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Western Guide to Mentorship in Academia

Donald Gordon Cartwright



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The University *of* Western Ontario
Teaching Support Centre

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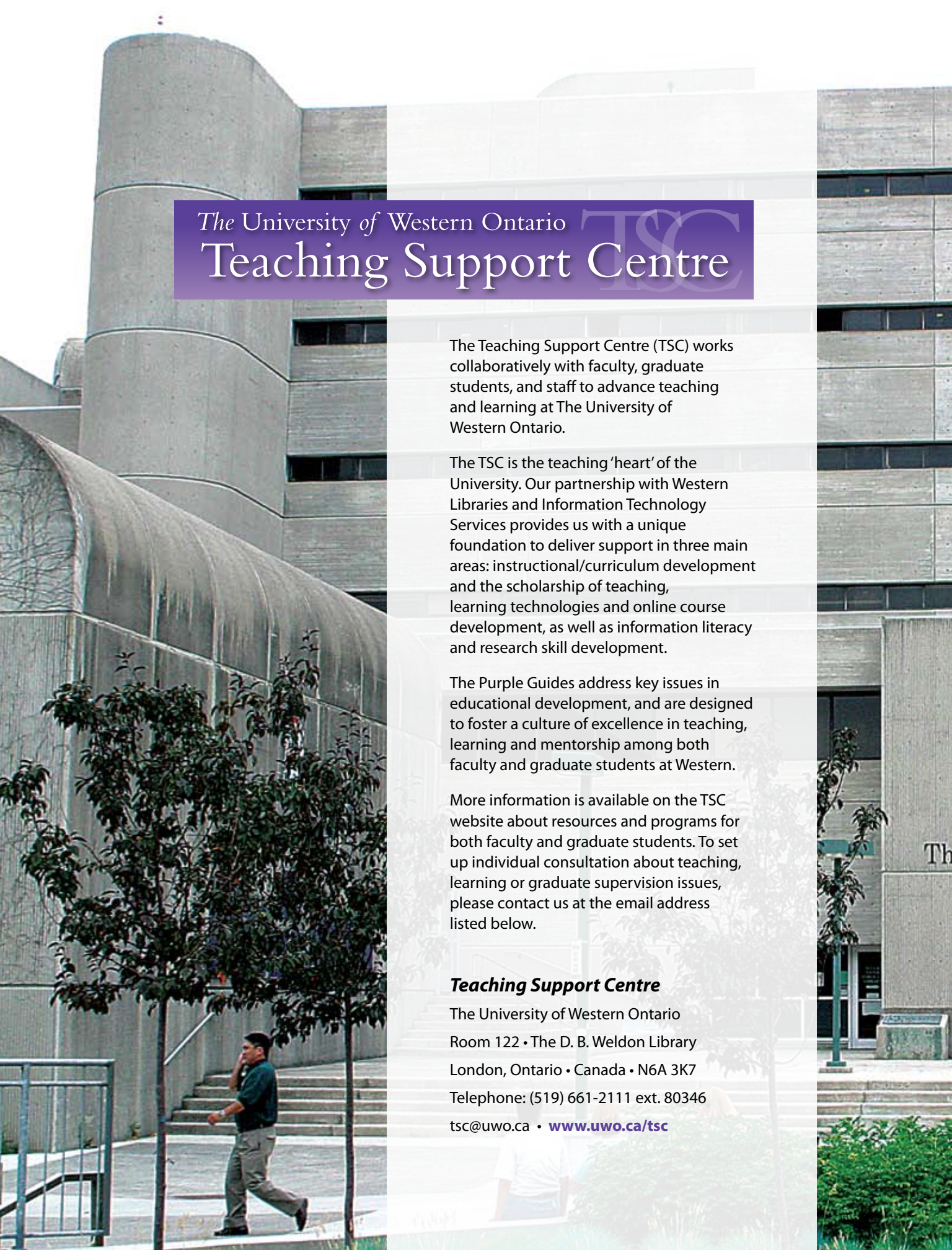
Teaching Support Centre Purple Guides

Western



The University *of* Western Ontario

Teaching Support Centre

The Teaching Support Centre (TSC) works collaboratively with faculty, graduate students, and staff to advance teaching and learning at The University of Western Ontario.

The TSC is the teaching 'heart' of the University. Our partnership with Western Libraries and Information Technology Services provides us with a unique foundation to deliver support in three main areas: instructional/curriculum development and the scholarship of teaching, learning technologies and online course development, as well as information literacy and research skill development.

The Purple Guides address key issues in educational development, and are designed to foster a culture of excellence in teaching, learning and mentorship among both faculty and graduate students at Western.

More information is available on the TSC website about resources and programs for both faculty and graduate students. To set up individual consultation about teaching, learning or graduate supervision issues, please contact us at the email address listed below.

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Lessons from the Private Sector: What's Your Advice, Mr. Black?

