There is No Magic to Mentoring

Definition of Mentoring

- Experienced <u>professional</u> assists another in developing knowledge and skills to enhance mentees professional and personal growth
- Someone who helps another with professional development or transition, to assist in professional growth and experience
- <u>Helping relationship</u> where one invests time and knowledge in another person's growth, knowledge, and skills to prepare for academic career, advancing or promoting a career
- Dynamic, <u>collaborative, reciprocal</u>, relationship focused on mentee's personal and professional development

Why mentoring?

- Faculty competitiveness for tenure
- New and early investigator opportunities
- Foster faculty development, enhance academic excellence
- Develop the next scientists/future scientists
- Develop faculty, quicker time to productivity
- Build a stronger faculty with increased productivity
- Encourage and support high flyers
- Support ethnic minorities and disadvantaged
- Support women – through glass ceiling
- When organization changes or new leadership, new roles (helps with transitions)

Why Mentoring at a University or Organization?

- To meet higher standards
- Understanding of institutional values
- Improves retention/stability
- Strengthens units / better prepares and productive faculty
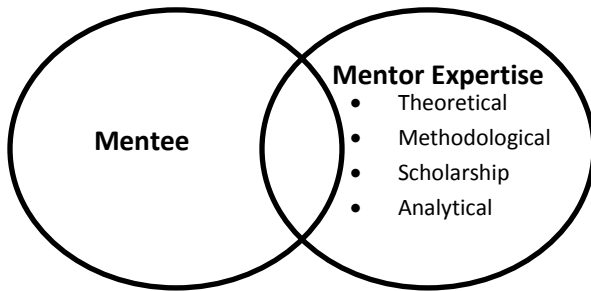
Why Mentoring at Unit Level

- Facilitate progression and career advancement in rank – promotions, tenure, merit
- Leadership development
- Faculty member satisfaction / morale
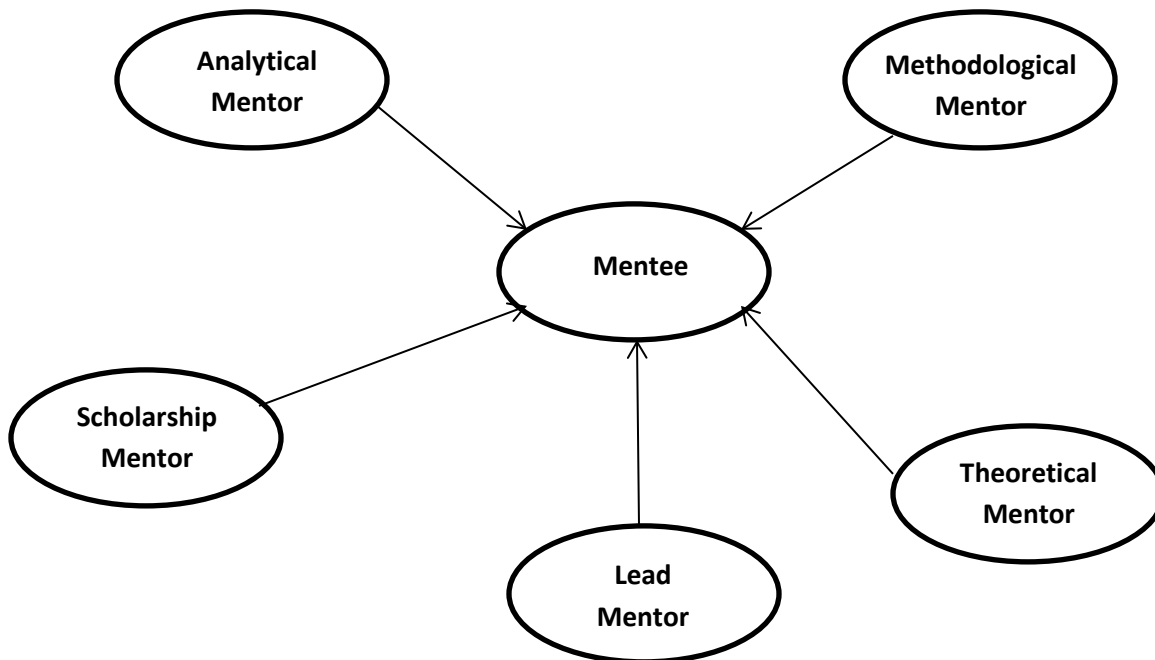- Develop or enhance areas of excellence

