about campus culture explored possible sources of collaboration, differences among divisions and their expectations, and the inner workings of the campus.

Not only did the number of mentoring bureau matches contribute to relationship building but the bureau's egalitarianism is likely to have encouraged personal connections. In a departure from traditional mentoring which pairs senior faculty mentors with junior faculty mentees, the bureau prioritizes topical expertise over faculty rank as a criterion for mentoring. Two lecturers, three clinical assistant professors, five tenure track assistant professors, and one tenured associate professor sought mentoring. Six lecturers, one senior lecturer, one tenure track assistant professor, six tenured associate professors, and one tenured professor served as mentors. Of the 20 matches, less than half (9) involved a mentee at a lower rank than their mentor. Conversely, in almost as many combinations (8), lecturers mentored assistant or associate professors. The remaining three pairs were comprised of faculty at the same rank.

Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring programs are effective, especially for historically underrepresented groups (Varkey et al. 2012). IUPUI's School of Dentistry has established a long running and successful peer mentoring program, based largely on principles of self-determination, mutual trust, comradery, and consistency. Our model borrowed all of these elements, with an emphasis on mentee self-direction and the creation of a "safe" space to discuss matters specific to new faculty and pre-tenure faculty. For example, each peer mentoring lunch session topic was decided by the mentees, not by administration or the mentoring program leadership. The topics chosen ranged from effective pedagogy to opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration in research. Cultural group values were discussed during the initial peer mentoring lunch and the mentees agreed: the lunch session conversations should be held in confidence to safely explore issues and build relationships – a value imperative for marginalized groups on a small campus.

The peer mentoring lunches were held once a month, alternating between a Wednesday and Thursday to accommodate as many teaching schedules as possible. At least 50% of the mentees attended each lunch session, with a total of 100% participating throughout the year. A final note on organization: the lunches were sponsored by the mentoring grant and included food from favorite community establishments. This detail – funded, delicious food – encouraged enthusiastic participation from the mentees.

Program Outcomes

Program success may be assessed with results from a post-program questionnaire. A total of 11 mentees (100%) and 13 (87%) mentors completed the survey for an overall 92% participation rate.

As intended, the mentoring bureau and peer mentoring promoted relationship building. Mentees reported satisfaction with the relationships they formed through the bureau:
- "Both mentors are very easy to talk to and share information. The mentoring bureau mentor is a more casual relationship [than that with the divisionally-assigned mentor] and focused less on specifics of P&T and more on personal experience."
- "Both of my mentors were very supportive. They asked how I was doing personally and offered very helpful and specific recommendations."
- "I think the mentoring bureau was helpful in connecting me to faculty members outside of my division."

- "We shared personal and professional information that enriched our relationship. While still new, it is a relationship that I feel could continue to grow. … My goal was to develop a new respectful relationship with someone I admired. We accomplished that."

Mentors also expressed appreciation for the relationships that grew from the bureau. Of the ten responses from mentors to the question, "What did you value most about your mentoring experience through the mentoring bureau?", seven called attention to relationship building. For example, one mentor wrote, "The thing I value most from this experience is the strengthened relationship I now have with [my mentee]."

Participants commented on the persistence of their relationships. One pair continued on a writing project they had begun in the pilot program. Several dyads stated that they would continue to work together in the future. One mentee stressed, however, that the bureau does not supplant the need for traditional mentoring which offers an important opportunity to form holistic, long term mentoring relationships.

The monthly peer mentoring sessions were highly valued by the participants as a means of relationship building. For example, they identified the following benefits of peer mentoring:
- "Meeting new people from outside of [my] division,"
- "It was very good for building relationships and understanding IUPUC culture. I enjoyed sharing with my colleagues (who were often struggling with the same problems that I was having),"
- "Relationships and culture were key gains here. Because we were from different areas I learned about those other areas as people talked about their experiences and research. It was good to compare experience and find both common and uncommon ones. It was sometimes the only socialization I had with other faculty."

Participants also achieved professional goals. Regarding teaching, mentees refined teaching strategies and philosophies, mastered online teaching practices and instructional software, and completed an online course development grant. Service-oriented outcomes included writing a degree program proposal, preparation for an upcoming seat on faculty senate, learning about programmatic assessment, and gaining perspective on campus culture. In the area of scholarship, one dyad prepared and submitted an interdisciplinary manuscript for publication, a mentee developed a research agenda and publication strategies, and a mentee gained experience directing student research.

Sustainability
In this final section, we will offer a summary discussion of program sustainability, structure, and outcomes that we hope will inform other institutions as they design and monitor their own mentoring programs. For our program planners and mentors, the pilot was labor-intensive. Well aware that sustaining this level of commitment was problematic, we were challenged to simultaneously expand the program and reduce its demands on us. The mentor bureau served this purpose in several ways. For mentors, the bureau reduces the time commitment and scope of individual mentoring assignments. On a psychological level, two mentors reported that the bureau's topical focus freed them from the unrealistic expectations made of the traditional mentor/guru. As one put it,

> I feel like I was able to make much more of a difference this year, rather than trying to mentor a tenure-track faculty member in every aspect of their academic lives last year. The mentor bureau plays much more to the strengths of the mentors.