Since the 1970s, mentorship in the private sector has been recognized as one of the most important predictors of a successful career. It was found that those who had a mentor earned more money at a younger age, were happier in their career progress and derived somewhat greater pleasure from their work.[1] For many corporations it has now become the means to foster leadership and "networks of knowledge" that facilitate quick and easy information flow among new employees. This type of program is generally based on the principles of commitment to corporate citizenship, and normally involves direct mentorship from a senior to a junior employee. Other programs may aim at staff recruitment and retention through career development and succession planning that will involve different mentors at various stages of an employee's association with the corporation. Whatever the focus, many corporations have learned that the way to disperse corporate wisdom and experience, while keeping employees engaged, challenged and, above all, loyal, is through formal mentoring.[2]

"A company's success and power used to be based on resources or the information it had – not any more. Now it's about relationships."[3]

There is disagreement within the corporate world as to the form that mentorship should take. Thomas Buckner, senior consultant with R. L. Stevens and Associates International, a career-marketing firm located in Louisville, Kentucky, believes that young professionals should not limit themselves to one mentor, but should seek a network of people they trust to serve as mentors. He emphasizes that the strongest connections are not going to happen when strangers are assigned to meet with one another. Those who subscribe to this position maintain that naturally occurring mentoring relationships provide stronger connections than those typically associated with formal mentoring programs. Those who experience this form of multiple mentorship are described as more empowered, engaged, knowledgeable and dedicated.[4]

Contrary to the position taken by Buckner et al, there are those in the private sector who endorse strategic pairings through a formal mentoring program. Although the term "formal" is employed, some corporations emphasize that it must not be too rigid.

"We don't want it to be too formal, or it won't work. It needs to be supported by the enthusiasm of the participants – not by the structure and formality of the program. It needs to be spontaneous and it needs to be driven by people clicking."[5]

In the private sector, the time when a manager was completely responsible for an employee's development has passed since managers are now too stretched to give their staff proper feedback.[6] The mentor/mentee relationship is thought to provide a broader perspective with development of life-long skills rather than just learning how to do your job better as occurred under the former arrangement. Also, mentees will report a feeling of relief when they no longer must go directly to their manager with every little question that arose at the beginning of their employment. There is greater consistency with a one-on-one mentorship according to those who endorse the more formal program.

Another benefit of the latter is to the mentor. The term "middlescence" has been coined in the business community to designate mid-career employees who, between the ages of 35 to 55, are burned out, bored and bottlenecked. According to one study, only 33 per cent of the 7,700 workers surveyed felt energized by their work; 36 per cent felt they were in a dead-end job, and 33 per cent responded that they were dissatisfied with their job. One in five was actively searching for other employment. "Like adolescence, it can be a time of frustration, confusion and alienation."[7] The authors believe mid-career can also be a time of self-discovery, new direction and fresh beginnings. Among the recommendations given to corporations to counter middlescence – new training, fresh assignments, sabbaticals – is the opportunity to mentor junior colleagues. Through this practice, senior employees share their experiences, which can be personally fulfilling, and allows them to make a fresh set of social connections with younger employees.

There are a growing number of companies in Canada that are establishing or expanding mentoring programs in the workplace. Many are following the initiatives that were spearheaded by corporations in the United States and by

Fig. 1.1

Mentorship and Engagement

Whether the form of mentoring is through the formal process or multiple mentors, the research by Wagner and Harter, of the Gallup Organization, identifies mentorship as one of the twelve factors that they consider to be critical in sustaining high performance among employees.

- **They found that employees expect to have a mentor in the workplace, offering guidance and counsel.**
- **Their research revealed that two-thirds of those employees who have someone (or more than one person) who encourages their development, classify themselves as engaged, but only 1 per cent of those without a mentor consider themselves engaged.[8]**

the Harvard Mentoring Project. Those that have embraced these programs do so to enhance career development opportunities, to improve the company's ability to attract and retain high quality employees, to spread corporate wisdom and experience and to create stronger linkages between different generations and departments.

Mentorship Enters the Ivory Tower: Raise the Portcullis!

While the corporations were endorsing the benefits of mentorship during the 1970s, most universities welcomed new members of the faculty into a situation that has been described as a form of Social Darwinism. Empowered with a lustrous, new PhD, a young associate professor was expected to teach undergraduates without the benefit of any training in teaching at the university level. This is a situation that endures unless the new associate received some training as part of his/her graduate-student program. New scholars were expected to learn how to balance their teaching, research and community service largely through a process akin to osmosis, unless an empathetic senior colleague stepped forward to offer advice. Added to all this there was, and is, considerable personal upheaval: finding a new home, adjusting to a new city, and having very few friends who will not also have a vote on one's tenure. Heather Kanuka (2006) has demonstrated the outcome when new colleagues are left to work through these dilemmas on their own. She reported on a longitudinal study in the United States that revealed by the end of the fifth year, 71 per cent of new faculty reported being stressed or very stressed and dissatisfied with their jobs. Of those not dissatisfied, mentoring was reported as the difference. Similar research elsewhere demonstrated that faculty satisfaction with the work environment decreases from the first year to the third and is caused by the critical time in the tenure process.[9]

In Canada and the United States, many universities have addressed this issue by introducing faculty mentor programs. Professor Marjorie A. Olmstead of the University of Washington has provided further rationale for a junior faculty mentor program:

"When a department makes a new hire at the assistant professor level, it has invested in one of its most valuable resources: a tenure-track faculty position. If the department does not nurture that new professor, it greatly reduces the probability of a good return on that investment. On the other hand, if the department facilitates access to the knowledge and resources required to develop a new faculty member's career, the payoff is likely to be a valued colleague for many years. If a new faculty member is successful, everyone benefits."[10]

The Best Substitute for Experience is Being 18...