Types of Mentorship

- Traditional / one-on-one (exclusive)
- Specialization focused
- Committee / group / collaborative
- Rolling
- Career mentor

Individual Model of Mentee-Mentor Relationship (McCorkle)

Mentee

Mentor Expertise
- Theoretical
- Methodological
- Scholarship
- Analytical

Collaborative Model of Mentee-Mentor Expertise (McCorkle)

Analytical Mentor

Methodological Mentor

Mentee

Scholarship Mentor

Theoretical Mentor

Lead Mentor

Benefits of Collaborative Approach

- Enhanced collaboration within disciplines
- Exposure to other disciplines, knowledge and resources
- Review of mentee's work from multiple perspectives
- Ability of mentor to oversee research process and reach mentee's goals with experts
- Socialization to develop and use a team
- Research/scholarly – presentations, publications, funding
- Project – limited

Career mentor
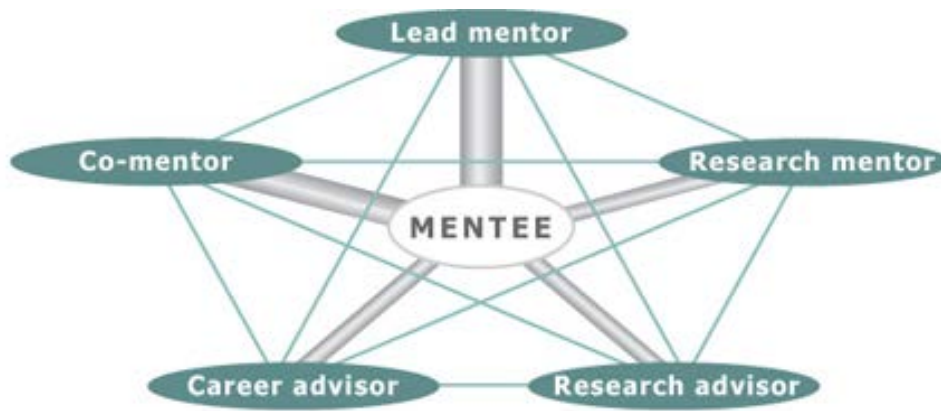
Career Mentor (Like Collaborative)

- Responsible for guidance and support
- Best if not the direct supervisor
- Co-mentors – team of different content and different expertise
  - Lead mentor – major leadership role
- Adopting academic values
- Managing an academic career over a long period
- Establishing and maintaining a productive network of colleagues

Principles of the Role

- Different kind of mentoring at different stages of a career / academic
  - Pre tenure
  - Tenure
  - Post tenure
- Different needs and different challenges by diversity
- Know that conflicts may occur but should be a <u>safe environment</u>
- Routine of evaluation of effectiveness by both mentor and mentee

Roles of Mentor

- Advisor
- Role model
- Coach
- Protector
- Supportive
- Advocate
- Challenger/motivator
- Companion
- Resource
- Teacher
- Counselor
- Navigates the unwritten rules

Desirable Characteristics of a Mentor
- Chooses to be one - volunteers
- Belief in importance of development
- Commitment to next generation of scientists
- Exemplifies excellence and integrity
- Ability to give constructive feedback
- Accessible / commits time
- Sustained optimism
- Listens actively/responds, hearing, interprets
- Has organizational skills
- Has interpersonal skills
- Has the respect of others
- Has knowledge and influence
- Willing to share
- Trust worthy (consistent, competent, confidentiality)
- Encourages independent behavior
- Provides constructive feedback

Mentors Behavior

- Provide information
- Facilitative–alternative views and options
- Confrontative–challenges explanations, probes
- Help mentee vision–to envision future of a good scientist
- Helps assess needs and establishes a development plan
- Building mentee's confidence

Challenges of Being a Mentor

- Assessing mentee's background (knowledge and skills)
- Identifying mentee's motivation
- Dealing with mentee's inexperience (knowledge and skills)
- Addressing mentee's misconceptions
- Setting reasonable goals
- Keeping mentee engaged
- Fostering mentee's independence
- Setting limits and boundaries
- Giving negative feedback to the mentee on lack of progress
- Allocating time
- Finding resources

