B. Gloria Guzmán Johannessen *Editor*

Global Co-Mentoring Networks in Higher Education

Politics, Policies, and Practices

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Introduction

B. Gloria Guzmán Johannessen

Abstract This book offers faculty and university leaders insights on issues surrounding institutional mentoring. It brings front and center the benefits of faculty informal mentoring initiatives, such as mentoring networks. In them, members have mutual support as they navigate the often-difficult path of academia. This is especially beneficial to minority faculty, who view institutional acclimatization as an abstraction of their ethno-cultural identity. An example is C-Y-F, an international women's network, highlighted in this book. It is an example of women collaborating and co-mentoring each other across continents, diverse linguistic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, different generations, and different fields. The contributions by minority and international authors bring a variety of perspectives on formal and informal mentoring within or outside universities and offer a unique view of intercultural mentoring.

Keywords Higher education · Universities · Mentoring · Informal mentoring · Mentoring institutional policies · Mentoring practices · Informal peer mentoring · Global networks

This book proposes to engage the reader in an intellectual expedition on mentoring across politics, policies, and practices juxtaposed with the racial, ethno-cultural, and gender diversity of the authors. The authors' voices will take the reader into a journey of global mentoring experiences, and will guide them to view mentoring, not only from its practical context, but also from a historical view of the universities. They will position the reader to view the present conditions of minorities and female faculty in the academy and engage the reader in the examination of alternative forms of mentoring. Alternative forms of mentoring needing to be supported by institutions of higher learning. The readings also bring forth the apparent absence or hidden policies on mentoring and the ongoing (intentional or uninten-

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tional) institutional practices that continue to maintain the invisibility of minorities and the inequitable presence of female faculty. Mainly, this book is about reflection and research of the present conditions of minorities and female faculty and their determination to engage in positive mentoring experiences within or outside their institutions. It is also about student cross-cultural co-mentoring. The book's orchestration was based on the exigencies of faculty in the new global society and their invisibility and inequitable representation in institutions of higher learning, It was built on the belief that students need to be prepared to enter the academy; thus, they need to engage in mentoring experiences early in their academic preparation. This book is situated and constructed from faculty experiences, as well as from the perspectives of universities' leaderships, which is uncommon in mentoring literature. The honest style of the authors' narrations will engage the readers into reflecting into their own stories; thus, creating a silent dialogue between the writer and the reader. Each chapter informs and inspires!

The chapters in Part I—Mentoring Politics, Policies, and Practices serve as the canvas on which other chapters portray their experiences and color the many mentoring issues. The tinted realities of institutional mentoring come to light and are addressed in the chapters that follow. The second section provides insights into a global mentoring network. The third section focuses on the invisibility to visibility of Latino/Latina faculty. The fourth section is dedicated to mentoring in international contexts.

Mentoring Within and Outside Institutional Politics, Policies, and Practices describes a study that compared faculty-mentoring policies and structures, from the perspectives of universities' leaderships.

A *Website Analysis of Mentoring Programs for Latina Faculty,* is a research in which the websites of the 25 Tier 1 High Research Universities (as recognized by the U.S. News and World Report, 2015) and Hispanic serving universities in the Southwest were analyzed for their relevance to mentoring Latina faculty.

1 Part II—Dynamics of a Global Mentoring Network Focuses on C-Y-F Network

In Synergy, Care, and Constructive Chaos the authors conduct a self-evaluation of the group aimed at better understanding of the intricacies of group dynamics in non face-to-face interactions. They point out the complexity of their network and the dynamics of synergy and chaos that transform chaos into constructive chaos.

Storying our Academic Career Transitions Within a Peer-Mentoring Community is an examination of the ways in which their *Friends* community within C-Y-F support their academic transitions, especially when they have to deal with challenges and transitions and by identifying three themes specific to dealing with uncertainty, support through collegiality, and support in their academic transitions.

Dynamics of Tensions and a Sense of Belonging in an Informal Peer Mentoring Community of Women Faculty addresses the challenges face by faculty on the path

of tenure, promotion, and leadership. They use a case study approach and Community of Practice (CoP) framework and identify group tensions to provide suggestions for the solution of conflicts.

2 Part III—Ethnic and Sociocultural Issues and Faculty Responses

2.1 In Mentoring for Faculty Engagement from a Socially and Culturally Situated Perspective

The author explains how the lack of attention to a person's identity development, in this case, faculty's professional identity influences marginalized faculty to become disengaged because this type of relationship becomes oppressive.

Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Alliance (MGSA): Crafting a Diverse Peer Mentoring Network within and beyond a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) In this chapter, the authors from diverse backgrounds and at different universities utilize a self-study approach employing auto-ethnographic techniques similar to those previously reported by the C-Y-F network, as well as personal narratives describing their paths in the academy.

In Critical Multicultural Latino Mentoring in Higher Education, the authors argue that there are invisible obstacles interfering with Latinos/Latinas progression in the professoriate ranks of the academy. They narrate their experiences as co-mentors and acknowledge and describe CRT and LatCrit as salient theoretical frameworks that help expose the complex forms of oppression.

3 Part IV—Mentoring in International Contexts

Cross-Cultural Mentoring of Graduate Students: Evidence from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Academy in Central Asia (OSCE) identifies the essential characteristics for effective cross-cultural mentoring and describes the OSCE Academy located in Central Asia where Students from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan studied and completed their Master in Economic Governance and Regulation Program degrees in a cross-cultural mentoring context.

In Student Co-Mentoring in Israeli and American Universities: Promoting Mutual Academic Success, the author describes a peer co-mentoring program in Israel and later in USA. These programs create the conditions for students to establish co-mentoring peer networks.

The Capacity Building of *Early Career Researchers Through Cross-Institutional Mentoring* presents an initiative aimed at increasing faculty publication, momentum, and new research methodologies by tailoring mentoring specific to the needs of the early career researchers.

Part I
Mentoring Politics, Policies, and Practices in Higher Education

Mentoring In and Outside Institutional Politics, Policies, and Practices

B. Gloria Guzmán Johannessen and Laurette Bristol

Abstract In this chapter, the authors discuss the impact of the new global society on higher education and questioned whether universities are preparing faculty, and more specifically minority and females, to meet the demands of the twentieth century. The authors recognize the continued underrepresentation of minorities and female faculty in higher education and examined it under the lenses of the historical and cultural onset of universities in USA and Australia. Using a multi-site study approach, they explored institutional politics and practices across international and geo-politically located universities (USA, Caribbean, and Australia). This investigation is based on the perspectives of institutional leaders (an under explored area within the field of mentoring research), and looked at university leaderships' understanding of existing mentoring practices in their universities. The findings articulate the evident compatibilities and dissonances between private (institutional leadership) understandings of practice and public (institutional websites) support practices for minority and female faculty. This study brings a new perspective on faculty formal and informal mentoring in and outside institutions of higher learning.

Keywords Higher education · Mentoring · Formal mentoring · Informal mentoring · Mentoring policies · Institutional policies · Minority faculty · Female faculty

1 Introduction and Background

The global demands, in twenty-first century, make the attainment of a position in higher education and academic success more difficult than in the previous centuries. The expectations of faculty work have changed from traditional teaching and

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research in local and national levels to international engagement in a global context. Faculty's ability to succeed academically in global contexts depends not only on knowledge, but also on the ability to collaborate with scholars from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, languages, cultures, and ideologies across international boundaries (Gopal 2011; Tenuto and Gardiner 2013). These international demands call for universities to be clear on how they are positioned in the new global society, and whether they are preparing their faculties to succeed, not only at regional and national levels but also internationally. This is an area that points to the need to build institutional climates and cultures that embrace diversity, promote collaboration, and support faculty mentoring within and outside the gates of their institutions. It also signals the need for faculty mentoring to be aligned with their institutions national and international missions. We point out that minority faculty, as marginalized members in a dominant society, navigate across language, racial/ethnic, and cultural borders. In addition their lived experiences cultivate in them the understanding of the intersection of diversity with academic work, which is the foundation for global intercultural engagement. Thus, they have the potential to be pivotal to their institutions' international global schemes. Nevertheless, minority faculty continues to be inequitably represented in numbers and in the ranks of the academy. There is also evidence that for white female faculty, marginalization has been and continues to be a reality (National Center for Education Statistics 2014).

Faculty formal and informal mentoring needs to be viewed as an institutional leadership priority, not only as a faculty concern, as it is commonly portrayed in the literature. This is specially needed because there is no research evidence that universities are providing mentoring and/or other professional development to ensure that their faculties have the skills to face the challenges and to engage effectively in teaching and research at a global level (Gopal 2011; Tenuto and Gardiner 2013). Mentoring is critical for professional support and development (Pennan & Willsher, 2014). Gopal (2011) questions "If they [faculty] are not prepared to teach in a cross-cultural, globally diverse setting, then how can they provide an equitable educational environment for their students?" (p. 63).

The challenges academic faculty need to face in the global society, the limited ethnic representation in the academe, and mentoring inconsistencies kindled our inquiry and framed our investigation. We grounded our inquiry on compared policies, structures, and processes of private and public universities in USA, Australia, and the Caribbean with respect to: (a) institutional position on globalization; (b) economic, political and/or social drivers influencing faculty hiring; (c) structures that support collaborative professional practices; (d) institutional mentoring; and (e) institutional perceptions of the service and contributions of minorities and female faculties. We asked institutional leaderships to give their perceptions on their institutions' positions with regard to their involvement at the international level and how collaboration and mentoring are addressed for minority and female faculties.

To better understand the position of the academy with respect to minority and female faculty that would serve as the framework of our investigation, we: (a) reviewed the literature on the historical and traditional development of universities in USA and Australia; (b) examined the representation of minority and female faculties at the national level; (c) reviewed the literature on mentoring; and (d) explored formal and informal alternative approaches to faculty mentoring, taking place within and outside universities.

To provide clarity to our work, and at the same time as an attempt to engage the reader in the issues presented in this chapter, we interchange *institution of higher education* (IHEs) with university(s) to avoid over-using the IHE acronym. We use the term minority to denote ethno-cultural minority, and use these terms interchangeably. We refer to women faculty as female faculty to be consistent with federal and other reports and represent the United States of America as United States of America (USA), instead the common term *America or US*. We do this because there are other countries in the American continent that also have *states* as their political-geographical boundaries.

2 Institutional Politics, Culture, and Climate

> Higher education, as a link in the chain of educational institution, has a social structure grounded in an ideology of unequal power relationships. Framed by a hierarchical social structure and guided by norms of interpersonal behavior traditionally defined by those it is intended to serve, it leaves little room for the contribution of women faculty of color (Balderrama et al. 2004, p. 141).

While the above quote refers to universities in USA, the course of unequal opportunities for women and minorities appears to be similar in Australia (Devos 2008). In our review of the literature, we found that the ongoing discriminatory practices in both countries have similarities in their historical evolution, past, and current policies. For both countries, the roots for the marginalization of minorities and females began at the onset of their first universities, because these institutions were founded for the elites—not for the common populations (Forsyth 2014; Dzuback 2003).

The discrimination of Indigenous populations in USA and Australia also had and continues to have similar pathways. Minchin (2010) provides a critical view of Australians' perceptions on the history of White domination in Australia and USA, which serves to illustrate the parallelism between the two countries in terms of discriminatory traditions and practices. Minchin mentions that in Australia,

> …a referendum in 1967 that allowed indigenous Australians to be included in the federal census and gave the Australian Commonwealth the right to legislate on Australian Aborigines… In the United States, however, black Americans' equal citizenship rights were —at least on paper—protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of 1868 (p. 1107).

3 Australian Early Universities

Forsyth (2014) describes the foundation of the oldest university in Australia as having been established in 1851 as an elite "sandstone" with British traditions and academic faculty from Oxford or Cambridge (p. 367). In her description of the historical evolution of Australian universities, Forsyth (2014) provides the following insights: Males were the highest and most significant majority, which had and continues to have implications for the "gender gap" across Australian higher education. The system of merit-based selection in Australia's public universities appeared to work well for women, who by 1920 composed half of the academic staff. However, while females were well represented in universities, Aboriginals and other Indigenous populations were not allowed to enter to enter higher education institutions. At the turn of World War II, the return of Australian males from war negatively impacted the representation of females, which was considerably reduced. This situation lasted up to 1970 when "New categories of oppression attracted their [universities] attention. Race, gender, and sexuality were added to class as sites of struggle and liberation" (p. 371). Finally, in 1960, the first aboriginal student entered an Australian university, but Sydney University did not open its gates for them till the 1980s. Even so, Sydney University did not have "a systematic solution to social and educational inclusion of Aboriginal people through undergraduate opportunity" (Forsyth 2014, p. 377).

4 USA Early Universities

The goal and purpose for the foundation of American institutions of higher learning was the education of the male elite. It was based on the belief that knowledge belonged only to them. Female's role was to support males on their path of wisdom, as well as in their personal and familial lives (Dzuback 2003). In her review of the history of USA universities, Dzuback (2003) describes the role of females as supporters—not doers, which entitled only White males to higher education, and at the same time made it inaccessible to females, Afro-Americans, and Native Americans. In these early colleges, dominated by males, keeping females and African-Americans outside their gates was "a matter of masculine honor" (Dzuback 2003, p. 179). These exclusionary tactics delayed the establishment of women and Black colleges for 200 years. However, by the latter part of the 19th century, neither females nor Afro-Americans continued to stand patiently and passively at the margin of intellectual progress and their ongoing relegation to intellectual impoverishment. They founded Black and Women universities and challenged White male institutions, and their determination opened the sacred halls of higher education; thus, changing the course of institutions of higher learning (Dzuback 2003). Nevertheless, in their intellectual journey, females and Afro-Americans continued to be treated as *outsiders* in terms of support and recognition of their intellectual

and research contributions (Dzuback 2003). It is incontrovertible that gender and the educational advancement of minorities have been fundamental issues in the history and evolution of USA higher education and continue to be a concern in present times.

5 Minority and Female Representation in the Academe

5.1 Australian Higher Education

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training Report (8 April, 2014) shows the following: There is a total of 113,630 faculty staff in public and private universities, of which 85,016 full-time faculty and 27,630 part-time. The representation of Indigenous (Aboriginals) is 958 (0.008 %). "No data are available on ethnicity or race of Australian academics with the exception of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders" (Devos 2008, p. 203). Furthermore, gender inequality continues to be present in Australian universities (Devos 2008). The presence of females in Australian public and private universities reaches only 39 % of the total number of faculty in these institutions, and the percentage of females who are at the associate and full-professorship ranks a mere 19 % (Devos 2008). This is a clear indication of the unequal position female faculty have in Australian institutions of higher education.

6 USA Higher Education

According to the report of the National Center for Education Statistics (2014), the total number of faculty in USA universities in 2013 is 791,391, and the total number of professors 181,530; associate 155,095; assistant 166,045; instructors 99,304; lecturers 36,728; and 152,689 other faculty (non determined).

Table 1 serves to illustrate the unequal representation of minorities and documents the need for universities to embrace diversity by recognizing and valuing the contributions of minorities and advancement in their academic careers. What is most compelling in these demographics is the fact that Hispanics comprise the largest minority group in USA with approximately 50.5 million (16 %) of the total population (US Census 2010), but their presence in the academy is only 4 %. The same can be said for Black Americans whose population is approximately 42 million (14 %) of the total population, but their presence in the academy is only 6 %. Asian/Pacific Islander Americans, on the contrary, appear to be equitably represented in the academy, given that their population is only 5220.579 (2 %); but their presence in the academy is 6 % and represent 10 % of the total number of faculty at the rank of professor.

Table 1 National Center for Education Statistics (2014)

Total number of full-time faculty by rank and ethnicity (2013)						
	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian Pacific Island	Am. Ind. Alaska Nat.	Unknown. Alien
Number of Faculty	575,491	43,188 0.07 %	33,217 0.06 %	72,246 12 %	3538 0.006 %	67,249 12 %
Professor	181,530 82 %	6665 0.4 %	5604 0.03 %	15,417 0.08 %	573 0.003 %	5267 0.03 %
Assoc. Professor	116,817 % 99 %	8812 0.07 %	6381 0.05	15,809 0.1 %	591 0.005 %	7276 0.06 %
Assist. Professor	112,262 69 %	10,542 0.09 %	10,542 0.09 %	18,402 16 %	683 0.006 %	17,709 15 %
Instructor	73,859 90 %	7448 10 %	6340 0.08	4950 0.07 %	879 0.01 %	6421 0.09 %
Lecturer	36,728 99 %	1728 0.5 %	2015 0.05 %	2436 0.06 %	117 0.003 %	3096 0.08 %
Other Faculty	96,523 57 %	7993 0.08 %	5747 0.06 %	14,946 15 %	695 0.007 %	26,858 28 %

The percentages in Table 1 represent, the number of faculty by rank and ethnicity compared to the number of faculty by rank and ethnicity of White faculty.

With respect to White female faculty, their presence in the academy is not as unequal as that of racial/ethnic minorities. In comparison to their representation the difference is only 9 % less than White males, but in the attainment of rank, there is a difference of 35 % for the rank of professor and 12 % difference for the rank of associate professor (US Census 2010).

Another legitimate concern is the contrast in salaries between males and females as presented by Fox-Cardamone and Wilson (2010):

> Certainly there is discussion of perceived disparities in salary between men and female at all academic ranks. In addition, there is discussion of the failure of females to progress through the academic ranks in numbers consistent with those of their male colleagues. These two topics are related, since progression through the academic ranks generally results in higher pay for the individual. While the reasons for these disparities in both pay and promotion are not always transparent, the disparities themselves are quite clear. (p. 2)

The disparity in salaries between males and females gives an indication that universities characterize the endeavors of males as having more worth than those of females, an issue that may be centered in the foundation USA universities and traditional practices. The base salary for university faculty in 2010–2013 was $84,000 for males and $69,100 for females, a difference of $14,900. A comparison of salaries among the various Racial/Ethnic groups shows that the base salary for White males is approximately $5000 less than for Asian/Pacific Islanders but higher

than Blacks and Hispanics (*The Condition of Education 2014* (NCES 2014-083). It appears that institutions of higher education fail to recognize that, "…barriers for females in higher education…place serious limitations on the success of educational institutions themselves" (West and Curtis 2006, p. 4).

> The low representation and inequitable standing of minorities and discriminatory practices demonstrate that universities continue to be "Framed by a hierarchical social structure and guided by norms of interpersonal behavior traditionally defined by those it is intended to serve, it leaves little room for the contribution of women faculty of color." (Balderrama et al. 2004, p. 141).

It seems that these inequities need to be a central issue in the academy because universities, even in this century, continue to be white male-dominated, and homogenized institutions. More often than not, this type of culture and climate negatively interfere with faculty's potential for academic and scholarly progress within an institution (Gibson 2006; Balderrama et al. 2004). Institutional priorities continue to have dissonant ideological bases for White males than for minority and female faculties. It may be because these were outspoken politics, policies, and practices in early universities (Balderrama et al. 2004; Dzuback 2003; Berkovitch et al. 2012), which persist to the present time as tacit (unspoken and hidden) policies and practices; thus, contributing to the persistent marginalization of minority and female faculties.