A useful interpretation of the mentoring relationship can be obtained from the description of the faculty mentor program at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. "A mentor, in relation to a mentee, is a person of higher ranking within an organization or profession, or of greater experience or knowledge, and with a commitment to supporting the development of a mentee's career. A mentor serves as a role model who offers acceptance, confirmation, protection, and even friendship to the mentee. A mentor listens, observes, asks, counsels, coaches, challenges and sponsors the mentee."[11]

The literature on mentoring in universities reports consistently that mentored faculty experience higher levels of job satisfaction, better student evaluations, greater academic productivity and a stronger likelihood of remaining at a particular university than non-mentored faculty. Mentoring, however, is not a panacea for all problems in a department, university or institution. A field-based research project funded by the Women's Education Act under the purview of the U.S. Department of Education has identified some myths of mentoring. (fig. 3.1)

The underlying assumption in this portion of the research report is that a faculty-to-faculty form of mentorship is prevalent. The issue of multiple mentors vs a faculty-to-facul ty formal program, however, has been encountered in academia as in the private sector. Although traditionally thought to involve the latter approach, current perspectives of mentoring often value group approaches and multiple mentors as viable alternatives. The latter operate on the premise that new members on today's campuses need to have an array of mentors to succeed, someone outside the department and a colleague, or colleagues, inside the department, along with peer-mentors to assist with one's acculturation into the university. Here, mentors may serve a variety of roles that encompass professional, personal and social growth. One risk in the multiple-mentor program is that it will be allowed to develop naturally. Boyle and Boise (1998) maintain that this is too risky. Their research revealed a low participation rate of only one-third of new faculty in naturally occurring multiple-mentor programs. Mentoring tended to be irregular and transitory as new colleagues, burdened with duties, put off meetings with mentors.[12]

As part of an assessment of new faculty mentoring needs conducted at the University of Guelph, a literature review indicated that the most appropriate model or method of mentoring is highly contingent on the context and culture in which the mentoring is being delivered. The research findings at the University of Guelph (2005) were consistent with the literature on this aspect of effective mentoring.[13] For example, a multiple-mentor model for a department will require endorsements from junior and senior colleagues, including the Chair. On the other hand, there are programs that prefer mentor-mentee relationships that are highly structured. When this is the case, the individuals often create a list of items they expect to discuss and then proceed methodically through the

Fig. 3.1

Mentoring Myths

1. ***Mentoring is a reward in and of itself.***

   It is a myth that the mentoring process is inherently rewarding and that remuneration is therefore not necessary. The truth is that organizations need to reward those individuals who agree to take on additional responsibilities. Providing incentives turns mentoring into an important activity and a priority in the workplace.

2. ***Mentoring programs are a panacea for difficult problems such as orientation, affirmative action and problem employees.***

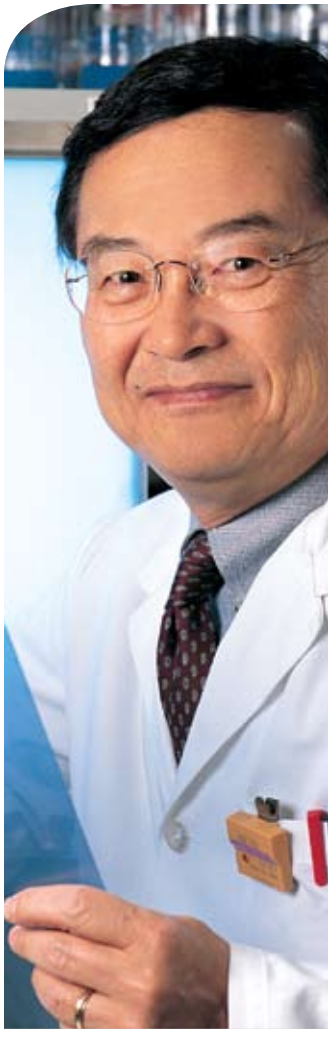
   Mentoring should be reserved for developing human potential in terms of improving organizational goals. Too frequently, quick-fix programs are initiated under the rubric of mentoring.

3. ***Any mentor and protégé can be paired.***

   Too often, mentors and mentees are thrown together with the assumption that a common workplace will be enough to make the relationship work. Not everyone is a good mentor or protégé, and participants' readiness, communication, volunteerism, compatibility and mentoring style should be assessed.

