Developing an Effective Mentoring Program

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JCLC, Dallas, TX, October 11-15 2006
Today’s Agenda

- Mentoring Models
- A case study on developing a mentoring program
- Feedback and program evaluation
- Q & A period
Why mentoring?

- An effective method of retention for librarians
- Help new librarians adapt to new environment
- Develop trusting professional relations
- Help team building
Some mentoring models

- Mentoring programs at academic libraries
  - Research Committee at Auburn University
  - Libraries’ Mentoring Program at UNC Greensboro
  - Librarian Mentoring Program at Yale University
  - Library Peer Mentor Program at Utah State University
Some mentoring models (cont’)

- Mentoring programs at ALA divisions and roundtables
  - New Member Mentoring Program at ACRL
  - International Librarians’ mentoring program at IRRT
  - Conference Mentoring and Career Mentoring at NMRT
  - ALA Spectrum Initiative
Some mentoring models (cont’)

- Mentoring programs at ALA’s ethnic caucuses
  - BCALA
  - Reforma
  - CALA
  - APALA
  - AILA
Mentoring Techniques

- Setting goals
- Clarifying situations
- Understanding other people’s behavior
- Dealing with road blocks
- Building wide networks of support, influence, and learning
Case Study

Wichita State University Libraries Mentoring Program Development

JCLC, Dallas, TX, October 11-15 2006
Why?

- Personnel Changes
- New Challenges
- Small Group “Veteran” Librarians
- Larger Number of Librarians “New” to Academic Librarianship

- Definition of Mentoring
- Mentoring Would Be Mandatory
- Program Length
- Who Could Mentor/How Mentors Chosen
- What Mentors Should Do
What Worked/Didn’t Work

- Yes, It Worked!
- All Eligible Participated
- Genuine Interest
- Helped With Orientation To Library/Campus
- Limits Understood

- No, It Didn’t!
- Lack of Eligible Mentors
- Is Policy in Effect?
- Specific Expertise Lacking
- Orientation vs. Mentoring
2006 Rewrite

- Mentor Pool Expanded
- Clarifications – Training vs. Mentoring
- Appointment/Recognition of Mentors Clarified
- Length of Process made More Flexible
- Calendar and Assessment Added
- Increased Confidentiality Added
Seeking Feedback

Interviews with participants
Seeking Feedback: Interviews with Participants

- We wanted to know:
  - how program works in real life
  - if participants’ satisfied with the program
  - the needs of mentee-minorities
  - how beneficial this program is for individuals and the library
The goals of the study was to

- investigate interactions between mentors/mentees/supervisors
- learn about matching practices and Mentor Mentee mutual expectations
- define the areas that need improvements and
- suggest recommendations
Seeking Feedback:  
The study technical details

- Interviewees:
  - 4 seasoned faculty-mentors
    - all women; members of T&P; 15-25 years at the Wichita State
  - 6 new faculty-mentees
    - 4 women and 2 men
    - 3 foreign born
    - 2 librarians of color
    - all on tenure track
    - 4 completed the program; 2 started
Seeking Feedback: The study technical details (cont’)

- **Time frame:** September 2006
- **Place:** WSU Libraries
- **Interviewer:** woman; on tenure track; foreign born; 4 years at Wichita State
- **Confidentiality**
- **Research data**
Seeking Feedback: The study technical details (cont’)

2 Questionnaires:
- “mirrored” questions for mentors and mentees
- general questions
- specific questions about a program
- satisfaction / dissatisfaction
- suggestions for improvement of the program
Findings

What we learned from the program participants
Findings:
Mentors Previous Experience

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<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Formal Program</th>
<th>Had informal Mentor(s)</th>
<th>Had Informal Mentee(s)</th>
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## Findings:
### Mentees Previous Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee</th>
<th>Formal Program</th>
<th>Had Informal Mentor</th>
<th>Informal mentor was a supervisor</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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### Findings: Current Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor No.</th>
<th>Mentee</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Forms fill in</th>
<th>Meet regular</th>
<th>Dept</th>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.2</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes + Irregul</td>
<td>The same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.3</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.4</td>
<td>1 done 1 new</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Both No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings: Current Experience (cont’)

- All 4 mentees are satisfied:
  - something extra; nice to have tenured faculty as a supporter; a person to ask questions

- 3 of 4 mentors expressed mixed feelings of guilt and dissatisfaction:
  - 2 feel that they did not give their mentees enough attention and support
  - 1 feels that she spent too much of her time with her mentee and was used as a trainer
Findings: Current Experience (cont’)