7 Mentoring Politics, Policies, and Practices

The literature on mentoring focuses on its many aspects from historical and political influences (Gibson 2006; Berkovitch et al. 2012; Johannessen et al. 2012); effectiveness of mentoring programs (Mullen et al. 2008) faculty dissatisfaction (Monk et al. 2010; Johannessen and Unterreiner 2010; Chadiha et al. 2014) mentoring ethno-cultural and women groups (Barak et al. 2013); and institutional culture and climate affecting faculty advancement (Trower 2011) among other themes intricately related to faculty mentoring in institutions of higher learning.

Mentoring in academia is presented in the literature as a process through which new seasoned faculty provide advice and support to new faculty into the politics, policies, and practices of an institution. It is intended to guide new faculty on a path toward successful advancement in the academy and with the potential to advance higher education institutions toward more inclusive environments. Mentoring can also contribute to the transformation of an institution's political climate and culture, which more often than not negatively interferes with faculty's potential for academic and scholarly progress (Gibson 2006; Balderrama et al. 2004).

Formal mentoring tends to reinforce the unchanging homogenization of an institution's intellectual reservoir, culture, and climate, and while it has the potential to help new White male faculty to become acclimatize to the institution's

environment and engage on the path toward retention, tenure, and promotion. For female and minorities this is not always the case, because they are not always provided with the mentoring they need. Formal mentoring partnerships in which a seasoned and/or older faculty member is assigned to mentor new and often younger faculty do not always meet with success when the mentor has different intellectual interests and does not have the needed knowledge and cultural sensitivity to understand the needs of the minority mentee.

Faculty dissatisfaction and frustration with the limited mentorship they received at their institutions, or in some cases not receiving any at all, is consistent in the literature of mentoring (Barak et al. 2013; Fox-Cardamone & Wilson 2010; Johannessen and Unterreiner 2010). We suggest that there is a need to ensure that the culture of their institutions embrace and value the intellectual and creative endeavors of minorities and females, because doing otherwise, is unwittingly contributing to the prevalent marginalization of females and minorities, as well as to institutional intellectual impoverishment. Gibson (2006) study on mentoring women faculty showed that "…the political climate of the organization as an essential attribute to this experience" (p. 63) and further describes how the misalignment between institutional missions, politics, priorities, and departmental practices, cultures, roles, and responsibilities create inconsistencies on how mentoring for females takes place in institutions' colleges and departments. Trower (2011) documented this instability as follows:

> Three quarters of associate and full professors agreed that institutional priorities have changed in ways that affect their work. Far fewer associate and full professors felt that the institution's priorities are stated consistently across various levels of leadership and fewer still felt that those priorities are acted upon consistently. (p. 6)

The low representation of minorities and females reveals that universities continue to be "Framed by a hierarchical social structure and guided by norms of interpersonal behavior traditionally defined by those it is intended to serve, it leaves little room for the contribution of women faculty of color." (Balderrama et al. 2004, p. 141). Also, the marginalization of women and minorities persists to be a central issue in the academy because universities continue to be white, male-dominated, and homogenized institutions. More often than not, this type of culture and climate negatively interferes with faculty's potential for academic and scholarly progress within an institution (Gibson 2006; Balderrama et al. 2004). Institutional priorities commonly have dissonant ideological bases for those of minority and female faculty.

> While the institution of education tends toward rationality and logic in carrying out its social and economic mission, it does have its share of contradictions. The presence of faculty of women of color and their scholarly work grounded in social action-research crystallizes these ideological clashes between the institution and individuals whose participation was not written in the original treatise (Balderrama et al. 2004, p. 141).

While it appears that institutions of higher learning are attempting to include minority and female faculties in their institutions, numbers alone do not adequately indicate their status and positioning in universities because "These twin forces—

inclusion and marginalization are the organizational setting that requires further investigation into the hidden cultural representation of these two processes." (Berkovitch et al. 2012).

Equitable representation of minorities and females in any organization is not only a privilege, it is a right in a professed democratic society, and as such it needs to be considered an issue of social justice. This is even more compelling in universities because they are the pulse of a society's drive toward philosophical, political, and social evolution, and in most cases where they take root.

8 The Transformative Role of Mentoring

8.1 Politics and Policies

Gibson's (2006) study on mentoring female faculty showed that "…the political climate of the organization as an essential attribute to this experience" (p. 77). It describes how the misalignment between institutional missions, politics, and priorities and departmental structures, culture, roles, and responsibilities, create inconsistencies on mentoring across departments and colleges. This points out to the need to ensure that the climates and cultures of universities embrace and value the intellectual and creative endeavors of minorities and females. Doing otherwise is unwittingly contributing to the prevalent marginalization of females and minorities and to institutional intellectual impoverishment.

What is needed is the creation of environments where the intellectual synergy between faculty and leadership become the force moving the institutional community toward increased creativity and innovation and common mutual goals and practices aimed at the institution's advancement (Mullen and Lick 1999).

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> Three quarters of associate and full professors agreed that institutional priorities have changed in ways that affect their work. Far fewer associate and full professors felt that the institution's priorities are stated consistently across various levels of leadership and fewer still felt that those priorities are acted upon consistently." (p. 6)

While there is a large body of literature on women and minority faculty perspectives on mentoring (presented in our background and literature review) we did not find any literature on faculty mentoring from institutional leaderships' perspectives. This disproportion in the literature may be reflective of the distance between faculty and institutional leadership, based on institutional culture and organizational politics, which as mentioned by Nejad and Abbaszadeh (2011) "… political behavior has dysfunctional results such as conflict, job satisfaction, and lower productivity" (p. 66).

Contradictions between institutional expectations and focus on mentoring and faculty's perceptions on the *what* and *how* they need to be supported in their academic and professional endeavors create the dysfunction alluded by Nejad and

Abbaszadeh (2011). It is basic to universities' visions and missions to include in them the *why* and *how* their faculties are supported in their academic paths and the ways in which their institutions facilitate their success and are invested in the achievement of the institutions' realization of their missions and goals, because, "… irrespective of whether faculty are entering the gates of academia or are already established professors, they all play a vital role in the ongoing transformation of educational programs" (Johannessen & Unterreiner 2010, p. 32). We believe there must be equilibrium between an institution's organizational obligations and interests and its accountability to nurturing and supporting their faculties. It is also crucial for universities to realize that the marginalization of faculty women and minorities continues to be present, even in those institutions where mentoring is available to them. Faculty in general, need to have mentoring that guides them toward the fulfillment of their academic careers, which is even more important for faculty from traditionally marginalized groups, because the mentoring they receive is also influenced by the organization's climate and culture (Gibson 2006; Nejad & Abbaszadeh 2011). It is undeniable that present conditions of society influence how institutions perceive and/or support faculty from traditionally disenfranchised groups. In institutions where minorities and females are only minimally represented in numbers and rank, leaderships need to look at their present institutional cultures, especially in terms of hiring practices, hiring practices and mentoring for retention and promotion.

Equity and access to the academy in the absence of supporting practices are nothing more than visions or illusions. Furthermore, continued complacency with the status quo reflect an unwittingly contribution to the ongoing marginalization of minorities and female faculty in the academe, as well as to institutional intellectual impoverishment. Universities in the twenty-first century can begin to change traditional discrimination by acknowledging the inequitable conditions of minority and female faculty and actively engage in initiatives to move forward their institutions toward more equitable conditions for *all* faculty because they are "…the fire that maintains the intellectual ardor needed for universities to cradle new world knowledge and to carry forward a future global evolution." (Johannessen & Unterreiner 2010, p. 32). This fire needs to be ignited and sustained by providing new faculty with support through formal and informal mentoring that honestly encourages their intellectual, physical, and emotional wellbeing; thus, aimed at enhancing their confidence in that their contributions will be acknowledged and supported.

Changing the current status of minorities and female faculty entails looking forward instead of continuing to believe that the answers to current and future issues can be solved through the lenses of antiquated models. If there is no forward thought, then the intellectual contributions of minorities and females will continue to be obscured and disenfranchised in the academy.

> The presence of faculty of women of color and their scholarly work grounded in social action-research crystallizes these ideological clashes between the institution and individuals whose participation was not written in the original treatise. We believe this is one of the

> reasons we sing the same tune with different lyrics—our experiences begin with personal/individual and local political issues. But as we continue to hear the song we begin to realize that it is more than local and personal and extends into the institutional and structural. (Balderrama et al. 2004, p. 1)

9 Mentoring Practices

Mentoring in academia, as presented in the literature, is a process through which new seasoned faculty provide advice and support to new faculty into the politics, policies, and practices of an institution. It is also intended to guide new faculty on a path toward successful advancement in the academy. The literature on mentoring practices focuses on its many aspects from historical and political influences (Gibson 2006; Berkovitch et al. 2012; Johannessen et al. 2012); effective mentoring programs (Mullen and Hutinger 2008) faculty dissatisfaction (Monk et al. 2010; Johannessen and Unterreiner 2010; Chadiha et al. 2014), mentoring ethno-cultural and female faculty (Kusselman et al. 2003; Barak et al. 2013), and institutional culture and climate affecting faculty advancement (Trower 2011) and other themes intricately related to faculty mentoring in IHEs. However, the institutional goals for mentoring are commonly centered in the acclimatization of new faculty; thus, reinforcing the unchanging homogenization of an institution's intellectual reservoir, culture, and climate. While it has the potential to help new White male faculty to become acclimatize to the institution's environment and to engage in the path toward retention, tenure, and promotion, this is not the reality for females and minorities. Formal mentoring partnerships in which a seasoned and/or older faculty member is assigned to mentor new and often younger faculty do not always meet with success when the mentor has different intellectual interests and does not have the needed knowledge and cultural sensitivity to understand the needs of the mentee. This type of formal mentoring does not seem to work for traditionally marginalized groups in the academy when the institutional climate is not deliberately engaged in their transformation from homogenized institutions to organizations willing to take into account the intellectual diversity of thought that female and minorities can offer to them.

Faculty dissatisfaction and frustration with the limited mentorship they received at their institutions, or in some cases not receiving any at all is consistent in the literature of mentoring (Barak et al. 2013; Fox-Cardamone & Wilson 2010; Johannessen & Unterreiner 2010). This lack of appropriate mentoring is a major influence on faculty failure. For members of traditionally marginalized groups, 'acclimatization' should not mean to surrender their own intellectual and personal identities. Gibson (2006) study on mentoring women faculty showed that "…the political climate of the organization as an essential attribute to this experience" (p. 63) and describes how the misalignment between institutional missions, politics, priorities, and departmental practices, cultures, roles, and responsibilities create inconsistencies on how mentoring women takes place in institutions departments and colleges.

10 Alternative Forms of Mentoring

There is variety of forms of mentoring addressing the needs of faculty who dissatisfied, and in some cases embittered by traditional formal mentoring (dyads) at their universities, faculty seek alternative ways of mentoring. Johannessen et al. (2012) describe different models of informal mentoring from traditional dyads to mentoring that includes one or more mentees working with one or more mentors. Another form of mentoring is group mentoring, such as *mentoring circles*, which provide the opportunity to work collaboratively with one or more mentors or mentees. *Speed mentoring* utilizes a match-making approach to find and match mentors and mentees according to their academic interests, gender, and styles. These configurations of mentoring can take in universities or are across universities, and may be at national or global levels.

An excellent example of group mentoring (actually co-mentoring) is CURVE-Y-FRIENDS (C-Y-F), a global mentoring network that evolved out of a common need to seek academic mentoring relationships that were appropriate to women's personal and professional learning needs.

C-Y-F is more than a model of an international peer mentoring; it is an illustration of peer mentoring support for females from diverse ethnic groups operating outside the political structures of their members' universities.

Established in 2011 C-Y-F was initially composed of 19 women representing four major ethic groups across the US, Australia, Egypt, and the Caribbean. The members represent academic experiences across early career, mid-career and late career, as well as variety of academic ranks. It also includes females who work on the periphery of the university as adjunct or short-term contract faculty.

The network is comprised of two previously established peer-mentoring groups, **C**aribbean Ed**u**cators **R**esearch Initiati**ve** (CURVE) and Female Researchers in Education, Networking and Dialogue (FRiENDs); the Y, Spanish for 'and' represents a dynamic alliance of females providing support for each other in shared universities through a range of current collegial relationships (PhD supervision, team teaching or co-authorship). The members' relationships are sustained by innovations in collaborative technology (Skype, Dropbox, Google Groups, GotoMeetings).

Bristol, Adams, & Johannessen (2014), members of C-Y-F, characterized the network as a "social experiment that encouraged members of the…group … to go beyond their safe and familiar mentoring and collaborative writing zones" (p. 3/4). Further, they outlined that:

> The description of our purpose and collaborative mentoring processes were illustrative of ways of working shaped by values of *mutuality* (drawing on the strengths of each other), *collaboration* (purposefully exploiting the relationship to promote and enhance our professional, academic, and personal lives), and *interrogation* (challenging assumptions and practices of mentoring in and through community). p. 4 *Original in Italics*

11 Method

11.1 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to a better understanding of formal and informal mentoring policies, structures, processes, and practices, based on institutional leaderships and leadership perceptions—not on faculty perceptions, commonly found in the literature on faculty mentoring. It also contributes to the body of literature on the marginalization of minorities and females in the academe, which is based on the historical and cultural onset of institutions of higher education in USA, Australia, brings forth a new perspectives, and invites a new discourse on faculty formal and informal mentoring in and outside institutional borders.

We guided our research with the following questions:

1. How is the university positioned to serve the wider public at the national and international levels?
2. What are the university's key areas of funding?
3. What are the university's economic, political, or social drivers influencing faculty hiring, retention, promotion, and mentoring?
4. What structures are in place to support collaborative professional practices in general and specifically among women and minority faculty?
5. How does the institution view the service and contributions of minority and female faculty?

Employing a multi-site case study approach, we explored institutionalized mentoring practices and processes across international and geo-politically located universities targeting the perspectives of institutional leaders (an under explored area within the field of mentoring research) We examined first, their understandings of existing mentoring practices within their universities; second, their understanding of their institutions' positioning at the international and global level; third, their interpretations of the social, political, professional developmental role of promoting faculty collaborative work; and fourth, the role that institutional formal mentoring may play in the academic lives of faculty broadly, and more critically, in the academic lives of minority and female faculty.

Given the social and academic status of the participants, and the proportional difficulties with access to this category of institutional leadership, convenience and snowballing sampling techniques were employed to recruit eight institutional leaders in private and public universities in the USA, Australia and the Caribbean. The sample of universities is characterized as large (>5000 students) or small (<5000 students) in urban, suburban, and rural locations.

The data was gathered using two means:

First, the authors conducted a content analysis of the universities websites and other documentation commonly available to the public. Attention was directed to the principles of collaborative practices expressed in the institutions' mission statements and public service goals. Special consideration was given to the description and

purposes of available faculty mentoring programs, paying close attention to agendas that targeted minority and female faculty. Data were refined using a thematic analysis approach that was guided by the research questions for the study.

Second, through structured interviews of approximately 30–45 min with faculty members in high profile institutional leadership roles responsible for, or with shared responsibility for the identification of faculty needs, and for finding the areas of research and pedagogical development. During the interviews the authors explored a variety of issues which included: (a) How the university was positioned to serve the wider public at the national and international levels; (b) key areas of research funding; (c) economic, political or social drivers influencing faculty hiring; (d) the structures in place to support collaborative professional practices in general and specifically among women and minority faculty; and (e) the institution's view of the service and contributions of minority and female faculty.

The institutional leaders' understandings and suggested practices around institutionally located mentoring practices were juxtaposed against the ways in which these positions reflected or refracted policy located positions on mentoring replicated on the related universities' (public) websites. The findings shared in this paper, articulates the evident compatibilities and dissonances between private (institutional leadership) understandings of practice and public (institutional websites) articulations of support practices for minority and women faculty. As such the case presented here maps institutional mentoring nuances across content (expressed through practice, and policy) and method (interviews, text analysis and reflective narratives).

12 Limitations of the Study

Given the social and academic status of participants and the proportional difficulties with access to this category of participant, there is limited number of participants. Also, due to the limited or non-existent demographics and historical information about Caribbean universities, the historical review of the development of institutions of higher education was limited to USA and Australia.

13 Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Future Research

13.1 Interpretive Thematic Website Analysis

The focus of our interpretive analysis of the universities Websites for the 3 private and 5 public universities was on a thematic interpretation of publication of their missions, visions, and strategic plans published in their Websites.

Mission and vision statements reflect commitment to global involvement. All but one private university showed a global vision and/or mission with emphasis on study abroad student programs; international students in their campuses; and encouragement and support to faculty work and research at the international level.

Strategic plans support for faculty teaching and research with or in other countries. Only USA universities in USA had internationalization in their vision and mission statements (3 public and 2 private universities), and of these 2 public university and one private university included specific plans on inclusion of global issues their strategic plans.

Recruitment and/or mentoring is referenced in the Website. Only one public university mentioned recruitment and retention of diverse faculty.

Mentoring and faculty development is referenced in the Website. Only one public university referenced faculty development and mentoring, and this statement was specific to establishing and environment of inclusiveness and development of faculty with the cross-cultural sophistication and skills.

14 Interpretive Thematic Analysis of Interviews

Position within the global demands of the 21st century. With the exception of one rural university, the leaderships expressed commitment to internationalization and service within regional, national, and global societies orientation and support faculty to teach and conduct research in regional, national, and global contexts.

Key funding sources. There were differences between public and private universities. While public universities seem to rely on governmental and private grants, private universities rely mainly on student tuition, manufacturing and business sources, as well as some form of international funding. There is a variety of funding sources, with the main sources as follows: only one private university had student fees as only source of funding; two public universities on competitive grants (government and international funding; one private on student tuition; one private and two public universities on funding from industry, business, and private grants, and one private university did not provide information on key funding sources.

Economic, political, and social drivers. (Faculty hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion). Responses diverge from a focus on the attraction of the university in terms of location (one private and one public university); commitment to social justice (one private and one public university) lagging behind in attracting faculty representative of diverse ethno-cultural groups (one public university); minorities are hired, but not retained—few attain tenure (one public and one private university); and students do well in a mono-cultural university and learn more than with people who have an international perspective (one public university).

Mentoring and professional development formal structures. No professional development due to lack of funding (two private universities) responsibility of the Faculty Center—not at the department level (one public university); Faculty Development Center with emphasis on mentoring new faculty (one public

university); semi-formal structures (one public university); no conversation on mentoring beyond the college level (one public university); no mentoring policies (two public universities;) mentoring through faculty development—not effective (one public university).

Service and contributions of minority and female faculty. Services of females and minorities are view the same as for other faculty (one pubic university); stated in the mission—excellent representation of females and minorities (one public university); service of minorities is not always recognized (one private and one public university); responsibility of the coalition of Black faculty and Hispanic Council (one public university) allocation of resources, but difficult to deal with discrimination (one public university); focus is on undergraduate students (one public university); and no mentoring program (one public university).

Discussion. The authors found commonalities among the universities in terms of visions, mission statements and congruency between Website information and the leadership's responses to the interviews. All but two of the interviewees described their universities as institutions engaged in global initiatives. The two universities described only in terms of local and regional serving institutions were located in rural areas.