4. ***Mentoring programs must be controlled to be successful.***

   Organizations are known for operating policies and procedures, and this same philosophy is applied – mistakenly – to mentoring programs. Each member of the pair has different needs and developmental considerations. Training and guidelines are important, but a successful mentoring program allows individualized goals jointly drawn from the pair. Organizations benefit when they provide resources for the pair and do not hamper their progress.[14]



list. Other relationships in the one-to-one format are fairly unstructured and issues or concerns are addressed as they arise. Both types of experiences can be successful. The most necessary ingredient to a fulfilling mentoring relationship in the faculty-to-faculty model is for the two individuals to spend time interacting.

Models of Mentoring: Coming In from the Cold

In 2004, the Task Force on New Scholars, sponsored by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, prepared a manual on meeting the needs of new members of faculty in Canadian universities. One outcome was an endorsement of the research conducted elsewhere in North America; new scholars need a constructive, welcoming environment to ease the transition from graduate student to faculty member. They concluded that the route to this environment is through mentorship. One section of the final report, therefore, is devoted to a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages for various mentoring models. A synopsis of these models follows.[15]

1) ASSIGNING A DEPARTMENTAL MENTOR

Pros: With a faculty-to-faculty program within a department, the mentee has access to information and experience that is specific to his or her discipline. This can be important as demands of grantsmanship, teaching and research can be quite different between disciplines. Departmental mentors can provide helpful information on localized, departmental practices and policies. (Most Chairs are too stretched to give new colleagues regular and proper feedback.)

Cons: There is a risk that this form of mentoring can lead to discipleship building and cronyism. Protégés might find themselves drawn into a departmental faction inadvertently, simply through their association with their mentor. It could become difficult to establish or express their own views on departmental issues and developments. New faculty may resist showing weaknesses to colleagues who may be involved in retention, tenure and promotion decisions.

2) ASSIGNING ONE MENTOR FROM OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT

Pros: It is suggested that such a mentor might be able to provide a broader perspective of both the institution and the academic profession than a departmental mentor. This relationship could also generate cross-disciplinary research that is currently favoured by SSHRC and NSERC.

Cons: The outside mentor will offer limited help on matters related directly to one's department. One must also be wary of broadcasting the "way things are done" in their mentor's department.

3) ASSIGNING A MENTOR OF THE SAME GENDER

Pros: There is consistency in the literature on mentorship that a female mentor will be able to provide valuable advice for negotiating the special demands upon female faculty members. ("We need a female colleague on this committee."

A directive that may arrive too frequently.[16]) The members of the task force believe gender issues can affect the reception of research grants and the reception of the women faculty members' ideas within administrative committees.

Cons: Expectations of friendship and emotional support in same-sex female mentoring relationships can make the mentoring process less productive. Male faculty members may outnumber female faculty in a department. In this situation, a mentor sensitive to the experiences of women in academia should be assigned. Both mentors and mentees should be well informed of sexual harassment policies and conduct the relationship accordingly.

4) ASSIGNING TWO MENTORS, ONE FROM WITHIN AND ONE FROM OUTSIDE A DEPARTMENT

Pros: This arrangement could provide the mentee with discipline-specific information as well as broader institutional and professional advice. There is the benefit of two perspectives when the new colleague is trying to make decisions about a career direction. Protégés are less likely to become associated with only one faction within the department or institution. They may receive advice from one female and one male mentor thereby receiving a dual perspective on the profession.

Cons: This model involves an enormous amount of personnel and time. Deans would probably find it difficult to find two mentors to serve each new member of faculty. Mentees could find it difficult to budget the time to meet with both mentors regularly. It may also be a challenge to balance the advice from one mentor against the other. In following one piece of advice, a conflict may occur with the other; one relationship sours while the other prospers.

5) SCHEDULING MONTHLY GROUP SESSIONS INVOLVING SEVERAL MENTORS AND PROTÉGÉS IN ADDITION TO REGULAR ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS

Pros: The mentees could receive valuable insight from several senior colleagues who might fill in "gaps" in the experience of their own specific mentor. Mentors can also rely on each other to provide protégés with information that they find difficult to supply on their own. These sessions will signal that mentoring is a priority throughout the university, hence it is considered to be a shared responsibility across all faculties.

Cons: Protégés could be confronted with conflicting advice that could be difficult to navigate. The time required to meet as a group may be difficult to find since these meetings would not replace one-to-one departmental meetings.

6) CIRCULAR MENTORING AND PEER MENTORING

Pros: A variation on number 5 above is to arrange occasional brown-bag lunches with all new members of a faculty that are infrequent rather than regularly scheduled. Two senior members of the faculty, or emeritus professors, are asked by the Dean to conduct these sessions. The intent of the program is to allow new faculty to come together to discuss issues, positive or negative, that are related to their adjustments to their faculty and to the university. The facilitators need not have an agenda; the issues can arise from the members of the group. The informality of the session provides a setting where frustrations, doubts and concerns can be voiced without fear of creating a negative image before a departmental colleague. These meetings will also allow new members to become acquainted with those in other departments of the faculty, and will contribute to their professional and personal integration in the new environment. The participants gain a sense of feeling less alone and isolated. Since the brown-bag sessions are infrequent the facilitators could encourage the junior colleagues to form their own occasional luncheons. The literature states frequently that peer mentoring in such situations is highly effective, and the circular mentoring becomes a catalyst for this to evolve.[17]

Cons: The Deans must be prepared to endorse the spirit and purpose of the program, but must also seek the cooperation and participation of senior faculty. This will take time to organize. All members of faculty are extremely busy, and it is possible for this scheme to be shuffled to the back of the deck whereupon it is too late to begin for that year. Those who do agree to be the facilitators should have knowledge of the current Collective Agreement. This is a heavy expectation particularly for an emeritus professor if that is the facilitator selected by the Dean.