Characteristics of a Mentee

- Eagerness to learn and desire to learn
- Seriousness in the relationship
- Flexibility and an understanding of mentor's schedule
- Promptness for all appointments
- Provides feedback (a report) even if nothing is requested
- Interest: Discusses personal and professional life
- Respect for mentor
- Motivated

Benefits to a Mentee

- Eagerness to learn and desire to learn
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- Respect for mentor

- Motivated
- Leads to personal and professional growth
- Job enrichment
- Technical skills and expertise
- Develops self confidence
- Protected relationship
- Development of ideas and learning

Mentee Role Includes Understanding

- Tenure and promotion
- Policies of institution
- Sort out priorities / balance in life
- How to say "no"
- Personal and confidential
- A no fault opt out clause
- More than a social role
- What is the culture?
- Unwritten rules of behavior

Good Mentoring Communication

- Descriptions not evaluative
- Specific not general
- Focused on behavior not person
- Need focused
- Focus on behavior that is modifiable
- Well timed
- Sharing info not giving advice
- Check for clear communication

Phases of Mentorship Relationships

- Building relationship (bonding), tentative
- Developing common expectations (work style, boundaries, eager to please)
- Developing mentee professionally (motivation)
- Developing independence
- Reflection
- A "second nature" comfort in communication with the mentor
- Ending formal phase – termination
- Redefine relationships

★ <u>Establish a Mentoring Relationship</u>

- **Mutual Interests:** Faculty will want to know if have research, scholarly, academic and/or creative interests similar to theirs
- **Goals:** State goals as seen now
- **Initiative:** Take action rather than wait to be told what to do
- **Skills and Strengths:** Show why mentor should invest in mentee
    - Availability
    - Expectations
    - Potential support
    - Roles and responsibility

<u>Requirements of a Mentor/Mentee Relationship</u>

- Expectations should be clear
- Interaction should be clearly defined
- Time span should be defined
- Boundaries should be agreed upon
- Guide not a gatekeeper
- A mentor is a unique individual - neither friend, nor colleague, but something of a combination of these and more

<u>Dysfunctional Mentoring Relationship</u>

- Primary needs of one or both partners are not being met
- Long-term costs for one or both partners outweigh the benefits
- One or both partners are suffering distress as a result of being in the relationship
- Constant surprises

<u>Predictors of Dysfunction</u>

- Poor mentor-mentee match / expectations
    - Personality
    - Communication style
    - Relationship preference
    - Career stage
    - Career interest
    - Impatience
- Mentor technical incompetence
- Mentor relationship incompetence
- Mentor neglect
- Relational conflict
- Boundary violations / unclear

- Exploitation
- Unethical or illegal behavior
- Abandonment / disappear
- Becomes dependent
- Mentee traits and behaviors
- Misdiagnosis of needs
- Mentor fatigue / toxic mentors
- Co-dependency
- Breach of confidentiality
- Overzealous mentor
- Work style lack of congruence

Questions & Quibbles for Mentors

- Effort allocation
- Documentation of mentoring activity
- Evaluation of effectiveness
- Compensation and incentives (lack of)
- Resources to help
- Recognition (lack of) / incentives
- Lack of targets for success

MSU Research Mentor Program

- Teaching and research mentors until tenured
- 1, 3, 5 year goals (reappointment at 3 yrs, tenure at 6 yrs)
- Goals used at annual review with performance indicators
- 1:1 sessions at regular intervals at least monthly until reappointment
- External mentor for grant reviews and manuscripts; and to visit team
- Until reappointment / tenure
- Contracts and agreements
- College Policies and Indicators for promotion and tenure – reviewed regularly
- University Development Program for both teaching and research
- Internal mentor – not a supervisor but more senior faculty

Tools for Mentoring

- Contracts (Letters of Agreement)
- Policies and procedures
- Guidelines and evaluation indicators
- Training materials and opportunities
- Evaluation forms - annual

- Documentation process / portfolio
- Targets of success / <u>report cards</u>
- College and campus <u>wide recognition</u>

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