Websites with mission and vision statements use the language of diversity and equity in terms of compliance, but not as embracing them in their practice Although all but one university addressed diversity in their vision and mission, the interviews, revealed that there seems to be a great deal of work to be done to transform their institutions' culture and climate reflected in their mission statements. It is also confounding that even in those universities with social justice, as their primary missions, they had no plans for recruitment of minority faculty. At one private university, minority hired left the institution when they did not attain tenure. Nevertheless, there was no indication that there were any formalized plans for program changes to ensure inclusivity in their hiring practices. Furthermore, there was no evidence, from the interviews, that in institutions with designated offices for equity and inclusion, the process of hiring is a shared responsibility of these office and colleges and departments.

The question remaining to be asked is whether support to minorities and women is reflected in their strategic plans and budgets because the lack of resources allocated to hire and retain women and minorities was not revealed in the interviews; therefore, the stated commitments do not match the allocation of resources. The institutional budget is not public, so this is an internal question for those in university leadership positions.

What is needed is that institutions go beyond compliance to fully embrace and support the institutionalization of their practices by including in their mission statements their commitment to furthering the inclusion of minorities and females. Institutional policies also need to be specific to the affirmation of institutional commitment to hiring and providing mentoring to minorities and females. Induction to the institution should be a request for minorities and females that they need to become part of a mold. Their mentoring should be based on the recognition that

faculty from diverse ethno-cultural groups and females need to be supported in maintaining their personal, relational, and collective identities (Johannessen 2015).

It is also confounding that even in those universities with social justice as their primary mission, minority there were no formalized plans for program changes to ensure inclusivity in their hiring and retention practices. The interviews brought forth the apparent inability to actualize commitment to practice. What seems to be the main issue is to how to bring about sustainable and systemic changes in mentoring practices, especially for minority and female faculty. It is, therefore, fundamental to the advancement of inclusiveness in institutions of higher learning that their leaderships engage in their own growth with respect to the transformation of the politics, climate, and culture of their institutions. Their committed engagement in these issues is crucial to change the discourse of the traditional and ongoing marginalization of minority and female faculty. University leaderships also need to look at alternative forms of mentoring within and outside their institutions and support faculty with time, resources, and other incentives.

As we stated in the body of our chapter, university leaderships need to look forward for new innovative ways to eliminate prevalent discriminatory practices (low numbers of minorities faculty and unequal representation of females and minorities in academic ranks). The solution of problems carried from the past cannot depend on looking at the review of historical practices, they require fresh new thinking.

15 Recommendations for Future Research

More research on mentoring focused on institutional missions, goals, and the perceptions of their leaderships is needed. This type of research would bring a better understand of the institutions' position on the ongoing effect of hidden and/or overt discriminatory practices that maintain low representation of minority faculty in these institutions. It would also help to raise institutional leaderships' awareness that their institutions need to make the inclusion of minorities a permanent goal—not a priority that may change from time to time, and that this goal must be explicitly communicated. Other investigations may focus on the connection and shared responsibility between colleges and departments with offices responsible for monitoring equitable access and support of minority and female faculty.

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A Website Analysis of Mentoring Programs for Latina Faculty at the 25 Top-Ranked National Universities

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Abstract The authors focused their investigation on Latino faculty, who represent the largest minority group in the United States. They point out that the numbers of faculty continue to be marginal as compared to White males and females. They hypothesized that the invisibility of mentoring programs from universities' Websites reflect the perfunctory importance these institutions give to ensuring that Latinas are provided with ethno-cultural appropriate mentoring aimed at their acclimatization to institutions, which does not mean that they must leave behind their ethnic and linguistic identities. The authors bring strong insights regarding the status of

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minority faculty and the need to have mentoring programs to support them, as well as the importance to publish mentoring policies and guidelines in their Websites as a reflection of the importance to the success of all faculty, and more specifically to Latino/a faculty.

Keywords Faculty · Latino/Latina · Websites · Mentoring · Institutional policies · Tier 1 universities

In the United States, Latinos (Hispanics) have increased six fold since the 1970, and as of 2013, there were 53,950,077 documented Latinos, which represents 17.1 % of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau 2015). Latinos almost mirrored that percentage in the universities in 2011 with 16.5 % (Fry and Hugo Lopez 2012). However, among full-time instructional faculty, in fall, 2011, there were 4 % Hispanic faculty members. Furthermore, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2014), there were only 3 % Hispanic full-time professors noted in 2001. There were even fewer Latino/Latina determined among tenured faculty at 2 %[1] in also among the faculty ranks in 2013, according to Zhu (2014), and according to the Nuñez and Murakami-Ramalho (2012), only 4 % of those tenured faculty members were Latina (female). It might be noted that the NCES (2014) reported the White faculty members by ethnicity and gender, but did not distinguish the gender among Hispanic faculty. Therefore, there is a need to not only recruit such faculty, but also to retain them.

Huber et al. (2006) recommended that for recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty group, a faculty-mentoring program needs to be in place. Espinoza-Herold and Gonzalez (2007) noted that in order to assist diverse and junior faculty members, mentors are needed to help develop their resiliency for overcoming challenges and for succeeding in higher education. Although Allen et al. (2004a, b) confirmed that mentoring had career benefits for faculty, mentoring available to Latinas did not equal the number of Latinas who needed mentoring (Chesler and Chesler 2002).

1 Purpose

The purpose of this website analysis was to review the top 25 Tier 1 High Research Activity Universities (as recognized by the U.S. News and World Report 2015) in order to determine if there is a purposeful mentoring program for Latina faculty. We hypothesized that if the mentoring program is not advertised or located on a university's website, then it may not be perceived by a university community as important.

[1]This was noted at the Duke University Faculty Diversity Initiative.

Table 1 Hispanic graduation and school data

Category	Number or percent
Hispanic enrollment in 4-year colleges, Fall, 2013	1,300,000
Hispanics graduating from High School, 2011	30 %
Hispanics within a year of graduation enrolled in college, 2011	62 %
Hispanic dropout rate, 2012	14 %
Hispanic advanced college degrees, 2011	<4 %
Hispanic females (under age 18) living below poverty level, 2011	20 %
Hispanic females who completed a bachelor's degree, 2012	17 %

2 Problem

According to the Bidwell (2014) of U.S. News and World Report, the U.S. Department of Education reported that the Hispanic student population at 4-year colleges grew by more than 20 % from 2010 to 2013. Nevertheless, Hispanic students constitute only 7.2 % of all undergraduates attending 4-year and 2-year colleges, and only 12.3 % of all 4-year college student bodies; but, Hispanics have a higher enrollment growth rate than any other ethnic group. As indicated in Table 1, statistics show that in fact, there were nearly 1.3 million Hispanic or Latino students enrolled in 4-year colleges in fall, 2013, which was about a 240,000-student increase since fall, 2010. Though numbers are increasing, in 2011 according to Davis and Bauman (2013), less than 30 % of Hispanic students graduated from high school, or as noted by 2012, though Hispanic dropout rates had decreased to 14 %. Nevertheless, Hispanics still have the highest number of dropouts compared to Black, Non-Hispanic White, and Asian students ages 16 through 24 (Davis and Bauman). Their numbers of earned advanced college degrees, is 4 % lower than other ethnic groups. In 2011, 70 % of White, 66 % of Black, and 62 % of Hispanic high school graduates enrolled in college within a year of completing high school, and the percentage of Hispanic females ages 25–29 who had completed a bachelor's degree more than doubled, from 7 % in 1982 to 17 % in 2012 (Baum et al. 2013). This information is important to Latina faculty. The figures related to education and the numbers of Hispanic females under the age of 18 who live below the poverty level 20 % is alarming (Davis and Bauman).

With respect to Hispanic/Latinos in the academe, the numbers are also disturbing. There is only a total of 3 % of Hispanic/Latinos to mentor new generations in colleges. Second, with 20 % of Latinas living in poverty, the likelihood of moving of going to college is diminished. Third, there are fewer than 4 % of Latinos who go to college who earn an advanced degree, which indicates fewer will be in higher education faculty positions. Fourth, even with the increase in Latinos going to college, it is a waiting game for those students to be in a higher education faculty position as it generally takes at a minimum no less than 10 years from entrance into college to exit with an advanced degree. This means that at least until

2023, or even late into the third decade of the twenty-first century, before major changes in higher education faculty ranks will attain some equity.

For the current time, however, there are concerns related to Latina faculty that need to be considered and programs that should be developed to support them. Furthermore, there are other issues as brought forward by Gonzalez (2007) who 8 years ago said that it is not a surprise that the academy has a history of racism, sexism, elitism, and exclusivity, particularly against women and people of color. Indeed, Murakami and Nuñez (2014) wrote:

> Latinas/os, who enter the academy as faculty members, face significant barriers to professional advancement (González and Padilla 2008; Padilla and Chávez 1995). They are likely to be the only one in their institution. The lack of retention among Latina faculty is the first sign that institutions are not successful in retaining and advancing their careers (Gonzalez et al. 2013;
>
> Turner et al. 2011). Latina faculty members face the dual burden of being women and being of color (Turner, 2002). As such, they encounter challenges, such as invisibility, isolation, self-doubt, and imposter syndrome, in addition to overt and covert racism, sexism, and classism (Cooper and Stevens 2002; Cuádraz and Pierce 1994; Ek et al. 2010; Hubbard and Stage 2009; de la Luz Reyes and Halcon 1988; Núñez and Murakami-Ramalho 2011; Turner 2002; Turner et al. 2008; Turner and Myers 2000) (p. 284–285).

3 Barriers Latina Faculty Face in Academia

In 2003, Patricia Arrendondo, Associate Profession at Arizona State University was interviewed on the topic of Latinas and the Professoriate; Dr. Arredondo described many of the barriers that Latina Faculty face in academia, and the recommendation of mentorship as a form to support these women (Arredondo and Castellanos 2003a, b). Among the barriers that she mentioned are stereotypes, usage of Spanish in campus, balance work-life or being a mother and a faculty, keeping family connections, loneliness, intellectual isolation, lack of collegial support and cultural incongruity, but she also provided a list of recommendations to challenge this barriers, the first one she mentioned is "better mentorship can assist the retention of Latina junior faculty in the academia" (p. 235). Specifically, she recommended with reference to a Latina,

> …assign two senior faculty to work with the Latina; develop a performance evaluations or a developmental plan. The plan should have some goals and a timeline on it and it must address scholarship. The Latina [faculty] must also have on-campus involvement, committee involvement, and connections with Latina/os on campus; she must also connect with Latinos in the community. Lastly, Latinas need to be involved with professional associations both as a presenter and as a member" (p. 236).

Over a decade has passed, and there are still similar situations. For example, Gutiérrez y Muhs et al. (2012) wrote *Presumed Incompetent*, a series of personal narrative where 40 authors expose the daunting challenges faced by academic women of color, many of whom are Latinas, as they navigate the often-hostile terrain of higher education, including hiring, promotion, tenure, and relations with students, colleagues, and administrators encounter inhospitable environments. The authors

pointed out the importance of supportive networks (mentoring) to create a more hospitable environment. Referring to this work, Fernandez (2013) wrote:

> It is possible that North American academia has made little to no progress in racial and gender equality in the very halls that should lead us to a better world. The stories in *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* frighten anyone who has a sense of social justice, but they frighten me, because they reach into the inevitability of the lives of women of color in academia in ways we are taught to ignore" (p. 1).
>
> Interestingly, after Latinas complete their doctorates, most seek employment outside of the academia usually due to the lack of Latina faculty representation in academia (Gonzalez 2007).

Additional barriers and challenges that have been found to exist for Latina faculty are numerous. They are listed as follows:

- racism, sexism, and White privilege, were experienced by Latina graduate students as well as Latina faculty (Dancy and Jean-Marie 2014; Gonzalez 2007).
- lack of mentorship, cultural homogeneity, and poor retention (Cora-Bramble 2006).
- lack of a comprehensible tenure system, lack of community, and a lack of a balanced, integrated life (Borders et al. 2011).
- isolation (Gonzales et al. 2013).
- multiple forms of marginalization (Turner 2002).
- not afforded the same opportunities or resources as the majority White male, middle class, and generational college-educated counterparts in academia (Delgado et al. 2002; Griffin et al. 2011; Johnsrud and Sadao 1998; Stanley 2007).
- assigned to teach race relations or low-regarded courses (Montero-Sieburth 1996).
- Latina/os' scholarship is at times discounted and dismissed (Delgado et al. 2002; Foley and Valenzuela 2008; Gonzales et al. 2013; Niemann 1999; Turner et al. 2008).
- observed how this form of research is often considered by dominant groups in academia as lacking objectivity (Delgado-Bernal and Villalpando 2002).
- lack of career mentoring, disparate promotion, and inequitable salaries when entering professorships (Nuñez and Murakami-Ramalho 2012).
- participate more in service-related committees than their White counterparts (Monforti and Michelson 2008; Ponjuan 2011; Turner et al. 2008).

Furthermore, Murakami and Nunez (2014) and Turner et al. (2011) found that faculty women of color, inclusive of Latinas, face an insurmountable force of barriers including isolation, marginalization, invisibility, racism, sexism, tokenism, and victims of systematic failures of tenure processes. The authors wrote about Kanter's (1977) theory of proportions in the context in a corporate setting:

> …women in the minority inhabit a context characterized by being more visible and on display, feeling more pressure to conform, needing to make fewer mistakes, finding it harder to gain credibility, being more isolated and peripheral, having fewer opportunities to

> be sponsored, facing misperceptions about their identity and role in the organization, being stereotyped, and facing more stress. Those in the majority faced the opposite social context, such as being seen as one of the group, and being preferred for sponsorship by higher-level colleagues. (p. 200)

Turner et al. (2011) found that the information on women of color in academia can be invisible, because it is buried in studies that have categories such as "faculty of color" or "women" (p. 200). The stories and experiences of women of color in academia can be masked, because they fit into multiple categories of gender and racial/ethnic descriptions and can fit into diverse social identities. Turner (2002) indicated that, "women faculties of color attribute their challenges and barriers to success in academia to the 'multiple marginality' they experience—being both minority and female" (p. 303).

Addressing the barriers. Tran (2014a, b) suggested that faculty of color should address these barriers by "challenging existing epistemologies and resist superficial assimilation while developing innovative practice and supportive networks" (p. 302). Such supportive networks can develop from interactions with assistance from mentoring programs, especially mentoring programs that address the unique needs of women of color. Lloyd-Jones (2014) proposed that mentoring is conceptualized as a strategy to address women of color and their social exclusion marginalization, and scholarly issues in academia. Social exclusion is defined as the alienation of a particular of group people usually associated with a person's gender identity, race/ethnicity, and social class (Lloyd-Jones 2014). According to Lloyd-Jones (2014), scholarly marginalization is referred to as "the regulation of certain scholarship to a secondary or minor position within the academy (Evans and Cokley 2008; McCoy 2006) and tends to focus on a race-based research agenda (Baez 2011; Peters 2011; Tillman 2011)" (p. 269). Tran (2014a, b) also maintained that "the shaping of positive experiences and pathway to success for women of color in higher education is due in large part to mentoring (Girves et al. 2005; Holmes et al. 2007; Johnston and McCormack 1997; Sorcinelli and Yun 2007; Stanley and Lincoln 2005)" (p. 302–303).

4 How Mentoring Helps

Mentoring, whether it is in a formal or informal mentoring, has been considered to be fundamental to advancement and to satisfaction in one's career (Hansman 2000). The differences between formal and informal mentoring indicate that formal relationships are those that are assigned by the institution and informal relationships are those emerge naturally (Cawyer et al. 2002, p. 226). Mentoring been known to increase retention and to promote academic success diverse female scholars (Cosgrove 1986). It was also found to promote higher rates of research productivity and publications for those who are mentored over those who were not (Cronan-Hillix et al. 1986). Aguire (2000a, b) noted that faculty who have participated in mentoring have positive socialization into higher education, while Boice (1992) indicated that with mentoring,

faculty are socialized more quickly into the culture of higher education and receive higher student evaluations than do non-mentored faculty. Socialization is defined as the process of adapting to and becoming part of an institutional culture (Cawyer et al. 2002). More so, Santos and Reigadas (2002) noted that organizations and universities that sponsor "planned" mentoring relationship can enhance the opportunities of women and ethnic minorities who are less likely to have an informal mentor (p. 41). Effective faculty mentoring programs can either bring about positive academic advancement or mitigate negative outcomes (Cora-Bramble 2006).

Mentoring is important, because as faculty careers develop overtime and as time passes, junior faculty will need assistance with making decisions and choices about how they will spend their time and about what they will do with their time. Borders et al. (2011) acknowledged that by meeting the specific needs of junior faculty through preferred approach to mentoring, informal versus formal or one versus multiple mentors, the outcomes of effective mentoring, functions of mentoring are important factors to consider when developing mentoring programs. Borders et al. (2007) wrote about formal and informal mentoring approaches. They indicated that "… a combination of formal and informal mentoring approaches may be the preferred option, allowing for flexibility that takes into account the individual needs of junior faculty members (Mullen and Forbes 2000; l Olmstead 1993)" (p. 173). Borders et al. suggested that the traditional mentor model (mentor–mentee) may not be realistic in academia and that junior faculty members need multiple mentors for a variety of aspects of their careers, and they stated, "This may be particularly true for female (Brown et al. 2009); Chandler and Kram 2007; Essic 1999) and African American faculty members (Bradley and Holcome-McCoy 2004; Evans and Cokely 2008). Junior faculty may benefit from working, not only with a primary long-term mentor, but also secondary and tertiary mentors (Johnson 2002) who provide less intense support over shorter periods of time for specific functions" (p. 174).

Cross-race faculty mentoring has been analyzed during the last decade, as an approach to face the barriers that underrepresented faculty have Stanley and Lincoln (2005) wrote about the fact that, "junior and senior faculty in education are uncertain about how to foster effective mentoring relationships" (p. 44), but from their inquiry, they learned that cross-race mentoring can be helpful, but it requires (a) sensitivity, (b) understanding of research undertaken by scholars of color, (c) the building of a relationship, (d) deep reflection on meanings of White privilege, seniority, and voice, as well understandings of departmental and college culture, (e) some responsibility of the mentor for the mentee, (f) an awareness of mentee's new needs, (g) sharing opportunities for professional development, (h) being on watch for major pitfalls, (i) an openness for scholars of color to be themselves, and (k) be sensitive to issues that might arise as concerns that may not have appeared in the past.

Tran (2014a, b) reported that research on mentoring has most recently been discussed as a popular interest that has made significant contributions to advancement of women of color and minorities (Girves et al. 2005; Holmes et al. 2007; Stanley and Lincoln 2005), that has facilitated deeper discussions about the different types of mentoring (de Janasz and Sullivan 2004; Sorcinelli and Yun 2007) and that has identified of several factors that influence mentorship

relationships (Girves et al. 2005; Holmes et al. 2007). Consequently, there has been a limited number of studies that examine the role of mentoring from the experiences of women of color in academia (Tran 2014a, b; Turner et al. 2011).

5 Role of Effective Faculty Mentorship

The interaction in a supportive community of senior faculty and scholars for junior faculty has been identified as a limitation for mentees success in academia (Sorcinelli 2002). Ideally, effective mentors use their institutional knowledge of the values, norms, and procedures of the institution as well as their professional experience to guide mentees from their initial hire through retirement (Bean et al. 2014). Mentors should be assigned to mentees in such a way that it presents a good "fit" between to two so that the tenured faculty provides guidance that supports and develops service opportunities, creative activities, teaching effectiveness, scholarship, professional development, and research (Bean et al. 2014, p. 57).