The Mentoring Relationship: Wandering Lonely as a Cloud

Some new faculty may simply not need or wish to participate in a mentoring program. Every effort must be made to assure them that participation is not required. Most new colleagues in academia, however, will seek counsel of some description. Whatever model is selected, whether it is faculty-to-faculty or multiple mentors or a variation of the models described above, it will be done because the institution subscribes to the values that mentorship can bring.

"Mentoring can help new colleagues improve their performance in all areas of work by alleviating feelings of isolation and inadequacy through mutual professional and emotional support." [18]

If a senior colleague is willing to step forward to offer his or her services as a mentor, it must be clear that there are a number of expectations and responsibilities to be encountered.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The mentor(s) should take the initiative to contact the mentee whether through a one-to-one program or a multiple-mentor scheme. For the latter, a department may develop a program where the mentee is free to approach whomever he or she wishes. This must be clearly understood by the new colleague.

- In a faculty-to-faculty relationship, a successful program requires a commitment of time and energy on both parts. This needs to be understood at the outset. The literature that endorses this approach recommends regular meetings that are neither too often nor too infrequent. If the times are established at the outset, this will help the new colleague to overcome the fear of "bothering" the mentor.

- Small talk, that rare skill amongst academics, is often essential in developing mentoring relationships, particularly in the one-to-one format, that grow beyond the mechanics of problem solving. This often serves to sustain involvement until times when new problems or needs arise.[19]

- New members of faculty need to know the committee work that is expected, but will need guidance in order not take on too much/too many that will interfere with research goals and teaching preparation as they develop their new careers.

- The mentor(s) must help the mentee to set challenging but realistic goals that match the expectations and resources of the department that, in turn, are aligned with the expectations of the institution.[20]

- At the outset, mentees should be encouraged to keep an ongoing log or record of their scholarly activities in teaching and learning (attendance at the sessions sponsored by the Teaching Support Centre, for example), research and service or outreach.

- "Anecdotes can be compelling, but don't lose the plot by drowning your mentee in old war stories."[21]

- The mentee may feel uncomfortable with the imbalance of power in the mentor/mentee relationship. Tell him or her how much you get out of the relationship, and that he/she should not feel beholden to you. (The mentor(s) demonstrates enthusiasm and motivation for mentoring.)

- The mentor should not expect the mentee to constantly express undying gratitude for what he/she is doing. Mentor because you enjoy it and think it is the right thing to do.

- The Chair should be the main source of information on tenure and promotion. This will provide consistency on information and advice. New members of faculty should be encouraged by the mentor to attend the sessions sponsored by the Faculty Mentor Program. There are several that deal with the issue of tenure and promotion under the Collective Agreement. These will complement information provided by the Chairs.

- The mentor should take care not to involve the mentee in any conflict that he or she may have within the department or beyond.

- The mentor(s) should be prepared to offer advice on:

  - » The preparation of an explicit course syllabus and the reasons why it must be explicit. Departmental policies on assignments and exams; for example final exams must be stored for one year.

  - » Teaching strategies for both undergraduates and graduates. Provide information on the workshops offered through the Teaching Support Centre at Western. Studies have revealed that mentors may not be adequate advisors on teaching skills. They are often unaware how they had learned this set of skills.[22]

  - » The supervision of honours and graduate theses.

  - » The preparation of small and large research-grant proposals, internal and external. (Note the sessions of the Faculty Mentor Program that deal with this issue.)

  - » The best journals in your discipline for the publication of research. (The Research Mentor Network is a source of manuscript review through the office of Research Western)

  - » Management of the demands of teaching, research and committee work. Also, advice on how to develop a balance between family & work.

  - » The most effective manner in which to communicate with administration and senior faculty.

  - » How to deal with difficult students and how to meet with students. (e.g. When meeting with appeals from students, deal with one student at one time, never entertain a group.)

Those who wish to explore the theme of mentoring relationships further should consult Lois J. Zachary (2000). The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.
A copy of this publication is available in the Teaching Support Centre, UWO.

Characteristics of a Mentor: A Good Mudder!

An evaluation of Western's Faculty Mentor Program was conducted in the spring of 2005.[23] The survey was designed to identify the topics that new colleagues discussed with mentors and to assess the perceived value of these contacts, but respondents were also asked to identify the characteristics of "a good mentor."

"Must have knowledge of the system – departmental, faculty and university levels – plus creative constructive feedback and criticism."

"A willingness to take time to discuss issues in confidence"

"Displays openness and availability."

"Has personal maturity, provides regular contact and has similar life situation e.g. family, etc."

"Has the desire to be a mentor, not simply assigned to me."