- Psychological compatibility is a major factor of satisfaction for both: mentors and mentees
- 2 of 6 interviewed mentoring “teams” were affected by poor psychological compatibility:

  (1) No contact. Hard to understand each other; (2) It would be better to have her as a mentee that him.
Findings: Current Experience (cont’)

- Mentee-minorities have the same access to the program as other participants

- However, they often need more attention (especially, foreign born librarians and recent graduates with no previous academic library experience)
Findings: Current Experience (cont’)

- 1 mentee minority missed a lot of benefits of the program:
  - Not a good match; other dept.
  - Majority of participants (4 mentees and 3 mentors) ask for more information about the program, mentor/mentee responsibilities, & clarification on a role of supervisor
Findings: Perceptions on the mutual roles and responsibilities

Mentors see themselves as:

- active supporters, trustful advisors, providers of useful information
- but not necessarily friends;
- senior colleagues who offer emotional support (“a friendly face in the confusing situation”)
- but not trainers
**Findings: Perceptions on mutual roles and responsibilities (cont')**

- Mentor & Mentee did not discussed their responsibilities:
  - Q: “Does your Mentee know about your responsibility as a Mentor?”
  - A.: “No.”
  - Q: “What is your responsibilities as a Mentor?”
  - A. “To be available. To answer questions.”
Perceptions on mutual roles and responsibilities (cont’)

- Mentees did not have the opportunity to choose mentors
- Some mentors were assigned mentees without asking; others accepted mentees with no previous knowledge about a new faculty
Perceptions on mutual roles and responsibilities (cont’)

■ 2004 Mentees expectations:
  ● A. “I did not think about it.”
  ● A. “Expected to become friendly; to have lunch together”

■ 2006 Mentees expectations:
  ● A. “I expect to get assistance with research and service
  ● to develop professional relationship with my mentor,” etc.
The Next Step

What we are going to do for the program improvement

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Discussion: What Should Be Improved

- With 2006 rev., we have a good policy. A program is successful.
- It changes gradually moving from informal mentoring to formal one.
- The most important for the longtime success is to find a BALANCE between formal and informal mentoring.
# Informal vs Formal Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Mentoring</th>
<th>Formal Mentoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less structured</td>
<td>Structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue indefinitely</td>
<td>Limited by time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More like friendship</td>
<td>Professional relat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on chemistry and trust</td>
<td>Arranged by a third party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No supervision involved</td>
<td>Monitored and controlled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No plans, or meetings, or expectations</td>
<td>Success depends on mutual responsibilities &amp; known expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Balance We Want

- Midsized library; 20 faculty
- Formal enough to leave no any single faculty behind
- Informal enough to build a team of good colleagues and to develop trustful healthy relationship in a library
- Supervised, controlled, & monitored enough to pair the right people and to keep a program alive
What to do

- Develop an **implementation procedure** based on 2006 policy
- Write **Mentoring Program Manual** for Mentors, Mentees and Supervisors
- Include there main **definitions**, participants’ functions, **FAQ**, and samples of **documentation**
What to do (cont’)

- Clarify for all participants the important functions of Supervisors:
  - Matching mentoring “teams”
  - Monitoring, controlling, and intervening if requested by a mentor or a mentee

- Develop **Application Form** for a mentor & **Enrollment Form** for a mentee to help Supervisors to bring together right people
What to do (cont’)

- Mentee-minorities:
  - talk to them about the program, ask them about their needs
  - provide them with written materials and official guidelines
  - offer them regular schedule and mentors from their own department especially if they are at their 1st job after graduation
What to do (cont’)

- Postpone the enrollment to a mentoring program for **one to three months** to let new faculty and their colleagues know each other better
- Organize **training workshop** for mentors, mentees, and supervisors
What to do (cont’)

- Find the appropriate form for exchange of mentoring experience between mentors (e.g. committee, business lunch, meeting, wiki, blog, etc.)
- Focus on benefits of all participants, including mentors
Conclusion

- “Mentorship is an investment”
- We expect that a Mentoring Program will contribute to new faculty retention and help their integration into the library.
- We plan to interview each faculty completed the program and to use this information for the program improvements.
Thanks!! Any Questions?

Developing an Effective Mentoring Program

Presented to the JCLC by Sha Li Zhang, Nancy Deyoe, and Susan Matveyeva

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