Cawyer et al. (2002) shared that good mentors fulfill both of Kram's (1983) psychosocial (counseling, acceptance, and friendship) and career functions (role modeling, sponsoring, coaching, and protecting) for mentees. For career functions, mentoring can involve instructional functions that support career advancement, protection, sponsorship and visibility, and challenging work (Borders et al. 2011; Lloyd-Jones 2014).

Good mentors should be engaged in helping mentees plan both short-term and long-term career goals and acquiring new skills sets that focus on teaching, research, and professional advancement (Bean et al.). Bean et al. indicated that mentees expressed that the most helpful aspect of mentor–mentee relationship was having regularly scheduled, one-on-one, confidential meetings with their mentors.

Sorcinelli (2000) identified 10 principles of good practice of faculty mentoring as: Principles 1 through 4 involves suggestions for improving the review and tenure process; Principals 5 through 7 involve ideas for encouraging positive relations with colleagues and students; and Principles 8 through involve suggestions for easing the stresses of time and balance. First, Principle 1 indicates that good practice communicates expectations for performance. Secondly, Principle 2 signifies that good practice gives feedback on performance. Third, Principle 3 specifies that good practice enhance collegial review processes. Principle 4 states that good practice creates flexible timelines for tenure. Next, Principle 5 asserts good practice encourages mentoring by senior faculty. In addition, Principle 6 reports good practice extends mentoring and feedback to graduate students who aspire to be faculty members. Principle 7 points out good practice recognizes the department chair as a career sponsor. Equally, Principle 8 and 9 directs good practice supports teaching particularly at the undergraduate level and supports scholarly development respectively. Finally, Principle 10 fosters a balance between professional and personal life. These 10 principles can be instrumental in the describing organizational framework for mentoring programs.

Murakami and Nunez (2014) indicated that peer mentoring in Hispanic institutions offers the opportunities for Latina faculty by addressing: (a) personal attributes (experiences and knowledge as faculty members, (b) individual behavior (commitment to educational advancement for Latino students), and (c) inclination to recognize common interests across individuals, to form a support group in the academy (p. 285). Murakami and Nunez explained that peer mentoring, the engagement of two or more individuals in a coequal relationship among faculty, especially Latinas, can be valuable to the development of knowledge in academia, self-efficacy, and personal competence. Nonetheless, good mentoring suggests that mentors are nurturing and good caregivers, complete the five following functions of teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and mentoring, and offer feedback, provide demonstrations, and meet regularly (Cawyer et al. 2002).

Tran (2014a, b) showed that there is relevant information on the significant role that mentoring plays on addressing the needs to shape the career advancement and tenure track in include mentoring relationships that support faculty with research while navigating the political and social environment (Johnston and McCormack 1997), structuring mentoring programs that provide support for national and companion relationships (Girves et al. 2005), and developing mentoring relationships that contribute to positive self-identity and efficacy while rejecting negative stereotypes and oppression (Packer-Williams and Evans 2011) (p. 304). Detsky and Baerlocher (2007) stated that process of a good mentoring relationship, mentors should understand when mentees do not always take their advice, mentees might be afraid to tell their mentors exactly what they might need for fear of disappointing them, and mentees need regular evaluations, communication, and outcomes.

6 Method

The method employed in this study was a website content analysis. Website content analysis has not been common in education, but it was previously applied in empirical studies relating to the e-business topic in the literature (e.g., Huzingh 2000; Robbins and Stylianou 2003; Teo and Pian 2004; Zhu and Kraemer 2002). Meroño-Cerdan and Soto-Acosta (2005) described two approaches on which the website content analysis is based. Auger and Gallaugher (1997a, b) described the first as the approach that based on web addresses got from the university directories, the U.S. News, or College Factual.

7 Research Question

The research question was: What formal or informal Latina faculty mentoring programs do the 25 top-ranked national universities report on their websites?

8 Data Collection and Analysis

Website content analysis is appropriate for this study, because we needed to screen the faculty mentoring programs in the top 25 universities in the United States. We explored the university directories provided by the U.S. News and World Report. Goode and Stevens (2000) found that approach is not complicated to utilize, because the website addresses are accessible. Liu et al. (1997) found the website analysis approach may be explored directly with keywords. In this study, we utilized three categories for search. The first category includes mentoring programs for faculty such as "mentoring, mentoring programs, and/or mentorship." The second category includes faculty words such as "faculty, faculty members, and tenured professors. The final category includes ethnic and gender identification of the faculty such as "Latina, and female Hispanic faculty," and "Latina mentoring program/s." In our study, the unit of analysis was text from the university websites related to faculty mentoring programs offered. More than 100 independent websites were screened.

9 Findings and Discussion

It is clear that the 25 top-ranked national universities exhibit diverse approaches to mentoring Latina faculty. Mentoring programs, both informal and informal, at these universities indicate that there is still a need to develop and implement effective faculty mentoring programs particularly for Latinas. Gonzalez (2007) asserted that if higher education institutions will not strive nor thrive through the twenty-first century if universities do not take intentional measures to be more receptive and inclusive to the educational requirements of Latina/os in academia.

10 Latina Faculty Mentoring Programs at the 25 Top-Ranked National Universities

After reviewing the content of the websites related to Latina faculty mentoring programs among all 25 top-ranked national universities, we placed each into a matrix (See Appendix, Table 2). Our findings show: All 25 universities[2] offered some type of formal or informal mentoring program for faculty and undergraduate and graduate students. Programs were identified as either informal or formal. Our research results

[2]Due to a tie at number 25, there are 26 universities within the top 25.

also indicate there are no data posted on the websites specific to mentoring Latina faculty. Some of the university websites indicated that there were programs inclusive of women of color, and we could assume that includes Latinas. Additionally, there are only a few of the university websites that note the total number or percentage of Latina faculty in their institutions. The lack of representation and of inclusive words on the website in terms of mentoring programs is troublesome, particularly in light of the needs that have been expressed by Latina faculty about mentoring. We believe that what is available and visible on a website speaks about the goals and priorities of the institution. The website is the university's window for everyone to view what is important to its culture and the website is the face of the university and the first portal that provides information about the values of the university. The universities in our study fall short in sharing information about their Latina faculty population—at least in terms of ease of access on the website.

Since we could find no readily available information on the focus of Latina faculty mentoring, we turned to some of the Hispanic-serving institutions in one state, Texas. We reviewed five major regional public and private university websites listed on the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. Those university websites analyzed were: (a) Our Lady of the Lake University, (b) St. Edward's University, (c) Texas A&M University International, (d) Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, (d) Texas A&M University- San Antonio, (e) University of Texas at El Paso, and (f) University of Texas at San Antonio. The University of Texas at El Paso and University of Texas at San Antonio were the only two of the five regional universities in Texas that mentioned supporting Latina faculty with mentoring programs. This was noted in an NSF ADVANCE third-year site visit report in 2006. Ruiz and Machado-Casas (2013) shared their experiences at the University of Texas at San Antonio's (UTSA) support group, Research for the Educational Advancement of Latin@s (REAL). The authors examined the roles of REAL in their motivation and professional growth for promotion and tenure at UTSA. Ruiz and Machado-Casas (2013) reported REAL served as a lifesaver-a *salvavidas* with the goal of staying afloat and not drowning (p. 53). More so, Ruiz and Machado-Casas (2013) shared that:

> According to Alanis et al. (2009), Research for the Educational Advancement of Latin@s (REAL) [pronounced in Spanish as "reh-ahl"] is an interdisciplinary research collaborative house in The Women's Studies Institute at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). It is primarily comprised of Latina tenure-track faculty from UTSA and Trinity University interested in researching Latina/o issues in education from various perspectives (e.g., educational leadership and policy studies, bicultural/bilingual studies, curriculum and instruction, special education, and educational psychology). The purpose of REAL is to represent the voices of a new generation of Latinas in the academy and to document their journey through specific values of support, persistence, and legitimacy. The primary goals of this collaborative are to engage in active interdisciplinary research with a focus on Latina/o issues, to present collaboratively at national and international conferences and to provide collegial support through the tenure-track process. (p. 243).

As an outlier, REAL represents an exemplar in mentoring that addresses the major aspects of new faculty, particularly Latinas, who are trying to achieve tenure.

Support groups similar to REAL are much needed and should focus on the major aspect of academia including emotional, academic, and community connections and support (Ruiz and Machado-Casas 2013).

11 Recommendations for Latina Mentoring Programs and University Websites

The results of our investigation prompts us to recommend the following for universities in their attempt to note the needs of diverse faculty groups, particularly Latina faculty: First, it is important to offer Latina faculty mentoring programs in the institution and to share other available programs, activities, and initiatives to support Latina faculty members' work. Second, when specifying any mentoring program for women of color, universities need to define how the program assists Latina faculty, and they need to make such information visible on the website. Third, we recommended that universities, particularly top-ranked universities, consider addressing mentoring for Latina faculty members and indicate online the demographics for Latina faculty (update their existing statistical data within departmental, college, and institutional contexts). Fourth, increase the efforts in the recruitment and mentoring of Latina graduate students to open their gates to top-ranking universities and subsequently support new Latina faculty with a mentoring programs. Fifth, give consideration to cross-race mentoring programs (with mentor and mentee training) or peer mentoring. Sixth, weigh the possibility of providing external Latina mentors for new Latina faculty members and provide incentives for those external mentors to assist until numbers of Latina faculty are sufficiently supported in a university. Ultimately, we recommend universities make visible (on their websites) their plans and actions in mentoring of Latina faculty and share findings related to such programs to the wider higher education community.

Appendix

See Table 2.

Table 2 Top-ranked university Latina mentoring programs

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
1	Princeton University (NJ)	8	Unavailable	Not found	The Women's Mentoring Program at Princeton is for undergraduates and does not target Latina faculty (http://womensmentorship.princeton.edu/)
2	Harvard University (MA)	8.9	Unavailable	Not found	Faculty Development and Diversity Office (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). There is a website and New Faculty Institute, but no program that targets mentoring specific to Latina faculty (http://www.faculty.harvard.edu/development-and-mentoring)
3	Yale University (CT)	10.1	1.9	Not found	Women Faculty Forum, a formal program, was initiated in 2001; however, WFF does not focus on Latina faculty mentoring. It promotes women faculty who work together to: – Foster gender equity throughout the University through policy initiatives and research – Promote scholarship by women and on women and gender across all schools of the University – Promote mentoring, collaboration, and networking (http://wff.yale.edu/)
4	Columbia University	15.4	Unavailable	Not found	The Mailman Mentoring Program, is a School of Public Health program, not University-wide, and is not specifically for Latina Faculty; the date of initiation was difficult to locate (around 2010). The goals of the program are as follows: guidance in career goals and sustained coaching in achieving them, access to honest criticism and feedback, expanded networks and opportunities for collaboration, advice on responsibilities and priorities, insight into the formal and informal "rules of the road" of academia, and help in developing skills needed to succeed (http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-and-staff-resources/momentum/2010/september/mentoring-mailman)

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
4	Stanford University (CA)	16.2	Unavailable	Not found	There is a Postdoctoral Scholars Mentoring Program. There are two school formal mentoring programs. Faculty Mentoring Program: to foster an environment of communication, cooperation and collaboration that will benefit the school as an academic community. PMP: To promote the career development of early career investigators (assistant professors and instructors) in Pediatrics at Stanford through a formal mentorship program and creation of the Stable of Mentors. There is another noted program: Counseling and Mentoring Program (general from Vice President for Faculty Development and Diversity; Faculty Mentoring Program; Pediatrics Mentoring Program (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty) (https://facultydevelopment.stanford.edu/professional-development/counseling-and-mentoring
4	University of Chicago	8.7	Unavailable	Not found	The Bucksbaum Junior Faculty Scholars program is in the School of Medicine. There are faculty support guidelines from the University, but no formal mentoring program overall, and nothing for Latina faculty specifically. There is no university-wide mentoring program for Latina faculty (http://bucksbauminstitute.uchicago.edu/junior-faculty-scholars/2/)
7	MIT (MA)	16.4	Unavailable	Not found	Center for Environmental Health Services—Jr. Faculty Mentoring Program (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). There is no university-wide mentoring program for Latina faculty (https://cehs.mit.edu/career-development/jr-faculty-mentoring-program)
8	Duke University	6.1	Unavailable	Not found	There is an Office of Faculty Mentoring in the School of Medicine (http://medschool.duke.edu/faculty-mentoring). There is no university-wide mentoring program for Latina faculty

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
8	University of Pennsylvania	9.5	Unavailable	Not found	1. Faculty Mentoring Committees at Penn; 2. The Penn Faculty Pathways Program (For STEM Faculty) (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty)There is no university-wide mentoring program for Latina faculty (http://provost.upenn.edu/faculty/current/mentoring)
10	California Institute of Technology	18.9	Unavailable	Not found	The Women Mentoring Women program matches women postdoctoral scholars with graduate women for a one-on-one mentoring experience. The purpose of the program is to provide support for women graduate students as they negotiate their academic, professional and personal development (targets postdoctoral scholars, but not targeted to Latina faculty) (https://diversitycenter.caltech.edu/resources/rfw/mentoring)
11	Dartmouth College	7.5	Unavailable	Not found	Latina/o Advisory Council (LAC) (not a mentoring program; is not targeted to Latina faculty) Operated from the Office of Pluralism and Leadership, this is a representative group of Dartmouth College students, alumni, faculty and staff coming together as a council to serve as a resource, support and advocate for the Latina/o and Latin American community at Dartmouth College and the Upper Valley. The LAC is coordinated by an elected moderator (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/latino/#LAC)
12	Johns Hopkins University	10.1	Unavailable	Not found	The Campus Conversation sessions are intended to create a safe space to stimulate meaningful conversations about diversity and inclusion at Hopkins. Monthly workshops are offered to the Johns Hopkins Community. In addition to the monthly sessions, group sessions can be scheduled to accommodate intact Faculty and Staff groups. (not a mentoring program; is not targeted to Latina faculty) (http://tmod.jhu.edu/talent_mgmt/talent_mgmt_diversity.cfm)

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
13	Northwestern University (IL)	9.5	Unavailable	Not found	All new faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty). The Faculty Development Committee holds an all-day orientation program for new faculty during orientation week, typically held the last week of August. The Faculty Development Committee offers a mentoring program for new faculty. These events are within the Law School (http://www.law.northwestern.edu/research-faculty/faculty/recruitment/mentoring/) The Searle Fellows Program, in the Feinberg School of Medicine, aims to help early career faculty develop expertise and knowledge to critically assess and solve problems in their courses. http://www.northwestern.edu/searle/programs-events/faculty/searle-fellows/index.html) The Feinberg School of Medicine sponsors the Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Forum is an annual event sponsored by the Office of the Provost, in collaboration with the University Assessment/Accreditation Council. http://www.northwestern.edu/searle/programs-events/faculty/learning-teaching-and-assessment-forum.html
14	Washington University in St. Louis	5.4	Unavailable	Not found	The CIRCLE Fellows Program is a significant step in transforming teaching and learning at Washington University. This two-year fellowship program is currently supporting a cohort of STEM faculty in the integration of active-learning approaches, including interactive lectures and group work facilitated by student use of iclickers. All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty) (http://circle.wustl.edu/Pages/Home.aspx) The CIRCLE Fellowship employs a "networking mentoring" model in which CIRCLE Fellows meet with Teaching Center and CIRCLE staff

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Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
					—and with faculty colleagues—as they develop, implement, and evaluate curricular innovations. Teaching Center staff apply their expertise in teaching to help faculty to take creative leaps in their pedagogical approaches and to make successful changes to their courses; the staff of CIRCLE lend their expertise in statistical analysis to the resulting evaluative studies. http://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/Scholarship/aau/faculty-development/Pages/default.aspx All New faculty The Junior-Faculty Mentoring in STEM Teaching program (MiST) is beginning in pilot form in 2014–2015. With the support of the Dean of Arts & Sciences, and the support and input of the science and mathematics department chairs. The Teaching Center has developed this new program, which brings together assistant professors with tenured faculty for a two-year mentoring experience focusing on teaching. The program is designed to help junior faculty develop their teaching early in their careers and to foster a multi-disciplinary, multi-level learning community of faculty engaged in scholarly teaching in STEM (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty) (http://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/Scholarship/aau/faculty-development/Pages/default.aspx)
15	Cornell University (NY)	11.1	1.9 %	Not found	The Small Group Mentoring Program (SGMP) is designed to bring together 3–9 women faculty in STEM or SBS who share an interest in a broad topic, a discipline or disciplinary group (e.g., "engineering"), or even a career stage (assistant or associate professor). The goal is to move the group members' careers forward by providing mentorship and support on issues relevant to a member of the professoriate. An emphasis will be placed on sharing best practices and tools to achieve positive outcomes. http://www.advance.cornell.edu/documents/

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
					Exemplary-Junior-Faculty-Mentoring-Programs.pdf/http://www.advance.cornell.edu/documents/Questions-you-might-ask-a-peer.pdf http://www.advance.cornell.edu/documents/Mentoring-Guidelines-and-Suggestions-for-Supporting-New-Faculty.pdf (Not for Latina but for female faculty in general) Women of Color Colleague Network Group (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty) This is sponsored by Latina/o Studies Resource Center. The mission of the Cornell University Women of Color Colleague Network Group is to develop and create engaging opportunities for networking, professional and leadership development with a particular focus on empowering, recruiting, retaining, and mentoring women of color (https://www.hr.cornell.edu/diversity/fostering/)
16	Brown University (RI)	10.6	2.3	Not found	One-to-One Faculty Mentoring Program (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). For All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty): Office of the Dean of the Faculty and the Office of the Dean of Biology & Medicine provides a formal mechanism for a new tenure-track faculty member to receive advice and counsel from a tenured faculty mentor from within the same division but outside her or his own department. http://www.brown.edu/research/projects/advance/one-one-faculty-mentoring-program Peer-Mentoring Groups (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty) For Women and Women of Color The ADVANCE Program at Brown University, a Peer-Mentoring Group, seeks to decrease the sense of isolation frequently experienced by women STEM faculty and women faculty of color by fostering a confidential network of colleagues and cohorts (http://www.brown.edu/research/projects/advance/faculty-development/peer-mentoring-groups)

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Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
16	University of Notre Dame (IN)	10.2	Unavailable	Not found	Provost's Initiative on Faculty Mentoring (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). For All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty): Provost's Initiative on Faculty Mentoring provides several faculty members each year with an opportunity to participate in the "Faculty Success Program," a 15-week intensive mentoring experience offered as an online program by the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD). The Faculty Success Program is facilitated by a cohort of tenured faculty members and is designed to equip faculty with the skills and strategies necessary to increase research productivity, promote effective time management, and maximize work-life balance (http://provost.nd.edu/provosts-initiatives/provost-s-initiative-on-faculty-mentoring/)
16	Vanderbilt University (TN)	7.9	1.8	Not found	Rethinking Mentoring Workshop (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty and For All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty): (https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/72986838/workshop%20slides%20%26%20audio/Re-Thinking%20Mentoring/Rethinking%20Mentoring_AIM_45min_NM.pdf)
19	Rice University (TX)	16.9	Unavailable	Not found	Triad Mentoring Program (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty).For All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty): Initiated by Rice's NSF ADVANCE Program (now transitioned into the Office of Faculty Development), the Triad Mentoring Program matches two assistant professors (protégés) with a tenured faculty member (mentor). These mentoring triads provide both peer mentoring and mentoring from a senior faculty member. In 2012, the Triad Mentoring Program was extended to pairings between Humanities and Social Sciences. (https://ofd.rice.edu/content.aspx?id=208) Associate Professor Mentoring Program (inclusive, but not