"I would like to have someone who would establish regular contact throughout the year, someone who would offer to help rather than wait for me to ask."

"It is a good idea, but no one seemed to step forward, and it is difficult to bug people to do it if they don't take the initiative given the busyness of everyone's lives."

"The mentor should be knowledgeable, experienced and interested/ engaged."

"Senior scientist who likes to help others to succeed."

"It would have been nice to have a mentor, someone who meets regularly with me to provide assistance in understanding the system and suggestions for managing one's career."

The reader may note the number of occasions when the respondents mentioned directly or indirectly the importance of regular meetings and the element of commitment by the mentor. Throughout the responses to the survey, the positive values of having a mentor were clearly expressed.

Positive Outcomes from a Mentor Program: And the Winner is...

Some in the business sector cautioned that the strongest connections between mentor and mentee are not going to happen when strangers are assigned to meet with one another. There are academics, however, who suggest that formal mentoring programs are just as beneficial as informal ones. Whatever the preference, the literature is replete with benefits that accrue to all who participate in mentoring programs.

GAINS FOR NEW FACULTY:

- Understanding of organizational culture
- Shown to have greater productivity as leaders within professional associations and within their university
- Receive more competitive grants
- Publish more books and articles
- Increase in job satisfaction (Many don't ask for mentoring support – don't want to impose or reveal their ignorance.)
- A better understanding of the tacit rules within the institution ("It's nice not to have to go directly to the Chair with every little question that I had at the beginning.")
- Academic confidence is advanced, and new members feel welcome and valued. They lose feelings of inadequacy.

GAINS FOR SENIOR FACULTY:

- Gain increased respect and recognition from others in the university as individuals who have the ability to identify, encourage and promote other colleagues
- Experience personal and professional growth and renewal. Mentoring younger colleagues is one of the techniques recommended to re-energize mid-career employees and to achieve personal fulfillment.
- Improve managerial and mentoring skills.
- More apt to keep abreast of new knowledge and techniques

- More apt to keep abreast of institutional developments
- Increased stimulation from bright and creative new colleagues
- Contributes toward increasing the protégé's enthusiasm about being a member of the university faculty.

GAINS FOR THE INSTITUTION:

- An increased stability and health of the institution, "Happy faculty stay" . . . "Faculty do not have the same allegiance to their organizations as employees in the corporate world."[24]
- Faculty develop a sense of commitment to both the profession and the institution through mentoring programs.[25]
- Mentor programs help to develop more collegial and compassionate departments.
- Future leaders are developed.
- Gain awareness of the value of professional development activities such as those in a Teaching Support Centre & a Research Mentor Network to new members of faculty.

Many corporations in the private sector have embraced the practice of mentorship for decades, and have studied and recognized the benefits that are derived from their investments in these programs. While slow, even hesitant, to emulate the corporate world, academic institutions are gradually incorporating mentorship into their long-range plans. In academia it is accepted that new colleagues have developed the skills upon which they can build a career. How to use their skills most effectively in a given context, however, requires information that they do not have. Mentoring enables the new colleague to develop his or her career path with confidence by providing support, encouragement, insight, advice, and the information required to make informed decisions and the choices that will lead to professional success and satisfaction.[26]

The Faculty Mentor Program

In September 2000, the Joint Committee of the University Faculty Association and the University Administration approved the introduction of a Faculty Mentor Program. The program is designed to serve all members of faculty, but has particular relevance for colleagues who are new to Western. The first component of the program is a number of workshop/information sessions that are offered throughout the academic year on topics that are important in assisting our new colleagues to adapt to Western. The second component of the program operates at the departmental level. When new appointments are made to a department, the coordinator of the Faculty Mentor Program requests the Chair to appoint two senior colleagues who are willing to act as mentors to their new associates. Some Chairs may wish to have several (i.e. multiple) mentors available for the new colleague(s). This is a less formal form of mentoring and requires organization that is not as structured as the two senior colleague system.

The topics that are presented at the workshop/information sessions are listed below.

The sessions are typically scheduled for Friday afternoons since many classes are not scheduled in the afternoon of that day to facilitate meetings. The time and place of each session is announced through e-mail to new members of faculty and to those who have joined Western over the past five years, through a flyer that is sent to the administrative staff in all departments with a request that it be prominently displayed, and in the Campus Calendar section of the university newspaper.

Sample Faculty Mentor Sessions

PREPARATION OF THE RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSAL

Colleagues from the Faculties of Arts, Science and Social Science will provide guidance on the proper preparation and submission of a research grant proposal. They will also offer information on what the granting agencies, SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR, are looking for in a proposal, and how members of the awards committee process these. All presenters are successful grant recipients and, in some cases, have served on awards committees.