The bureau also introduces an efficient egalitarian inclusivity which spreads the burden across the faculty and relieves senior faculty of sole responsibility for mentoring. Highly effective in its own right, peer mentoring further redistributed the mentoring effort.

For the authors who led the program, putting the bureau into motion – recruiting and orienting mentors and making matches – required a concentrated, frontloaded effort. Once in place, the self-determined mentoring relationships required little maintenance from program leaders. Organizing the monthly peer mentoring meetings entailed more regular work. This task was graciously shouldered by a program leader who also participated as a mentee: "The most positive experience I had this year was through the peer mentoring lunches. Folks always seemed happy to attend and our hour together was never enough."

Fortunately, restructuring for sustainability did not compromise program quality. Participants provided useful and affirming perspective on the structure of the mentoring bureau and the peer mentoring sessions. Upon confirmation of matches, mentoring bureau participants were free to configure their mentoring relationships. This resulted in a wide variety of arrangements. For example, one pair reported that they met daily and another that they met weekly. At the other end of the spectrum, one dyad met only once and another emailed but never met in person. General information on meeting frequency from all 20 matches was reported but is difficult to quantify. For example, two pairs indicated only that they met several times. Our best estimate is that the median number of meetings per pair was five. Therefore, given that the program began at the end of October and that our spring semester classes concluded at the end of April, mentoring bureau pairs typically met monthly. This meeting frequency matches that of a normal IUPUC committee, making mentor bureau membership consistent with a standard service role. Moving forward, program leaders will communicate to participants that monthly meetings are a realistic and reasonable expectation.

As described above, mentees and mentors commented on their satisfaction with their bureau matches. Mentees' observations are available for 15 of the 20 pairings. All of the mentees' remarks are positive. Certainly, this is an apparent indication of program success. Unanimity, however, may also reflect mentees' polite reluctance to criticize the volunteer work of their mentors and the program leaders. More concrete feedback on the matching methodology came from two mentees who expressed appreciation that the bureau, unlike traditional mentoring programs, gave them the opportunity to choose their mentors.

Mentors were also favorable. They reported on the five matches unaddressed by mentees and an additional ten matches for a total of fifteen. While they made positive remarks about all fifteen matches, three (20%) also commented on problems. In the two cases referenced above, mentors regretted the unavailability of their mentees. One mentee declined to meet after the initial meeting and the other was entirely unavailable to meet face to face. In the third case, the mentor expressed that while the mentoring relationship was positive, it "felt a bit strained" because of personality differences and unfamiliarity with each other's fields.

Suggestions for improving the peer mentoring program focused on logistical challenges. For example, participants proposed rotating the meeting day through the work week, identifying discussion topics further in advance, and, forming smaller discussion groups for topics such as grant writing and teaching. Mentees who were unable to attend meetings understood, however, that resolving all scheduling conflicts is a near impossibility.

The program delivered the twin outcomes of relationship building and achievement. Reflection on our program reinforces the realization that relationship building and achievement are inseparable. The mentoring literature reminds us that career success is increasingly dependent on networking (Johnson 2015, Lumpkin 2011, Niehaus & O'Meara 2014, van Emmerik 2004). Concomitantly, accomplishments attract prospective mentors to one's network of supportive professional relationships. In response to pilot program feedback, our redesign prioritized the process of networking to build relationships and promote success. Indeed, we realize the need to more explicitly promote relationship building to prospective participants. As one example, we recommend following the advice of our mentees and scheduling more social events. More generally, we will communicate that mentoring relationships are not only a means towards achievement but also a highly rewarding end in themselves.

Next academic year marks the third year of a revitalized mentoring program at IUPUC, and goals for next year are three-fold. First, the past two years have overall been successful, and we aim to continue facilitating a worthwhile program for faculty. Second, based on expanded program feedback, we plan to more explicitly promote relationship building by scheduling more social events to encourage personal connections. We intend to promote the notion to prospective participants that mentoring relationships are not merely a means to an end (achievement and productivity), but are intrinsically rewarding in and of themselves. Third, for the first time since beginning the mentoring program, a cohort of six new faculty will begin in fall, 2017. We intend to focus programing to fit their needs in their first year at IUPUC. We plan to welcome these faculty through mentorship opportunities which involve both relationship-building, and fostering achievement.

We hope that our journey from a pilot program providing a faculty sub-population with targeted mentoring to an expanded campus-wide program informs fellow mentoring program planners. By facilitating networking through the mentor bureau and peer mentoring, we reached more faculty with effective mentoring. While we moved away from the traditional model of pairing mentees with single all-purpose mentors, our model is a complement, not a substitute for standard intra-departmental mentoring assignments. Going forward, we will continue to provide our colleagues with access to a sustainable diversity of mentoring opportunities and target our cohort of new faculty to provide quality mentorship from their first day on campus.

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