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Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
					targeted to Latina faculty). For All New faculty (programs are not specified for Latina/o faculty): Based on feedback from Rice faculty, in 2014 the Office of Faculty Development will pilot a new mentoring program that matches associate professors in one on one mentoring relationships with full professors, each from a different department (https://ofd.rice.edu/content.aspx?id=208)
20	University of California—Berkeley	13.2	Unavailable	Not found	Faculty Mentoring (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). Their goal is to promote the development of faculty mentoring programs that are tailored to the traditions and values of individual departments and schools, and are attentive to mentoring across differences such as gender, race, culture, and generational lines. Each faculty member has an important role to play in sustaining a supportive academic environment, and all faulty should receive service credit for their mentoring contributions when their merit/promotion cases are being reviewed. Also, each department/school has its own principles and best practices for mentoring faculty. They also describe a comprehensive faculty mentoring program that should include topics such as teaching, grant writing, publishing, time management, networking, financial management, balancing family needs, and navigating departmental culture (http://vpf.berkeley.edu/faculty-mentoring)
21	Emory University (GA)	6.2	1	Not found	Center for Faculty Development and Excellence. Most of the colleges/schools have Junior Faculty mentoring—for example– Emory College (informal), Goizueta Business School (informal), Law School (informal), Medical School (formal), Emory Center for Injury Control (formal), School of Nursing (formal), Oxford College (formal), Public Health (informal) and Theology (informal) (http://cfde.emory.edu/faculty_life/facmentoringemory.html)

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Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
21	Georgetown University (DC)	7.5	Unavailable	Not found	Faculty Development (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). College of Medicine sponsors this program. The goal is that junior-faculty need both specific/content-oriented mentoring (e.g. specialty-specific career information and content expertise like editing of grant applications) as well as general career advice relevant to advancing as medical school faculty members. The Faculty Development Committee Mentoring Subcommittee assigns mentors to serve in the second career (general career) capacity while departments are providing mentors to serve in the first (content and specific) capacity (http://gumc.georgetown.edu/evp/facultyaffairs/mentoringprogram/)
23	University of California—Los Angeles	18.4	1.9	Not found	Council of Advisors (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). The goal is to provide career advice, mentoring and to serve as a "sounding board" from outside the home department of the participating Assistant Professors as they advance to Associate Professor in the regular rank or in-residence series. The Faculty Success Program through National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity; another networking program—MentorNet (http://gastro.ucla.edu/site.cfm?id=303)
23	University of Virginia	5.5	Unavailable	Not found	A former faculty mentoring program does not appear to be active
25	Carnegie Melton University	7.5	Unavailable	Not found	Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovations (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). The mission is to distill the research on learning for faculty and graduate students and collaborate with them to design and implement meaningful educational experiences. They believe that combing the science and art of teaching empowers their colleagues to create conditions for students to learn,

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

University ranking (U.S. news)	Name	% of Hispanic or Latino faculty*	% of Latina faculty	Mentoring program for Latinas	Notes and/or comments
					and through this learning, transform their world. Teaching consultants, educational technology, workshops and special interest groups, teachers' observations, early course feedback—student surveys and focus groups are the support that is offered to faculty. Eberly also offers graduate student support (http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/index.html)
25	University of Southern California	13.4	Unavailable	Not found	Faculty Development and Mentoring (inclusive, but not targeted to Latina faculty). Each college has a distinctive program for mentoring—there's an extensive list attached. Goal is to see that each new faculty member realizes his/her full potential. They want to do whatever it takes to retain and advance all new faculty members (http://faculty.usc.edu/mentoring/)

**Note* Data in the column of percentages of Hispanic faculty were gathered from either the university website or the College Factual (2015) website (used the highest percent noted). Latina faculty information were gathered from the specific University websites.

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Part II
Dynamics of a Global Mentoring Network

Synergy, Care, and Constructive Chaos: Conceptualizing the Dynamics of an International Global Co-mentoring Network

Nilsa Thorsos, B. Gloria Guzmán Johannessen, Makini Beck and Christine Nganga

Abstract This chapter seeks to advance a theory of global mentoring from the perspective of an international co-mentoring network of women academics. The authors identify and describe the impact of *synergy* and *care* as a framework for the transformation of *chaos* into *constructive chaos* as essential elements needed to bring about positive outcomes in collaborative academic endeavors. The focus of their inquiry was on the global Curve-Y-FRiENDS (C-Y-F), a network of women collaborating across language, culture, and national boundaries. The authors examined how the membership is defined and experienced by members and what makes the network function in an age of increased globalization and technical innovation. To develop a theory of practice, they analyzed the work generated by members of the network, such as published papers, conference presentations, and other planned activities that either ended successfully or failed. In their analysis, they questioned whether proceedings, abstracts, paper presentations, and publications by members of the network reflected an alignment to the above theoretical concepts.

Keywords Informal mentoring · Global network · Synergy · Care · Constructive chaos

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1 Background and Purpose

Most Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) provide faculty access to either formal or informal mentoring, as part of their institutional practices, to support novice faculty; however most of the institutional support does not seem to align to specific needs of women and other marginalized groups in academia. The type of support that Curve-Y-FRiENDS (C-Y-F) members give each other to attain intellectual, emotional, and sociocultural balance as they move through the tenure and promotion path in the academe is missing in many institutions of higher education (Johannessen et al. 2012). Johannessen et al. (2012) also point out that the support they need to fulfill their familial responsibilities and pressures for tenure and promotion balance, and more specifically with emphasis on fulfilling institutional publishing demands are also absent from institutional formal mentorship.

The global network we discuss in this chapter is composed of two major informal pre-established peer-mentoring groups: the Caribbean Educators Research Initiative (CURVE) and the Female Researchers in Education, Networking and Dialogue (FRiENDs). The Y (Spanish word for *and*) represents a set of individual members who were not part of CURVE or FRiENDs. "Y" is composed of members who worked on mentoring and research agendas separate and apart from C-Y-F. "Y" is also made up of "female faculty connected in some way, either work or personal friendship, to individual members of CURVE or FRiENDs" (Bristol et al. 2014, p. 3).

C-Y-F was formed as a result of a serendipitous meeting during an American educational research association conference. From 2011 to the present, C-Y-F members meet in person, as a group, and/or as writing teams during annual meetings. These once-a-year in person brief interactions typically do not exceed more than four hours per conference. During face-to-face meetings, C-Y-F members develop plans and the research agenda for future paper presentations and publications. Membership within the group is fluid. Existing 22 members can choose their level of participation, while new members are invited to join and collaborate on a research project for the following year.

All C-Y-F members have remained with the group since membership, but with varying levels of participation.

The C-Y-F mentoring network consists of women faculty who have similar academic fields of interest, previous personal friendships, and share their commitment to collaborate with others. The purpose of the C-Y-F network is to engage in collaborative academic endeavors, recognize its members' academic potential and co-mentor each other in developing a theory of practice. The dynamics of this network in which women represent a variety of languages, ethnicities, and cultures communicating across national and international boundaries create a wide range of situations agreeable and discordant. It is understandable that the complexity of these dynamics gives way to a range of tensions and chaotic situations between and among the members, given their individual's differing commitments. In C-Y-F, the members attempt to resolve these tensions by focusing on synergy and ethics of

care, which tend to transform chaos into constructive chaos, the paradigms defining the network and our chapter.

Other characterizing aspects of C-Y-F are the lack of explicit operational rules and the opportunity to meet face-to-face during the development of collaborative projects. Given the lack of opportunity to meet with each other face-to-face, C-Y-F members overcome the challenge of geographical distance by learning how to use technology to enable members to continue their informal mentorship and ongoing academic development. Interactions and interpersonal relationships between C-Y-F members and writing are conducted in a remote mode via SKYPE, video chatting, and conference calls. Therefore, even though this is a chaotic environment, the members set their paths toward positive outcomes as they continue to refine their research and publishing skills. Constructive chaos is evidenced when communication and creativity is negotiated within these virtual spaces.

The dynamics of the C-Y-F's network provide a different perspective from traditional gender stereotypes by centering efforts in establishing safe collaborative environments and encouraging members to document their journeys as women and members of traditionally marginalized groups in the academe. Members of C-Y-F recognize that women ways of constructing knowledge and transmission through research can also be framed within a collaborative and dialogic pedagogy (Belenky et al. 1986). C-Y-F members collaborate, cooperate, and sustain deep dialogues, including differences of opinion and disagreement, while at the same time attempting to maintain focus on the common goal of promoting research and publication agendas. As a result of the phenomenon of informal mentoring in the C-Y-F global community, a research agenda emerged to investigate the impact of co-mentorship on C-Y-F members' ability to access opportunities of leadership, tenure, and promotion.

The authors of this chapter are active members of C-Y-F, and in this chapter, explore the concepts of *synergy, ethics of care, and constructive chaos* to describe the multifaceted nature of the C-Y-F network. They analyzed C-Y-F's paper presentations and published work to be able to confirm whether these concepts are reflected in them. The authors drew from Higgins and Kram (2001) who advance a definition of mentoring through the lens of developmental networks that help maintain the traditional goals of mentoring through a "constellation" system of relationships where individuals with similar career goals and aspirations support each other (Chandler and Kram 2005). In particular, our framework derived from a developmental network approach, which emphasizes the mutuality of benefits to be experienced by network members (Dutton 2003; Dutton and Heaphy 2003). From this research, we learned that trust, honest dialogue, clear expectations, active engagement, self-awareness, and shared common beliefs lie at the core for the sustainability of our relationships.

2 Theoretical Framework: Overview of Synergy, Care, and Constructive Chaos Theories

2.1 Synergy

Synergy is connected to the field of leadership (Irby et al. 2002) and feminist and critical theories (Martin 2002). The literature on higher education reflects the exploration of aspects of synergy for advancing knowledge in the area of mentorship for women faculty in higher education. Different aspects impacting women faculty in higher education: include lack of representation in leadership and management, which is similar to research findings in the field of leadership. The implication of excluding feminine voices in theory development (Irby et al. 2002) is evident in higher education, especially from women faculty from traditionally marginalized groups. The literature shows that these women of color continue to be absent or excluded from positions of leadership, and their number in the rank of professor remains largely below in comparison to White males and females (Johannessen et al. 2012). Irby et al. (2002) proposes an additional leadership theory with inclusive and explicit advocacy leadership practices with feminine attributed approaches. It appears that the connection between White-male dominant theories and practices in the field of higher education directly align to concepts taught in coursework text, which serve as a means to perpetuate biases against women faculty and limit their possibilities for tenure or promotion and other opportunities for leadership.

The synergistic model of leadership is an alternative approach of mentoring women faculty in higher education in a global network (Cohen et al. 2012). The support system of C-Y-F, developed across a global space, draws from feminist theory and the concepts of synergy in order to define and delineate the mechanism of support, mentorship, collaboration, dialogue, and care. Synergy is defined as the interaction of elements that, when combined, produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual elements and or contributions (Dictionary.com n.d.). Corning (2003) explains that the word synergy originated from the Greek word 'synergos' which means to 'work together.'

The concepts of synergy are part of many disciplines including science, medicine, engineering, marketing, and education (Jackson and Matthews 2007). Lasker et al. (2001) describe synergy as an outcome of a partnership and identify five determinants: partnership assets, partner characteristics; and partner relationships, including trust and power, governance and leadership. Covey (2004) makes connections between trust and synergy regarding effective people. Synergy is also associated to the degree to which a partnership combines resources of all partners in order to attain optimum outcomes (Gray 1989).

2.2 Ethics of Care

Ethics of care in mentoring relationships such as those in C-Y-F apply this practice in a mutual sense. Therefore, there is an interchange between the "caregiver" and the "cared for." According to Noddings (1994) the practice of caring has four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice and confirmation. Noddings (1994) also points out that we cannot expect those we work with to care for others, if there is no appropriate model, and asserts, "dialogue is a common search for understanding, empathy and appreciation" (p. 114).

Ethics of care allows women in the academy to establish meaningful relationships that enable them to share common struggles and support for each other's academic advancement. Women's way of knowing is, in this regard, related to care. As Noddings (1995) notes, care is not just a warm and fuzzy feeling, or anti-intellectual stance, instead, care demonstrates a "respect for the full range of human talents" (p. 24), built on relationships of trust and continued support. In co-mentoring relationships, care provides a space to share one's own dreams, desires, worries, and fears, and may span to include the spiritual, personal, and psychosocial development. From this stance, ethics of care also acknowledges the importance of "expression, emotion and empathy as a means to understand each others' experiences" (Collins 2000, p. 266).

It is a conscious decision on the part of members of a collaborative group to embrace an ethic of risk that takes action for the larger good, rather than one's own individual gain (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2002). In this regard, those operating from a caring ethic of risk create healthy spaces to discuss and identify power, privilege, and injustice, and ways in which we can work to counter white hegemony. Therefore, ethics of care may also be considered an act of social justice (Johannessen and Unterreiner 2010).

2.3 Constructive Chaos

The chaos theory originally emerged as an effort to challenge the traditional scientific method of "controlled laboratory environment experiments" while pointing to the complexity of reality (Pryor and Bright 2011, p. 2). Ideas from chaos theory are currently utilized beyond the mathematics and science fields and permeate other disciplines such as economics, theology and education. Chaos theory explains how humans perceive and navigate through different life events that involve change and uncertainty. This realization serves as a constant reminder that ultimately, we do not have total control of our lives. Change is a reality for most individuals, and in particularly for faculty members in institutions of higher education. Faculty needs to adjust to the demands of technological innovations and to interact between and among culturally, linguistic, religious, and diverse populations in the global society. When we reflect on these changes, we must recognize how these experiences

blatantly prove the uncertainty and unpredictability of these events (Taleb 2010). Pryor and Bright (2011) applied chaos theory in the field of human careers and used descriptors to relate to movement and shift including "transitions, change, and outplacement" (p. 5).

The authors expanded the concepts of synergy, ethic of care, and describe how C-Y-F members may thrive and prosper as scholars amidst chaotic, ever changing, and unpredictable contexts. Synergy supports the advancement of knowledge in the area of mentorship for women faculty in higher education. Chaos, expanded in this chapter as *constructive chaos,* promotes members to develop meaningful relational and psychosocial support systems. It explains the experiences of the members within the context of the chaotic environments in which they maneuver their plans for research, publications, and other professional activities within the network. It also underscores the nature and culture of C-Y-F as a network bound by these common bases working in contexts unbound by state and internationally fabricated time zones, physical, and socio-political borders.

3 Method

The authors conducted a document analysis of 15 articles proceedings from conferences and publications produced by the C-Y-F group over a three-year period from 2012 to 2014 (see Table 1). They identified 10 articles aligned to the theories of *synergy, care, and constructive chaos.* All of them addressed elements of synergy and care, and 3 papers, which formed the bases for the 2014 AERA conference symposium, discussed the tensions and chaotic nature of the network.

The authors used a table with descriptors as a reference for the document analysis. The analysis of the research included "content analysis such as coding and classifying data" (Patton 1990, p. 380) from the table in order to examine the manifestations of synergy, care, and constructive chaos. The categories emerged into subsequent patterns, and critical findings were used to formulate a theoretical understanding of global mentoring through virtual spaces.

Table 1 provides the title of the products developed by members of C-Y-F and specific information regarding the publications and or presentations.

The questions guiding our research were:

- How is membership defined and experienced by members within the C-Y-F global network?
- How do C-Y-F members' paper proceedings, abstracts, paper presentations and publications align with the theories of synergy, care and/or constructive chaos?

Table 1 Title of the products developed by members of C-Y-F and specific information regarding the publications and or presentations

Title	Publication/presentation
([a]1) 'Storying the Self': My Journey as an Afro-Caribbean Woman Academic in Search of a Mentor	Paper presented at the American Research Association (AERA), 2012 Paper presentation at the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), 2012
([a]2) Journey into the Embrace of Risk: A Collaboration of Allies across Races and Conferences	Paper presented at the American Research Association (AERA), 2012
(3) Mentoring Across Universities: A Caribbean Educators Research Initiative	Published as a chapter in book: Culture, education and community: Expressions of the post colonial imagination, 2012
([a]4) Storying our Academic Career Transitions within a Peer-mentoring Community	Paper presented at the American Research Association (AERA), 2013
([a]5) Women's Ways of Collaborating: A Study of Cross-Cultural Peer Mentoring	Published as a chapter in a book: Uncovering the cultural dynamics in mentoring programs and relationships, 2014
(6) Academic Life-Support: The Self Study of a Transnational Peer Mentoring Group	Accepted for publication in Mentoring & Tutoring Journal, 2014
([a]7) Reducing Intellectual Poverty in 'Outsider' Academic Spaces Through Informal Peer Mentorship	Accepted for publication in Mentoring & Tutoring journal, 2015
(8) The Role of Technology in Geographically Distributed Peer Mentoring Communities	Paper presented at the American Research Association (AERA), 2013
(9) Mentoring Within and Outside Institutional Politics, Policies, and Practices	Accepted for publication in the book: Global Co-Mentoring Networks in Higher Education, 2012
([a]10) Like Running Bamboo: Rhizomatic Thinking About Cross-Cultural Collaborative Mentoring	Accepted for publication in NASPA Journal about women in higher education, 2016
(11) "They Keep me Feeling like an Academic." Informal Peer Mentoring Among Women in Outsider Spaces	Submitted to Mentoring & Tutoring journal, 2014
([a]12) The Power of Dialogue and Meaningful Connectedness for Two Female Scholars of Color	Presented at AERA, 2014
([a]13) Dynamics of Tensions and a Sense of Belonging in an Informal Peer Mentoring Community of Women Faculty	Accepted for publication in the book: Global Co-Mentoring Networks in Higher Education, 2015
(14) Collegiality, Loyalty, and Friendship: Emerging Tensions in the C-Y-F	Paper presented at the American Research Association (AERA), 2014

[a]Selected for the study

4 Findings

The authors present the findings aligned to the three interrelated theoretical concepts: synergistic relationships, ethics of care, and constructive chaos as defining elements in the C-Y-F culture. Attention was given to the report by including only excerpts from members' statements and limited information to avoid the possibility that any statement could be traced to the members' identity. To further ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the statements are cited as *anonymous authors.*

The findings suggest two encompassing themes: *Interpersonal relations* (pertaining to the relations between individual members) and *interaction* (reciprocal action, effect, or influence) from a feminist perspective. It is evident that some C-Y-F members developed interpersonal relationships that provided them with opportunities for professional and scholarship growth, helped them develop research and publication agendas, and culminated in presentations at professional conferences and/or publications. On the other hand, several projects were either postponed or went unrealized due to conflicts and or tensions. These unrealized projects compelled us to examine the causes of conflicts, tensions, and unsolved situations preventing their realization by furthering our review of literature of group dynamics, conflicts, and tensions in collaborative environments.