RESEARCH GRANTS AVAILABLE BEYOND SSHRC/NSERC/CIHR VIA RESEARCH WESTERN AND WESTERN'S RESEARCH DATA CENTRE

Are you familiar with; The New Research and Scholarly Initiative Awards (ADF); Western's Innovation Fund; SSHRC small grants fund; SSHRC travel grants; The Ontario Research Fund; Government funding agencies (other than SSHRC/NSERC/CIHR) and private foundation awards (hundreds are available); the International Curriculum Fund; or services available from Research Western;

Western's Research Data Centre; Western's Research Mentor Network? If your answer to any of the above is "no", then you should plan to attend this session with (Names of presenters are listed)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND TEACHING ASSISTANTS: THE ROLE OF THE FACULTY

Graduate students are attracting a great deal of attention currently. Canadian universities are renewing their efforts to recruit a greater number of graduate students and to diminish unacceptably high rates of attrition. At Western, we will attract and retain these people not only because of the strength of our programs, but because of the superb supervision and mentoring they will receive. Mentoring of graduate students goes beyond monitoring their timely progression; it involves their development as the next generation of researchers and university teachers. Academic associates of the Teaching Support Centre will offer their experiences and provide advice on how to prepare the next generation with the goal of enhancing the graduate experience for both student and faculty.

GETTING READY FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION UNDER THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Representatives from the University Faculty Association and the Office of Faculty Relations will discuss selected topics from the Collective Agreement that are germane to tenure and promotion. This session and the two to follow on (dates given) will be significant for all new members of faculty and for those who are on tenure track. The selected topics for this session will include:

1. What is a Collective Agreement?
2. Issues that are related to your "Official File"
3. Understanding the importance of your letter-of-appointment
4. What are academic responsibilities?
5. Workload, alternative workload, reduced responsibilities, leaves, the tenure clock: implications/significance for you.
6. The annual meeting with the dean and the annual performance evaluation.
7. Documenting your career.

TENURE AND PROMOTION UNDER THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT, HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

Representatives from the Faculty Association, the Office of Faculty Relations and the Office of the Provost will explain the procedures to tenure and promotion under the Collective Agreement. This session will be important for all new

members of faculty and for other colleagues who are on tenure track. Topics will include:

1. The composition and selection of members for the P & T Committee.
2. The composition and selection procedures for joint appointments.
3. The balance of teaching, research and service to tenure and promotion.
4. The significance of the teaching dossier and the teaching –philosophy statement for tenure and promotion.
5. The process of file review.
6. The role of the Chairs and Deans in the context of tenure and promotion.
7. The Office of the Provost in the context of tenure and promotion.
8. Explanations of the grievance and arbitration processes.

DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING DOSSIER & A TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The theme of this session is a continuation of the fifth faculty mentor meeting held in December on "Tenure and Promotion Under the Collective Agreement: How the Process Works." Before applying for tenure and promotion, a teaching dossier and a statement of one's teaching philosophy must be developed. This interactive session will provide valuable material to assist members of faculty in the preparation of these components for a personal file.

KEEPING ACADEMIA FROM TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL JUGGLING

New scholars are expected to learn how to balance the varied and high demands from teaching, research and community service while simultaneously accommodating a personal shift in life style. How does one find this balance among the demands of teaching (My computer is jammed with e-mails!), colleagues and Chairs (Would you like to serve on this interesting committee?), one's research program (My grant proposal was due yesterday!) and a home life (What home life?) in the early years of an academic career? How does one ever contemplate career opportunities? To gain some insight on being efficient with one's time in order to accommodate all the demands, and to learn about career opportunities, join us for this interactive session with colleagues who have "gone before".

TEACHING AWARDS FOR FULL- AND PART-TIME FACULTY

There is a surprising range of teaching awards that are attainable for those who wish to emphasize this aspect of a career. Information on the criteria for the awards will be available at this session.

For a list of sessions offered this year, please visit the Teaching Support Centre website at www.uwo.ca/tsc/faculty_mentor.html

Sample Letter to Departmental Mentors

This is a sample of the letter that is sent to colleagues who have agreed to be departmental mentors. A copy of the Purple Guide, "Mentorship in Academia" accompanies the letter.

Professor_____
Department of_____
Faculty of _____
University of Western Ontario

Dear Professor _____ ,

In September 2000, the Joint Committee of the Faculty Association and the University Administration approved the introduction of a Faculty Mentor Program for the university. I have been asked to coordinate this program, and it is in this capacity that I am writing to you since your name was sent to me, by the Chair of your department, as a colleague who is willing to be a departmental mentor to new members of faculty.

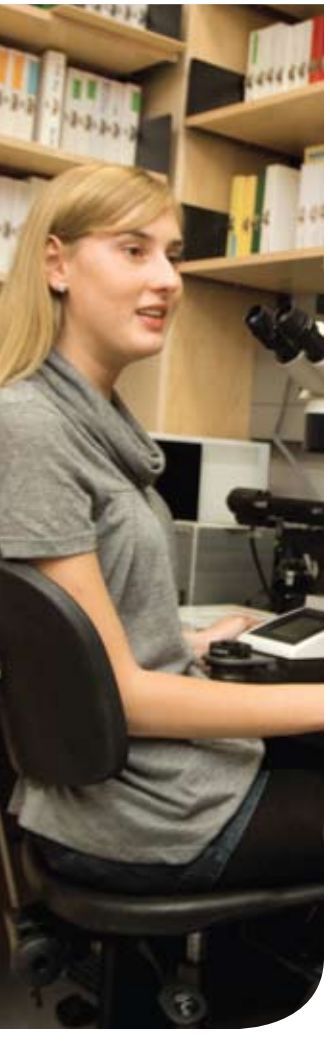
The program is directed to new full time members of the faculty who have joined Western this year, and has two components. We shall sponsor a number of workshop/information sessions throughout the year on topics that we feel are important in helping our new colleagues adapt to Western. Since the approval of the program, I have also met with representatives from several faculties that have their own mentoring programs to learn from their experiences and to develop our list of topics.