4.1 The Complexity and Implications of Tensions in C-Y-F

Less than half of the 22 members of C-Y-F reported different degrees of conflicts and tensions within some of the writing groups as a result of miscommunication, misunderstanding due to cultural diversity in addition to different working styles. Another issue was the lack of opportunities to develop interpersonal relationships as a result of the geographical distances, and sensitivity regarding email interactions, which had led to misunderstandings and resentment. One of the papers explored the topic of tension (2014) reporting that, "several members perceived some of the email communication among members as "pushy and forward," while others were simply offended by the email communication. A couple of members viewed other members' reactions as "disrespectful." It appears that while use of cutting-edge technology permits the group to connect with each other globally, limiting communication via distant technology gave way to miscommunication; thus, creating tensions among the members." (Dynamics of Tension and a Sense of Belonging in a Mentoring Community of Women Faculty).

In this chapter, we explored the topic of tension (2014) and identified its sources as: (1) The techno-space structure of the network as members meet more via conference calls **a**nd social media than face to face; (2) Multiplicities of the cross-cultural, cross-generational, and cross-racial network caused some degree of discomfort silence which made it difficult to confront or move beyond (Dynamics of Tension and a Sense of Belonging in a Mentoring Community of Women

Faculty). During the AERA annual conferences, members of C-Y-F meet in person. During these meetings, different aspects of tension were discussed, and members agreed to further explore conflict resolution strategies and research how dynamics of tension impact informal co-mentorship groups such as C-Y-F. Work is now underway to plan a retreat in order to provide members with more opportunities for personal interaction.

4.2 Identity, Tensions, and Conflicts

The inevitability of tensions and conflicts in collaborative endeavors is documented in the literature (Kreiner et al. 2006; Chan 2015) may have explained on the bases of the network's identity and the individual and social identities of its individual members. Kreiner et al. (2012) developed the construct of "identity elasticity" as "the tensions that simultaneously stretch, while holding together, social constructions of identity" (Abstract). They point out that organizational identity tends to be described as "think-like" membership that becomes evident in their processes and work and describe it as,

…an organization's identity comprises that which members consider to be most central, relatively enduring, and largely distinctive about the organization. Identity answers questions such as "who are we?" how are we different from others?", and "what is most important to us?"

Answers to these questions help explain the tensions and conflicts identified in our study. Also basic to our research is the recognition that members' identities impact group work, change, and advance of scholarly products because, "identity involves individuals, doing, acting, and interacting" (Kreiner et al., p. 983). And, that each individual brings his or her identity and perspectives to the shared experience. When this goes unrecognized or is devalued, conflicts and tensions arise and if unresolved become disruptive and projects are unfulfilled.

Synergy—The results achieved from a collaborative enterprise were found to be greater than the expectations to what some individual members hoped to achieve on their own. We agree with Lick (2006) that, "Members of a synergistic co-mentoring group inspire and energize each other, and the openness and diversity of perspectives create new ideas, knowledge, and problem-solving potential" (p. 46). This seemed to be particularly true for some of the members in the network. Synergistic mentoring relationships were observed when co-peer mentors interchanged roles and, as Mullen (2009) expresses "simultaneously engage in nurturing, advising, befriending, and instructing" (p. 20). Success of projects occurred when trust, honesty, and a willingness to learn and understand each other seemed to be at the forefront of research presentations, academic publications and/or research projects. For instance, in one of the papers, the authors described ways in which they supported collegiality, writing for publication, and navigating the academic path. In a particular group, synergy was evidenced when faculty from similar academic

disciplines gave support to each other through their progress toward attaining a faculty position, tenure and/or promotion.

> Because our members are all female we can and do choose to work in ways that are meaningful to women, fully taking advantage of our many opportunities to blend the professional and personal aspects of our relationships (Anonymous Author).

Another member personally affirmed the synergy experienced within the group by stating that the ... *support group, [was] a journal club, a writing forum, a cadre of scholars, a group of folks to sort out issues, peers to debate problems, partners in learning, cheerleaders, and friends I count on (*Anonymous Author).

It is important to recognize that not all endeavors have been successful, which may also be attributed to linguistic (different English dialects), cultural divides, multi-generational, academic ranking, and other socio-cultural differences such as racial, ethnic, and work style. Such differences may contribute to instances of friction within collaborative groups. Hence, there is a need to emphasize the complexity of the interpersonal and interactive aspects of co-mentoring in C-Y-F or in other co-mentoring groups. The authors note that while technology serves as the main avenue for communication and is beneficial, it also brings challenges due to miscommunication that interferes with the development of congenial and deeper relationships. In one of the papers, a member described her feelings as follows:

> The manner, in which two members working in the project verbally attacked me during a conference call made me realize that, when interaction does not occur face-to-face, in some cases, allows certain types of objectionable behavior. I do not think this would have happened in face-to-face communication. (Anonymous Author).

While the example above shows that there can be unusual interpersonal relations and interactions, this situation is a reminder that when there is no face-to-face communication, members of a group need to intentionally listen and clarify the goals and intentions of their discourse. In addition, during online communication, C-Y-F members need to engage in collaborative efforts with the confidence that it is for *mutual support* and the advancement of both individual and group professional growth.

The above narratives exemplify ways in which synergistic interactions and interpersonal relationships in C-Y-F succeed or fail. Mentoring in C-Y-F is deliberately, non-hierarchical and supportive of members' professional growth, and it is driven by the prospective of the realization of scholarly projects. We acknowledge that the work produced by C-Y-F members has been, for the most part, successful with several publications, symposia, and the invitation to contribute with chapters to this book on global mentoring. We bring to the attention of the C-Y-F members and other global networks that in their development, the members reflect on how synergy and care are crucial to ensure collaboration, especially when there is limited face-to-face communication.

Ethics of Care. C-Y-F members acknowledge the possibility that synergistic relationships often create chaotic situations, and when this occurs, the resolve is founded on 'the ethics of care' that are deeply relational and interactive. These

relationships move beyond the need to produce academic work to also seek and provide support as members' feelings and emotions, which in many cases interfere in their academic work.

An ethics of care was noted in co-mentoring experiences in which members work and published in dyads. We found that working in dyads tended to increase the building of meaningful interpersonal relationships and to better support the members' academic and psychosocial advancement. Members working in dyads defined their caring relationships as 'critical friends' who supported members' recovery of resistance from their academic posts, and work in spaces where they could speak freely about injustice, racism, intolerance, and white privilege without the fear of jeopardizing their job security and alienating themselves from the whole group. A member of a co-mentoring dyad wrote about her personal and professional difficulties as follows:

> We learned then that we could call one another instead of dealing with the difficulty alone. Our relationship as co-mentors was developing through collaborative research and writing and supported our recovery from resistance (Anonymous Author).

The ethics of care is evidenced here as they remind each other of the similarities in their struggles, and that they were able to reach out to each other when support was needed. It is apparent that the relational aspect of calling each other and building each other's confidence is an example of how ethics of care needs to be extended among members.

After a year of co-mentoring and documenting their experiences, another dyad wrote:

> We are aware that many academics engage in critical and sometimes destructive self talk about their writing (Cohen et al. 2012). Because of this, we made a point to build each other's confidence through encouraging words of wisdom. We also reminded ourselves that our struggles are not signs of weakness or incompetence, but fears that we must face with courage and hope… Over the year, we also helped each other battle these feelings with a renewed sense of power and agency in instances of adversity. (Anonymous Author)

From this excerpt, we learn that ethics of care provided them with more than intellectual support, and it also helped them build each other's strengths to cope with academic or personal struggles. Furthermore, the ethics of care was manifested in close encounter discussions where members assured each other of their competencies, and provide each other with the words of encouragement needed in trying times. On the other hand, when there was an absence of ethics of care, the authored projects stalled and or failed to move forward.

While not all members in C-Y-F need or require this kind of mentoring, we observed the variety of relationships emerging from authored projects written in dyads and triads or the inclusion of several members. Other members reporting lack of support in their academic departments had the need to develop a mentoring network supportive of their professional and psychosocial growth and at the same time promote equity and social justice academia. Even though sustaining a co-mentoring community through virtual spaces within the contexts of a variety of dialects and cultures is often chaotic, over the span of our association, C-Y-F strives

to work collaboratively and constructively. It is within this contradictory and chaotic nature of the network that often can be perceived as unstructured, disorderly, and unstable. Thus, informing the theory of the constructive chaos we explore below.

Constructive chaos. This theory underscores the nature and culture of how C-Y-F members interact and develop interpersonal relationships uninhibited by national and international borders. Thus, in spite of what appears to be chaotic, there is constructive chaos. As a result, the network is able to move forward with the research agenda. An example of constructive chaos is how members in writing teams negotiate and establish the hierarchy for authorship. These agreements develop in a spirit of collaboration, working toward the common goals of completing the research project, providing support, and mentorship for each other, and respect for the members' academic and personal constraints on time and availability.

Although authorship hierarchy has the potential to create chaos among group members, synergy, and care allows concerns such as these to be worked out smoothly. For instance, many publishing collaborations are written with a distributed leadership model in mind. Here, authors negotiate a rotation of first authorship among group members for new projects each year.

Constructive chaos is also aligned with manifestations of tension and conflict among C-Y-F members. C-Y-F members negotiate tension and conflict as a result of their interaction in virtual spaces. During the 2013 conference, C-Y-F members decided to examine the inner functioning of the group. There was a sense of unspoken tensions and members expressed a desire to identify and address these concerns. Therefore, the focus for the 2014 conference was the exploration of tension and conflict resolution. The end product included four research papers for presentation and publication. For example, in a paper in which tensions were addressed, the authors brought attention to themes specific to member's varying perceptions and expectations of the group and its activities. They also explored and learned that the variety of views led to tensions in the way members viewed each other's contributions or lack of them. Finally the paper described how interactions and interpersonal relationships are stronger and more beneficial among dyad and triad writing teams. In a follow-up to this paper, and to address this tension, the group designed a six-month professional development curriculum to help strengthen the ties and mentoring capacity among group members (Unterreiner et al. 2015).

In a publication on the dynamics of tension and a sense of belonging in a mentoring community, the authors explained that the reasons for C-Y-F members to change their roles within the groups and or abstain from projects were due to their personal and professional priorities, need for alternatives in the leadership of the project, or member's lack of participatory motivation. In some cases non-participation was due to "personal conflicting constraints in research priority time, and energy; lack of satisfaction with the project or progress within the community, alternative leadership roles" (Anonymous Author 2014, p. 5). However, the authors of this paper also noted that members viewed the community as "supportive and not pressuring different levels of participation" (2014, p. 6). Other C-Y-F publications had similar findings. These papers emerged in 2014, and

show how C-Y F members began to interact and develop interpersonal relationships and became more interested in examining the dynamics of C-Y-F. Although some members experience conflicting priorities with regard to continued writing and publication with the group, C-Y-F as a whole continues to support, co-mentor, and construct knowledge in virtual spaces as a network of women academics.

5 Scholarly Significance

In an effort to develop a theory of global mentoring, the authors identify two themes: interpersonal relations using a feminist lens, and interactions in different spaces. They aligned these two themes to three interrelated concepts, synergistic relationships, ethics of care, and constructive chaos to define an international global network, its culture, and its challenges. The critical findings of C-Y-F members' scholarly work and group observations were used to formulate a theoretical understanding of mentoring globally through virtual spaces. This chapter seeks to advance a theory of global mentoring from the perspective of an international co-mentoring network of women in academics. We identified a framework that clarifies what these relationships look like and what makes them work. In an age of increased globalization and technical innovation, we propose future directions for sustained mentoring across academic global communities. For example, in order to develop deeper relationships and to bridge the diversity of the group, C-Y-F members are seeking opportunities to have a retreat where all members can meet face-to-face at least two days conducting meaningful dialogue and learning more about each other and explicitly explore effective conflict resolution strategies. In addition, the group discussed several strategies to avoid miscommunication during email interactions such as calling the sender when the email rhetoric seems to be confusing. In addition to a research agenda, it is essential for the C-Y-F members to identify each of the member's strengths and areas for improvement as women in academia. Once the member's strengths are identified, it is important to recognize that using a feminine lens is strength for C-Y-F members and should be used as an advantage.

C-Y-F members need to provide opportunities of mentorship embracing *woman's way* of constructing knowledge and learning effective ways to have a voice and successfully navigate in academia.

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Storying Our Academic Career Transitions within a Peer-mentoring Community

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Abstract Careers in academia entail multiple transitions, which may also involve new places, new roles, new colleagues, new opportunities, and new challenges. In this chapter, we describe how our engagement in an informal peer mentoring group consisting of faculty members in science and mathematics education supported our various academic transitions during the early years of our careers. Through the construction and reconstruction of our personal narratives we identify, analyze, and abstract themes related to our transitions. Three themes emerged from the analysis of our narratives: support in navigating uncertainty and complexity, providing a venue for collegiality and collaboration, and supporting our professional identity development. These findings highlight the importance of alternative spaces for faculty to access mentoring and support as they navigate these academic transitions.

Keywords Academic career transition · Faculty · Peer mentoring

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Careers in academia involve multiple transitions (Reynolds 1992). These transitions may also involve new places, new roles, new colleagues, new opportunities, new challenges, and new constraints. For most academics the transition from graduate school to the first academic job, the move from assistant to associate professor and granting of tenure, and promotion to full professor are planned mileposts in an academic's career. Reybold and Alamia (2008) stated, "Becoming and being a faculty is a dynamic journey marked by movement: moving up through promotion and tenure, moving on to other institutions, and moving out after retirement or even leaving the academy due to disillusionment" (p. 108). Academic careers can also involve more unexpected transitions such as moves to new institutions, taking on administrative roles, and moves into and out of academia due to personal life changes such as starting a family or taking care of loved ones. The time in between these defined events is also a period of continual growth and development for faculty as they take on new courses and new projects. All of these transitions and changes involve a continual rebalancing of roles, development of skills, and shifts in personal identity (Baldwin 1990; Reybold and Alamia 2008). Support for navigating these changes can ease the transition process. Although some higher education institutions provide mentoring supports for new faculty and for faculty entering administrative roles, research has shown that this support often fails to address the range of needs faculty require (Mullen and Forbes 2000).

In this chapter we share insights from our informal mentoring group, Female Researchers in Education, Networking, and Dialogue (FRiENDs) consisting of faculty members in science and mathematics education. Our group initially formed in 2008 when three of the members were starting their academic journeys. What began as a summer writing retreat has grown into an informal peer mentoring community that is now eight years old. As our community grew and our commitment to each other continued, we started to question what characteristics of this group kept us together and created an ongoing space for professional growth that we had not found in other sources. We recognized that our collaborative work and our interactions were providing informal peer mentoring for members (Bottoms, Pegg, Adams, Wu, Smith Risser, and Kern, 2013). Many of our conversations were related to issues around our academic transitions. In order to better understand the role of the group in these transitions we embarked on an inquiry into our stories of transition and the connections to our involvement in the group.

1 Faculty Transitions in Higher Education

Success as faculty in academic life involves a process of on-going transition. While many of these transitions are bounded by particular changes in status or position, faculty development is by no means a linear process (Acker 1997). Entering each of

these positions necessitates transition as individuals learn to successfully engage in and balance the components of each complex role (Baldwin and Chang 2006). Transitions in academia are on-going and relate to the complexity and ever-changing components of faculty work, with faculty continuing to develop throughout their work life (Baldwin 1990).

Navigating a particular transition involves three phases: challenge, confusion, and adaptation (Hill and MacGregor 1998), as an individual, over time, identifies the conditions and requirements of the myriad tasks to be completed and balanced, considers current skills and knowledge, determines what else is to be learned, and finally develops some knowledge and strategies for dealing with the new situation. Hall (1996) described the tasks of professional transitions as developing the needed professional competencies. These include knowing what, as well as "knowing why, knowing when, knowing how, knowing where, and knowing who" (p. 15). Although transitions entail challenges, they also offer opportunities for professional growth (Reybold and Alamia 2008).

While some see career transitions as a series of stages to progress through over time (Baldwin 1990), research on the nature of career transitions for female teacher education faculty highlights the complex, non-linear, and interconnected nature of transitions that may be experienced across a career (Reybold and Alamia 2008). Due to the nature of teacher education programs and the lives of women, the transitions experienced by female education faculty may follow atypical career trajectories resulting in increased complexities in regards to career development (Acker 1997). Acker (1997) examined the narratives of female teacher educators' transition into university positions and found that many of them entered academia later in life resulting in feeling the need to "catch up" as they learned the ropes in this new environment. The participants' narratives also highlighted the complexity of the transitions experienced, as Acker stated, "The careers sound less like linear progressions than like complicated puzzles with pieces representing marriages, divorces, children, teaching work, higher degrees, sessional university teaching and perhaps a few other odd-shaped segments" (p. 72).

Reybold and Alamia (2008), in a longitudinal study of 23 female teacher education faculty members' transition experiences across their academic career, found that transitions are not linear or simplistic, but rather multiple and overlapping. Academics experience multiple interconnecting or nested transitions across their careers. One transition may trigger others. Most participants identified promotion and tenure as the defining transition event in their careers. It was seen as distinct from other types of transitions because it was anticipated for one's entire six-year probationary period and because it alone determines whether an individual may choose to remain in the current position or must move to a new location or even leave academia. In addition to the transition to associate professor, participants also described transitions to new institutions and transitions sparked by crises, such as sexual harassment or divorce.

The complexity of academic transitions for female teacher education faculty was further explored in Bosetti, Kawalilak, and Patterson's (2008) autoethnography of the authors' personal experiences of transition from senior management positions to

academic members of a faculty of education. Two of the authors were tenured faculty moving back into faculty roles after years in senior administration, and one was a newly hired professor entering a tenure track position, after a previous career as an adult educator in a postsecondary institution. In their mid-career transitions they described how they found themselves in a "paradoxical situation where we had developed effective professional habits that facilitated our success in our previous roles; yet we experienced confusion and anxiety in attempting to adapt these habits to our new role in the faculty" (p. 102). Their stories highlight the range of transitions that teacher education faculty encounter during their careers and the importance of paying attention to the needs of faculty throughout their career transitions.

Unfortunately, research suggests that universities generally fail to provide the supports that faculty need as they move through these various transitions during their careers (Baldwin 1990). Knight and Trowler (1999) found that the lack of formal mentoring resulted in new faculty basically inducting themselves. Mullen and Forbes (2000) surveyed 60 pre-tenure faculty in the US, Canada, and Australia regarding the mentoring that they had or had not received. Many of the respondents indicated that they primarily sought support from peers due to the lack of formal mentoring, isolation, and the feelings of competitiveness among colleagues.

Due to the challenges faced by faculty as they progress through the various transitions in their careers and the lack of formal supports available, informal peer networks and communities of practice are often described as alternative ways of meeting the needs of faculty. One of the limitations of institution-based mentoring is that the formal structures available for faculty are generally focused only on specific faculty roles (e.g., teaching, administration) at specific stages in an academic career and are limited to work within that institution. Based on their study, Reybold and Alamia (2008) recommend, "… a more holistic, person-centered program for faculty growth across the career, one that assists faculty members in exploring their potential and possible selves beyond their current institutional affiliation and roles" (p. 125). Andrew, Ferguson, Wilkie, Corcoran, and Simpson (2009) also described how communities of practice can "complement formal training programmes, by allowing members to explore the pedagogical underpinning of practice and share less formal, tacit, personal survival knowledge" (p. 609). Furthermore, Lave and Wenger (1991) recognized the role of communities of practice in the development of professional identity. Participation in academic life increases over one's career as individuals learn how to participate in the myriad activities of faculty positions. A number of examples can be found in the literature that describe various models of self-initiated peer networks that faculty have formed to support their professional growth and transitions through various stages in their careers (Angelique, Kyle, and Taylor, 2002; Bottoms et al. 2013). Findings from these self-initiated groups illustrate the importance of creating spaces that provide support that is more holistic than traditional mentoring, balancing the personal and the professional needs of the group members in these ongoing transitions.

2 The FRiENDs Group

FRiENDs was born out of mutual needs for support as we transitioned into new and unfamiliar territory as faculty members in higher education. As the founding members left graduate school to take full time academic positions, they found that the formal mechanisms for mentoring did not always provide the personal and professional support necessary for a successful transition.

FRiENDs is rooted in the experiences of two members who had been in doctoral school together. During their time in the doctoral program they had met regularly and supported each other through the dissertation process, reading each other's work and providing constructive feedback. One member proposed a summer writing retreat and invited another recent graduate. These three initial members had all been classroom teachers in the same state before their doctoral programs. Over the next two summers three additional members were added. For the past eight years the group has continued to meet each summer for an annual week-long writing retreat. Despite many changes in members' academic lives, the FRiENDs group continues to support our growth and transitions. Various pairs of members communicate weekly via Skype to offer support and to collaborate on research and writing projects. We have also engaged in scholarship examining the role of the group as a form of informal peer mentoring (Bottoms et al. 2013; Pegg, Adams, Smith Risser, Bottoms, Kern, and Wu, 2014).

Although the group was created out of the need for support during the specific transition from graduate school to faculty positions, it has supported each of the six members through other personal and professional transitions, including transitions to new universities and to positions with new responsibilities. As members worked together through these ongoing transitions, the FRiENDs group has provided informal mentoring.

3 A Narrative Inquiry into Our Individual and Group Stories of Transition

We engaged in a narrative inquiry of our individual transitions and the interplay between these transitions and our experiences in the FRiENDs group. We chose narrative as our means of inquiry because our interactions center around stories of our experiences, and narrative recognizes the relational nature of those experiences. Through the storying of our individual and group narratives we examined our personal stories of transition and the ways in which our involvement in the group has supported our movement through these transitions.

Drawing on the work of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) our field texts included our stories, our recorded conversations, and writings gathered through reflections on our experiences of transitions and our interactions with others in the FRiENDs

group. We began this inquiry by writing our individual stories of transition in academia. Our stories included examinations of transitions that occurred as we shifted from graduate students to assistant professors and navigated tenure and promotion. We then drew on additional field texts including emails and recorded conversations.

As we wrote our transition stories we tried to keep in mind the three dimensional space, temporality, place, and personal and social interaction described by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). Our stories expanded across various time frames. For some of us they started with our transitions from teachers to graduate students. For others they started with our early school experiences. Some of our stories wove back and forth temporally between experiences of academic transitions and related experiences from our past, such as when feelings about writing sparked memories of childhood that frame our current stories. They take place in various localities, and changes in location are an important part of understanding our experiences of transition. These changes in place include moves from one country to another, moves from one university to another, and moves from one academic position to another within the same institution. Our stories also explored the personal and social interactions that occurred during our transitions. Who did we draw on for support during these transitions? How did changes in personal and social interactions influence our transitions? What was the role of the personal and social interactions of the FRiENDs group in navigating our transitions?

In our analysis, we shared these stories and questioned each other to clarify and more deeply explore the experiences that each of us described. Then we individually examined all of the stories for themes in both our individual experiences and our experiences with the group and shared the themes we had identified. From this process three key themes emerged regarding our transitions and interactions with the group. Within each of these themes we examined the role of the FRiENDs group in supporting our transitions. Although the members in the group come from different places and backgrounds, there are similarities in our stories that frame our transitions and influence the forms of mentoring we sought from FRiENDs.

We struggled in this inquiry with the idea of pseudonyms and whether it is or is not appropriate to tell our stories using our own names, pseudonyms, or without attribution. As the researchers and authors of this work, we share our stories, through narrative inquiry, about each of our movements through the academy from graduate school, through the tenure process, and, for some, movement to or from administrative positions. Since our stories are very personal and in some cases professionally awkward, we have chosen to address the issue of attribution on a case-by-case basis. At times we have chosen to credit a story to a particular author, such as when the context of the author's experience is important to understanding the story. At other times we have chosen to leave the stories without ascription in order to reduce the possibility of connecting the story to one particular member of the group.

4 Our FRiENDs Story

In this section we share insights from our narrative inquiry into transitions we have experienced, as individuals and as a group, and highlight how the FRiENDs network provides space and support through these transitions. The discussion is organized around the themes: (1) support in navigating uncertainty and complexity; (2) providing a venue for collegiality and collaboration; and (3) supporting our professional identity development. In each of these themes we share our words and stories to provide context and describe how our engagement in FRiENDs has supported and continues to support us through these ongoing transitions.

4.1 Support in Navigating Uncertainty and Complexity

Many of our stories of transition described challenges in navigating the complexities and uncertainties that we encountered during our early years as academics. Our engagement in the FRiENDs group provided structure to the unstructured nature of our jobs, supported us in developing the skills we needed to succeed, and assisted us in finding our way through our continually evolving roles within academia.

4.1.1 Providing Structure Through Accountability and Motivation

Academic work environments consist of a complex mix of duties including research, teaching, advising, and service. Teacher education faculty must meet these traditional institutional expectations, along with expectations unique to education, such as involvement in partnerships with K-12 schools, student teacher supervision, heavy undergraduate advising loads, program responsibilities, and outreach (Goodwin, Stevens, and Bellamy, 1998). We each experienced challenges in determining how to coordinate these diverse roles within our jobs and the needs we had for personal development within each area.

In our previous careers and in graduate school our work had a clear focus, identified deadlines, and expectations we understood. As we commenced our academic positions the diversity of our job duties increased, the expectations became less clear, and our ability to balance our various duties successfully was challenged.

> As professionals with years of practical expertise, we may come into this terrain with a sense of 'cockiness,' many times having earned a Master's degree without much trouble,… Well I quickly got my 'butt kicked'… I have always been a planner and pretty organized, so meeting due dates was not a problem for me, as I was able to expect it. This is not something I can say or feel [I] can do today as an assistant [professor].

The range of expectations in the various areas of our jobs and the lack of structure regarding expectations and deadlines at times resulted in feelings of confusion and lack of control. As one of us described:

> Unfortunately, I miss the grad student days of feeling like you were in control, as I gain more experience I feel more out of control… The unfortunate thing is I have come to expect to have 'no control' and just to hold on as time will pass and the urgency will pass with it.

The lack of structure in academic jobs was highlighted in our discussions of research expectations. Although teaching and service have clear meeting times and deadlines, scholarship does not, and therefore it is the easiest thing to set aside.

> The one area of my job that I struggled with was research and specifically writing. What was the struggle? In some ways it was finding time, or making time. Teaching, professional development and committee work all had immediate deadlines that needed to be met. Writing could always be put aside until later.

And yet, we all recognized that our success in scholarship would be the primary thing that mattered when it came to tenure decisions. Somehow we needed to carve out time for scholarship in the face of many immediate deadlines for other aspects of our jobs.

In our interactions with other members of FRiENDs we began to set research and writing goals and create forms of accountability to each other. At the end of our summer writing retreats we each set goals for our accomplishments during the next year and made commitments to check in with each other as a way of providing accountability to meet those goals. As one member of the group stated:

> Throughout these years my weekly Skype meeting with [another member of the group] has been a focal point. Our conversations have helped me stay focused, provided accountability (yet with flexibility) for moving forward when too many tasks demand my time and pull me away from writing. She has been a sounding board for much of what I have done, as well as a cheerleader. And she listened patiently on many occasions as I vented.

Through our interactions in the group we felt pressure to move forward on our research. This pressure was both self-induced, by asking others to hold us accountable, and external as we felt pressure when we saw others in the group accomplish goals such as getting papers published or getting grants funded. As one member stated:

> I listened to the work that was being done by my colleagues, the writing – I saw and heard the progress everyone had made as I had been listening and reading this work for the past few years. It was a real example. I've got work to do.

This motivation and accountability provided a structure that allowed us to maintain a focus on the research aspects of our jobs and create a better balance among the many tasks drawing on our time.

As a number of us have successfully achieved tenure, we have felt the pressures on us shift, resulting in a change in the types of support that we are seeking from the group. Although tenure comes with increased job security, it also returns us to a situation with unclear goals and expectations (Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw, and

Moretto, 2008). Some institutions have recognized the difficulty of mid-career faculty in adjusting to the nebulous expectations of post-tenure life and have provided support designed to help mid-career faculty to collaborate with others and to pursue new research opportunities (Baldwin and Chang 2006). The FRiENDs group provides members with a sounding board for clarifying this new role as a mid-career academic.

> Getting tenure is a big relief to me. Now the question is what my research plan/agenda is for the next few years in preparation for the next milestone of my career: full professor? Well, I don't quite know the answer yet. I am excited for our FRiENDs summer retreat this year and hopefully we could share some thoughts on this.

In addition to the unclear expectations, tenure can also result in increased administrative duties (Baker-Fletcher, Carr, Menn, and Ramsay, 2005). For one of our members, tenure came with a new role as chair of her department. FRiENDs has helped her to balance this new administrative role and to maintain her identity as a researcher.

> I am struggling to reapportion my time in response to these new duties. At this point, the only thing keeping my research from dying on the vine is my weekly meeting with [one of the other group members].

For this member, the group was a key factor in providing a structure that supported her continued work as a researcher despite the shifting responsibilities in her new position.

As these group members move into a new stage of their careers, they are each negotiating a new role as a mid-career academic. Other studies of faculty work patterns have shown that as faculty move through their careers they renegotiate their work-life balance (Jacobs and Winslow 2004). FRiENDs continues to support group members as they restructure and rebalance their work and their personal lives post-tenure. As a group member who recently achieved tenure said:

> Four of FRiENDs received tenure before I did. They all appear to have a more full personal life than I feel I have had in recent years. They seem to spend less time working. I am now looking to them for ways to scale back my work enough to have some fun and still feel accomplished and successful.

Baldwin, Lunceford, and Vanderlinden, (2005) found that shifting roles require academics to renegotiate their time as their career progresses. FRiENDs provides a space to discuss these shifting roles with peers who are or have experienced similar difficulties.

4.1.2 Supporting Our Development of Skills and Confidence

In our transition stories we explored the aspects of our transitions that were smooth and those that were more challenging. The complexities and multiple roles in our academic jobs resulted in each of us experiencing different challenges depending upon our backgrounds, graduate training, and particular contexts. Our transitions

into our roles as university teachers were all relatively smooth as most of us had prior experiences as educators. However, our initial transitions into the aspects of our jobs involving research, grant writing, professional development, and publishing were often the areas where we were seeking support. As one member of our group stated:

> In my first academic post… I was feeling successful. In many ways my transition was smooth. The grant funding that was available to me was the same type of funding that I had written grants for while I was in my PhD program. I knew the requirements, I knew how to structure the programs and design the evaluation, this was something I was good at. My doctoral advisor had trained me well in this regard.… The one area of my job that I struggled with was research and specifically writing.

Another member of the group described how her transition from the university where she received her PhD to a different type of university in another state created challenges with transitioning her confidence and skills in research to a new context:

> I had systematic training in variety aspects of research: from writing a proposal, to collecting data, cleaning up data, data analysis, and writing reports/academic publications. All in all, I graduated with as much training in research and teaching as I could imagine that any doctoral student could have. Therefore, I started my job with quite some confidence. … Having good research training is one thing, building your one research agenda is totally different. It requires one to clearly think about his or her research interest, strengths, and the environment/conditions around him to conduct research. It took me a couple of years to get to know the educational system in the state as well as at my institution.

We each felt that our backgrounds and graduate training prepared us well for some of our roles in academia, but not all of them. The complexities of our jobs and the many roles that we needed to play meant that we all had areas we felt comfortable and confident in and other areas in which we knew we needed to develop. One of the group members explained how the group helped her to work through the complex issues inherent in academia.

> When I would express some frustration or concern in casual conversation, someone would recount a similar situation or concern and perhaps also describe how she (or some colleague) dealt with this concern. These conversations have been enormously helpful in finding my way in this latest position.

In the FRiENDs group our peers provide feedback and offer support that may not be available at our institutions. One of the members of the group discussed how her university had provided some support for research, but that these supports did not address her needs regarding support that was specific to her discipline:

> When SueAnn proposed a writing retreat with other science educators it seemed like just the thing that I needed. It provided focused time with others who understood the field I was working in and the work I was doing. Since SueAnn and I had provided each other feedback and support as we were working on our dissertations I knew that this would be productive time.

Another member of the group described how the range of support that she received from the group was key to her receiving tenure:

> This transition has been aided by FRiENDs who read reviewer's comments, encouraged me, volunteered ideas for moving forward, and one time even joined authorship to be able to provide even more support.

Studies of a variety of mentoring models in higher education have suggested that although most mentoring models provide support and advice, they often provide limited benefits related to career and skill development, in particular in regards to scholarship (Boice 1990; Darwin and Palmer 2009). In a survey of untenured faculty in colleges of education, Greene, O'Connor, Good, Ledford, Peel, and Zhang, (2008) found that when participants were asked what forms of support they would liked to have had but had not received, support with research was most commonly mentioned. Recent articles on peer and group mentoring in higher education have highlighted the desire of new faculty, particularly women, to form mentoring communities that are able to target needs related to scholarship, including collegial support for scholarly writing (Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, and Bannister, 2009; Henrich and Attebury 2010).

As we move forward in our careers, our needs for support from the group are also beginning to shift. One member of the group described how her desire for support from the group has not changed; however, "the issues and challenges that I need support for have changed as I have transitioned from new faculty to a more experienced researcher, writer, and university-level teacher". Another member of the group described how she is looking to FRiENDs for support in figuring out what her post-tenure life will look like. Changing positions lead to changes in the kinds of support that we look for from the group:

> In thinking about the summer retreat coming up I am realizing that my goals for it are also shifting and although I am looking forward to writing and getting support from my FRiENDs in that regard I am also looking forward to discussing with them and learning from those who have had or are just starting in administrative roles. I am looking forward to having frank conversations with them about what they have learned and how this might inform my path moving forward.

An important aspect of the FRiENDs group is the flexibility of the group to meet the range of needs the members have as they transition through various phases and roles within academic careers. Each change in position or place brings new expectations and obligations and another round of prioritizing and learning as we move onto different paths. FRiENDs provides a space for working on the areas in which we lacked confidence and prior experience in a safe environment with others who provide expertise and encouragement.

4.2 Providing a Venue for Collegiality and Collaboration

Our transitions from graduate student to university faculty brought changes in opportunities for collegiality and collaboration. Most of us valued the collegiality of graduate school. Many of us were drawn to advanced study originally, not because we wished to conduct research, but from a deep desire to continue learning. Our graduate school experiences continued to feed that need, and we look back, at times with longing, on memories of lively exchanges and debate with faculty and fellow graduate students around critical ideas in our field. Not only were these experiences exciting and invigorating, they drove us to deeper understanding of critical ideas and introduced us to new ones. However, for many of us, similar experiences developed infrequently in our new faculty environments. Our new roles were extremely demanding, our time was limited, and we had not yet developed connections with like-minded colleagues or graduate students. Research and collegial support at the university did not provide the discipline-based critical feedback that was needed.

> While my grad student years were spent in study groups, working on projects with fellow students, or even grabbing an end of the term beer, these days or this sense of true collegiality has been lost. Either I and my colleagues are too stressed, too busy, or just plain tired. There is little time that I talk with my colleagues outside of faculty, department, or project meetings.
>
> I tried to start a discussion group with other faculty and grad students where we would share our works in progress. But somehow these efforts did not provide the support I needed…. Although it was helpful to be able to talk about our work, my research was so specific that the others in the group once again could not address conceptual issues or really provide critical feedback. In addition, during the weeks that you were discussing others' work, you were not moving forward on your own which eventually led to a lack of motivation to continue the group.
>
> I was hoping to continue something [that] had started in grad school, and well my colleagues were just too busy doing their own thing and adjusting.

As the FRiENDs group developed, members who had drawn on the support of peers during graduate school found such support within the FRiENDs group. While FRiENDs' interactions initially focused on research, writing, and the publication process, the group also provided us with opportunities for collegiality and collaboration, with frequent interweaving of the personal and professional in our interactions.

> Those conversations have been a driving force in my learning and motivation. I think that this is a big part of what FRiENDs does for me.
>
> I became keenly aware that I needed to connect with others. When the FRiENDs network extended the invitation to join them, I jumped at the chance.

Most of us had found such opportunities in a variety of positions we had held prior to becoming academic faculty—as graduate students, teachers, scientists, collaborators on projects, and were drawn to find similar interactions in academia.

> The teaching profession allowed me to work and problem-solve with others. It is impossible to teach in isolation. In teaching I found a place I could continue to learn, use my scientific background, find a way to work with people, and find a group of like-minded professionals.
>
> This is something that has mattered enormously to me in each transition as well. My jobs and learning are most satisfying when there are others similarly engaged who I have opportunities to talk with - and to support.

Like others, we were looking for community in our new settings. Urgo (2005) described a desire for collegiality as a plea for community, a need to balance the isolation of academic work. Collegiality is important for quality of life and job satisfaction for junior university professors, many of whom engage in work that is like parallel play—each engaged in similar activities, but in isolation (Krovetz 1993). Additionally, the isolation for faculty is often greater for professors in smaller institutions. A number of the members of the FRiENDs group were at smaller institutions or branch campuses where they had few colleagues in their disciplinary area. One member's experience is described here.

> I moved to a university in a mostly rural state and suddenly found myself needing to reach out even more. I am the only educational researcher at my small university and one of only a handful of researchers on the campus that work with human subjects. Suddenly my pool of potential collaborators dwindled even further.

These feelings were not unique to our group. While many new faculty arrive expecting collegiality (Mullen and Forbes 2000), they often begin to express concerns about finding a lack of such community and collegiality in university environments (Austin, Sorcinelli, and McDaniels, 2007; Sorcinelli 1992).

In addition, there is often an undercurrent of competitiveness in university settings. University systems have increased the emphasis on publishing in tenure and promotion decisions, and reward quantity of publication over quality (MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion 2006). Mullen and Forbes (2000) found that new faculty expected collegiality in the workplace, and some were unprepared for the reality of competition at some institutions. This was certainly true for the members of FRiENDs, and was an impetus towards the formation of our group.

> Many times faculty colleagues feel they are competing, rushing to the next meeting or duty and can only do what is the most important to them first.
>
> I would like to think this lack of collegiality is due to the extreme demands on faculty time, but I wonder if the goals and demands of faculty are so extremely different than as graduate students. There is a different set of protocols, norms, and rules that prohibits faculty to truly enjoy one another's company when not working.