Your involvement will be with the second component of the program whereby you will act as an individual mentor to work directly with new colleagues in your department. You may already be associated with such activity, for some departments have initiated their own program. Through our Faculty Mentor Program we hope to extend the practice of mentoring and to introduce an element of consistency throughout.

One aspect of mentoring will involve career planning with new members whereby a balance in the aims and objectives of that career is put into perspective. This will involve a discussion on time commitment to committees

and the weight of course assignments in the context of one's dedication to research and the concomitant need to seek funding. Mentors have also given their opinions on the best journals in which to publish. They may review a paper before it is submitted to a journal, and provide a similar critique for grant applications. The techniques of teaching will be only partially developed by a young colleague, and a mentor can play an important adjunct role to the work of the Teaching Support Centre in advancing these skills.

According to my sources in the faculties that introduced their own Mentor Program, many new faculty members had not been informed about the requirements for course outlines, including the clarity that is required for grading procedures, nor the reasons why it is necessary to store old exams, or the length of time. Most had not been told that access to library journals is available through computer; they knew nothing about the Faculty Dependents' Tuition Scholarship Plan; the function of Information Technology Services was largely a mystery, and even the university newspapers that are available on campus had not been explained to them. A departmental administrator or the Chair normally handles these items, however if this has not been done you may anticipate such questions from new members. These are only a few of the areas in which a mentor may provide assistance to our new colleagues.



Research into the effectiveness of mentoring in academia has demonstrated that most new members of faculty are reluctant to approach senior colleagues to discuss issues. For that reason, may I ask that you approach your new colleague to initiate the mentorship process? Also, please encourage your new colleagues to attend the mentor sessions that are held at the Teaching Support Centre throughout the year. These are well advertised through e-mails, flyers and in the Western News. Finally, I wish to thank you for agreeing to help us with this project. We know that our Faculty Mentor Program can succeed only with the willing participation of our senior colleagues.

Sincerely,

Don Cartwright, PhD
Professor Emeritus, Department of Geography
Faculty Associate, Teaching Support Centre
Coordinator, Faculty Mentor Program
e-mail: dgcartwr@uwo.ca

Web Sites

The web sites listed below are but a few of the dozens that are available on the theme of mentoring in academia. They have been selected for their relevance to the information provided in the text of this paper.

New faculty mentoring: Best practices and recommendations, University of Guelph, 2005.
uoguelph.ca/facultyjobs/images/pdfs/Best%20Practices%20and%20Recommendations.pdf

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Mentoring programs for new faculty members, University of Toronto.
www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/info4faculty/mentoring.html

Faculty mentoring guidelines, Washington State University.
provost.wsu.edu/faculty_mentoring/guidelines.html
This is a useful source to address the unique and varied experiences of female faculty.

Faculty mentoring program for women, University of Texas, El Paso.
dmc.utep.edu/mentoring/

Mellon academic mentoring support project, University of Southern California, Center for Excellence in Teaching.
usc.edu/programs/cet/private/pdfs/mentor/facultypaper.pdf

Guidelines for the School of Medicine: Faculty mentoring program, University of Pennsylvania.
somapps.med.upenn.edu/fapd/documents/pl00021.pdf

Preparing future faculty, Tufts University. The Center for Academic Excellence has compiled a number of resources to help senior faculty mentor junior members. There are many useful links at this site.
preparing-faculty.org/PFFWeb.Resources.htm

Faculty mentoring recommendations, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.
rwjms.umdnj.edu/faculty/faculy_development/mentoring.htm

Faculty of Science Mentoring Program, University of Alberta
science.ualberta.ca/staff.cfm

Reading list: Women in higher education (Sources 1996 - 2005). University of Wisconsin – Madison.
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About the author

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Before his retirement, Don Cartwright was a professor of geography in the Faculty of Social Science at The University of Western Ontario. Since his departure from the Department of Geography, he has been a faculty associate with the Teaching Support Centre where he has been the Coordinator of the Faculty Mentor Program and a participant in the Centre's sessions that are held in August for new faculty members.

He is the recipient of four awards for excellence in university teaching; the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations Award in 1981, The National Council for Geographic Education Award (USA & Canada) in 1989, The Pleva Award from Western in 1985 and the 3M National Teaching Fellowship in 1996. Currently, he is a member of the Executive of the 3M National Council that is actively involved in the promotion of the scholarship of teaching and learning in postsecondary education.

He joined Western's faculty in 1974 and has taught as a visiting professor in the Departments of Geography at Carleton University and the University of British Columbia.

Teaching Support Centre Purple Guides

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