These competitive pressures can work their way into the interactions of FRiENDs. At times we felt a moderate amount of friendly and supportive competition within the group. This provided a bit of tension, an edge that spurred us each to continue moving forward, producing stronger work over time. Working in close collaboration is not without its challenges. "It is extremely difficult to function as a community of colleagues and scholars in a competitive culture. The paradox is

that the very competitive structures that sustain our culture tout a vision and philosophy promoting collaboration, community and relationship" (Bosetti et al. 2008, p. 12). However, we also continue to feel support and care from each member of the group.

> Even though we are not openly competitive with each other, this group reminds me of what I need to do to keep up or catch up with. I celebrate in their successes and publications, and then think, 'damn, I've got to get going.'
>
> I think we are all competitive by nature. Really we would not have gotten where [we] are without it. It is healthy, but I wonder if this gives us a gauge about how we are doing individually. But then again in this field we are finally judged on our own merits and not against others.

None of us truly wants to get ahead of others in the group, but neither do any of us want to be the lowest performer. We constantly compare ourselves with each other as well as with others. Such comparisons sometimes cause anxiety and impact our self-confidence both positively and negatively. At times this tension is motivating; at others it may be briefly immobilizing. Darwin (2000) discussed the paradoxes of the work environment, including the paradox of competitive and collaborative environments, and argued that "within such a paradoxical environment, organizations need to encourage formation of mentoring relationships through dialogue" (p. 207). Such informal mentoring has been a key role of the FRiENDs group.

Through our participation in FRiENDs we have been able to develop relationships that provide a space for collegiality and collaboration, while creating deeper connections that go beyond the professional. Clark and Watson (1998) found women took care to maintain a strong relationship with their female partners in the collaborative process. They noted the "central importance of connection for women. Even in an environment that places the highest value on individual achievement, women will choose, in the words of one of our women, 'to place connection in front of personal aggrandizement'" (p. 10). Ropers-Huilman (2000) found relationships to be central for academic women's job satisfaction. The relationships developed through our participation in FRiENDs play many roles in our personal and professional lives. As one member stated:

> For me FRiENDs has been a support group, a journal club, a writing forum, a cadre of scholars, a group of folks to sort out issues, peers to debate problems, partners in learning, cheerleaders, and friends I count on!

Another member described how the relationships with others in the FRiENDs group have been important in allowing her to work through a particularly difficult time in her transition to academia.

> My FRiENDs group was critical in helping me work though the angst and unpleasantness around this issue. While at an annual conference where we were making our first public presentation of our work, my FRiENDs generously gave me their listening ears and let me process this transition. This was a wonderful gift from each of them.

For women the boundaries between personal and professional are often blurred. Women frequently have greater challenges balancing personal and professional responsibilities resulting from childcare and family duties. However, when operating in many work settings, women are expected to silence personal discussions. This can lead to women feeling isolated and fearful that discussion of such issues will be viewed as complaining, an indication of incompetence, or inability to separate personal from professional responsibilities. Gibson's (2003) study identified the following important aspects of mentoring for female faculty "(a) having someone who truly cares and acts in one's best interest, (b) a feeling of connection, (c) being affirmed of one's worth, (d) not being alone, and (e) politics are part of one's experience" (p. 173). The FRiENDs group provides a safe space within which to discuss the ways that our professional and personal lives interact without a fear of judgment.

> FRiENDs members have been cheering me since I was pregnant and celebrate with me when [my son] was born. It is much appreciated when our group decided to choose a place close to [my home] to do our summer retreat, so that I could accommodate joining the group… It is such flexibility, warm, and supportive that makes FRiENDs so unique!

As we are all females, we have been able to meet, support, and understand one another's struggles and celebrations professionally and personally. As members of FRiENDs we have been afforded opportunities to collaborate and develop as colleagues while providing informal mentoring.

4.3 Supporting Our Professional Identity Development

The skills, knowledge, and practices of our former positions have played a role in shaping our identity. As we progress through our professional life in academics, we reflect on and carry these experiences to our new positions. With each transition, we are confronted with new questions, new doubts, and new fears—how can we integrate our prior experiences into these new expectations; will they complement one another, or will we have to start anew and abandon our previous modes of operation. Reybold and Alamia (2008) described how early career faculty begin their careers with a provisional faculty identity that eventually becomes more resilient and robust with experience.

The unfamiliarity of various roles within which we found ourselves led us to question our identities as academics. A common theme for all of us was the ease in which we proceeded from teacher to teacher educator. Each of us had felt a sense of expertise as a teacher and this feeling extended to the role of teacher educator. This transition allowed us to draw on identities and expertise as educators and practitioners. The role of a teacher was one we were comfortable with—we understood the expectations and practice of teaching. As we moved from teacher to teacher educator, to educational researcher, many of us struggled in part because in our previous roles we were viewed as and viewed ourselves as competent experts, and yet as educational researchers we were novices.

> The transition from biologist, to science teacher, to professional development and even to department chair seem much easier than the transition to educational researcher. For the most part in all other transitions I felt prepared for what I was taking on.

Furthermore, the nature of academic research results in a cycle of new challenges that continually juxtaposes the identity of novice and expert.

> In academia we are constantly experiencing transitions. We work in a field where you cannot be successful if you just continue doing the same thing over and over again. We must continually examine new research, new methods, new ideas. This is at once exciting and scary. In some ways we will continually find ourselves feeling like a novice as we delve into new areas of research, but on the same hand we are expected to be the expert. This can be a really uncomfortable place to be.

Our previous identities as teachers created another set of tensions in our development as educational researchers. There is an inherent tension in academia between being a teacher and being an educational researcher. Our identities as teachers provided us a level of confidence in the transition to our roles as university professors.

> I have come to understand teaching is one of the most demanding yet gratifying jobs one can have - intellectually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. It has been this endeavor that set me up for success as a graduate student. And hopefully as a professor, but who knows.

However, our reliance on our identities and confidence as teachers was often undermined by the messages we continually heard about the reduced value of teaching compared to research.

> With only good teaching, you will never get tenure; with good research, even if you do not do a good job in teaching, you will still get tenure.

This belief is consistent with findings from other studies that report that there are often mixed messages conveyed to faculty about the value of teaching (Austin 2002). Reybold and Alamia (2008) describe how one response to academic transitions involves a faculty identity focused on maintaining balance in regards to professional roles and responsibility and balance between professional and personal lives. As faculty developed professionally and gained a better sense of their identity in their positions, they were able to find a sense of "professional equilibrium" (p. 118). Our conversations within FRiENDs allowed us to work through the tensions we experienced between our previous identities as teachers and our evolving identities as educational researchers.

Our narratives also highlighted the transitions that occur when contexts shift and previous identities related to specific areas of research no longer fit in the new context. In these transitions, the challenge became defining a research agenda in a new context such as qualitative or quantitative research, moving to a different university, or a different country. One member of the group described how a transition to a new university context was supported by conversations with members of FRiENDs.

> I also had to constantly consider how I would conduct new research in my current context without close relationships with teachers, such as the relationships I was able to develop when doing PD. So this question of how to transition into a new line of research was a constant part

> of my weekly conversations with [FRiENDs members] during my second year in [new location].

Many of the members of the group experienced atypical pathways prior to entering positions as assistant professors. These atypical pathways influenced the development of our professional identities. As a member of our group said:

> I have never really been one to play the game. This got me thinking about some of the discussions in our group about how many of us did not follow a typical route. As women in science and now in academia, maybe this has influenced our willingness to just play the game and follow the rules. If the system can't accept the way that I pursue my research then maybe I won't work within the system.

Another member's story provided an interesting example of the perceptions of being an imposter in the group when she moved from department chair to assistant professor, illustrating the complex relationships between identity and practice.

> I realize that although FRiENDs provided me a space to talk about and engage in conversations as a researcher, I was not actually doing the work of becoming a researcher that they had been doing.

This member's atypical pathway from graduate student to non-tenure track department chair and then to an assistant professor position exemplifies the complex and paradoxical situations described by Bosetti et al. (2008) that can challenge a faculty member's identity when moving into and out of various roles within academia. Shifts in our academic positions have resulted in shifts in our professional identities.

Through our involvement with FRiENDs we have been able to share our questions and uncertainties regarding our place within academia and have found support in defining our roles as teacher educators and educational researchers. The fact that we are all in similar disciplinary areas provides a common frame of reference and understanding as we each work through the various transitions in our academic careers.

> Because FRiENDs members also come from a background in math and science they understand the issues we may struggle with.

Although the members of FRiENDs might have not all followed the same paths through our careers, participation in FRiENDs provided a space for us to discuss the changing roles that we were experiencing and allowed us to talk through issues related to our shifting and evolving identities as researchers, teachers, and leaders within academia. It is within the structure of the FRiENDs group that we have found the space to examine the tensions inherent in these transitions.

5 Academic Transitions "With a little help from our FRiENDs"

In many ways, the FRiENDs group has helped the individual members navigate our professional transitions. As we have progressed in our careers and experienced changes in our professional lives, our needs for support from the group have changed. FRiENDs has provided consistent and stable support through these transitions and shifting needs.

The advantages that the members of our group have found in our peer mentoring network are similar to those found in the literature on peer mentoring. While many of the challenges we have faced navigating our responsibilities and the tenure system are not unique (Austin et al. 2007; Heinrich, Hurst, Leigh, Oberleitner, and Poirrier, 2009; Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin, 2000; Sorcinelli 1992), openly admitting these challenges in a formal professional context often leads to judgments that the individual is weak. Consequently, junior faculty members often feel isolated by a culture in which they cannot show weakness (Mullen and Forbes 2000). As a "safe" space, a peer mentoring network enables new faculty to freely vent and talk about problems and concerns, especially those of a political nature. The peer network we have formed allows group members to be open about challenges of navigating the complexities of our jobs and acknowledges and even criticizes the ambiguity surrounding tenure without fear of professional consequences. But more importantly, the network provides ideas for a variety of approaches to working through our challenges, support for the work involved in that process, and the knowledge that others understand our situation and care enough to support us in navigating it successfully.

As we determine which skills and experiences to draw on in our positions and which new ones need to be developed, membership in the FRiENDs group provides a space for us to define and redefine our identities as academics. Through the peer mentoring provided by this group we are able to examine our choices, challenges, and possibilities within a space of safety and support. As group members are located at different institutions, they can be unbiased and uncompetitive allies who provide an invaluable perspective. The cross-institutional nature of peer mentoring groups has been recommended by others (Gibson 2006) as a way to mitigate the local political challenges inherent in protégé mentoring models. Unlike a traditional mentoring model, our collegial and collaborative interactions involve an interweaving of the personal and professional, acknowledging the complexities of the lives of faculty and the needs of women.

6 Advice and Recommendations

The FRiENDs group is a support system we created out of specific needs identified at the beginning of our academic careers, but one that has supported us through a range of subsequent career transitions. To conclude this chapter, we reflect on the ways that the formation, structure, and evolution of informal peer mentoring groups such as FRiENDs can support faculty in navigating uncertainty and complexity, providing a venue for collegiality and collaboration, and supporting professional identity development. We offer these as areas to consider for others interested in forming similar structures to facilitate transitions along the academic path.

6.1 Forming the Group

A successful peer-mentoring group is the result of a combination of thoughtful consideration and chance. Some factors to consider when forming the group include members' career stage, location, discipline and research area. In choosing the membership for a peer mentoring group, we recommend determining the areas in which it will be important to have members with similar backgrounds and in what areas diversity would be of value. When members are in similar career stages they will likely be dealing with similar challenges or have done so recently, thus creating a desire to discuss these with others having similar experiences. Similarities in research areas can facilitate collegiality, opportunities for providing professional feedback, and lead to possible professional collaborations.

On the other hand, diversity among members can also be of benefit. Choosing members located at different institutions can diminish competition and provide some level of emotional safety; yet if distances are too far, face-to-face meetings will be less frequent. Ensuring that members have experience in different areas (e.g. administration, publishing, grant writing experience, qualitative inquiry, quantitative methods) can provide the expertise needed to support others moving into or forward within these areas and provide a variety of perspectives about a particular decision or event.

Choose a group size that will allow the type of interactions that you envision. Smaller groups are less diverse, yet may more readily provide a safe space for discussing uncertainty, the complexity of academic transitions, and one's place within the academic world.

6.2 Determining the Structure

Creating collegiality, collaboration, deep conversations, extended connection (intermixing of personal and professional), and support in navigating uncertainty and

complexity takes time and much interaction. Determine how your group can best provide the needed time to accomplish these important goals. Consider face-to-face extended work time, continued online communication, or some mix of these.

Decide if you will include accountability features. FRiENDs created additional informal accountability structures. We set goals annually and chose to check in regularly (typically weekly via Skype) with one or two others to report progress on these goals or discuss modification of goals. This regular check-in provided opportunities for encouragement and mentoring, and became a convenient venue for work on collaborative projects. We also developed a memorandum of understanding, which specifies that the scholarly work we do within the context of our group is our collective, not individual work.

6.3 Maintaining Flexibility

Be open to changing the structure as the needs of the group change in order to accommodate continuing shifts in professional identity, academic roles, and personal needs. Determine which structures must remain to support the nature of the group, and which can be modified to fit the current need. Be open to spending time and effort to build relationships and friendships that are both professional and personal. Developing trust and a sense of belonging takes time and effort and requires getting to know each other. Willingness to provide opportunities and time both for professional issues and development of friendships was one key to the success of our group. We have spent much time listening and providing suggestions when one member brought up an issue, as well as cheering professional and personal successes.

Groups such as FRiENDs can help faculty navigate the terrain of academia through informal peer mentoring. As individuals progress through the many transitions of academic life this alternative form of mentoring can support new faculty to negotiate the path towards tenure, encourage tenured faculty as they transition to other roles, and lend another point of view or simply a caring and supportive ear to listen.

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Dynamics of Tensions and a Sense of Belonging in an Informal Peer Mentoring Community of Women Faculty

Ke Wu, Nilsa Thorsos and Anne L. Kern

Abstract Women in academia face many challenges as they navigate through the tenure and promotion process. In addition, institutes of higher education lack the appropriate support to meet the varied needs to mentor diverse faculty. Researchers have shown the importance of mentoring networks to support women in their academic career progression, as well as advancement toward tenure, promotion, and leadership as faculty in higher education. However, few researchers explore the tensions and conflicts in mentoring networks, their dynamics, and implications in the communities of practice. In this chapter we conducted an ethnographic case study using communities of practice (CoPs) as a cognitive framework to examine the dynamics of tensions and sense of belonging in an informal peer-mentoring network of 21 women faculty who connect globally. The findings showed that members held an overall sense of belonging to this network community. In addition, three themes emerged regarding tensions: Members of the community recognized the existence of tensions; lack of space, action, and opportunity to resolve conflicts; and members' hesitancy to use their voice. Implications of this study include considerations to support collaborative communities, the need to intentionally address aspects of collaborative productivity, and suggestions for ways to resolve conflicts when working in informal mentoring and distant communities.

Keywords Tensions · Sense of belonging · Peer mentoring · Communities of practice · Woman faculty in higher education

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In recent years, there has been dramatic increase in the proportion of women enrolled in higher education as students at all levels (bachelor, graduate, and doctorate levels) (King 2006). Knapp et al. (2011) reported that in the year of 2011, 57 % of undergraduate and 59 % of graduate students enrolled in postsecondary institutions were women. Similarly, degrees awarded at all levels in North American colleges and universities were predominantly earned by women (Curtis 2011). However, the employment status and success of women faculty in academia, particularly in senior positions is not as promising (e.g. Etzkowitz et al. 1994; Burke and Mattis 2007). Curtis (2011) reported on the disparity between the percentages of men and women faculty with tenure (48.6 and 34.6 % respectively) and the low rate (28 %) of women faculty who advance in rank to full professors. While we are in the 21st century such disparity continues to present challenges to women in academia.

There have been a growing number of studies that document the unique barriers women encounter during their career progression in academia (Bilimoria et al. 2008; Johnsrud and Des Jarlais 1994; Menges and Exum 1983; Rosser 2004; Winkler 2000). Typically when new faculty members navigate through the expectations of faculty careers in higher education, they encounter various challenges. At a minimum these challenges include a complicated process involving adaptation, adoption, and socialization to new roles in academia (Austin 2002; Austin and Sorcinelli 1992; Austin et al. 2007; Greene et al. 2008; Mullen and Forbes 2000; Whitt 1991). For women in academia, the challenges are more complicated as they tend to involve the development and constant adjustment of professional and personal identities while balancing various expectations and responsibilities (e.g. Bilimoria et al. 2008; Bottoms et al. 2013; Menges and Exum 1983; Winkler 2000). Women faculty often feel isolated without access to quality mentors or role models and more likely to experience lower satisfaction with their career in higher education relative to male faculty (Bilimoria et al. 2008). For them, to gain professional credentials and respect they have to work harder than male colleagues (Agosto et al. 2015; Liang and Bilimoria 2007; Rosser 2004). In addition, there have been organizational, institutional practices and procedures in which systematic, historical, and widespread inequities persist at all stages of progression in the academy: hiring, tenure, promotion, and leadership (Johnsrud and Des Jarlais 1994).

The importance of mentoring networks for women faculty in supporting their successful advancement toward tenure, promotion, and leadership has been well documented (e.g. Agosto et al. 2015; Allen et al. 2004; Bottoms et al. 2013; Esnard et al. 2015; Unterreiner et al. 2015). However, there is little research on tensions and conflicts in the mentoring networks and their dynamics and implications in the community of practice.

In this chapter, we explore how tensions exist within an informal peer mentoring community of women faculty in higher education and how members of the community react and negotiate through those tensions. Communities of practice (CoPs) as a conceptual framework was used to help understand the dynamics of tensions and sense of belongings and to answer two questions: (1) How and why members

choose to participate in, contribute to, or temporarily abstain from the practice within an informal peer mentoring community? and (2) How members of the community perceive and respond to tensions in mentoring?

1 Peer Mentoring of Women Faculty in Higher Education

Studies have shown the significance of peer mentoring as an alternative versus the traditional mentoring model in supporting the development and success of faculty in higher education, especially for faculty of women and women of color (Angelique et al. 2002; Bottoms et al. 2013; Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 2002; Sorcinelli and Yun 2007; Tillman 2001). Members or peer, who share similar interest or are at similar positions of their career, come together and form a community that has an equal, collective, and cooperative structure (Angelique et al. 2002). Peer mentoring networks have been shown to: build trust, caring, and connections among members; develop strong commitment to the collective goals; provide social and psychosocial support for professional learning and knowledge construction; reduce the isolation felt by beginning faculty; enhance mutual sharing of information, resources and multiple perspectives; support partnerships in scholarly writing; and facilitate development of identity and understanding of their role in the academy (Alfred and Nanton 2009; Angelique et al. 2002; Bottoms et al. 2013; Darwin and Palmer 2009; Driscoll et al. 2009). There is overwhelming emphasis on the advantages and strengths of peer mentoring. Such picture somewhat overlooks the other not so "perfect" aspects of mentoring network: tensions, inefficiencies, exclusiveness, and discomforts (Dasgupta 2005; Esnard et al. 2015; Portes 1998).

The limited literature on tensions within a mentoring community is predominantly in the context of formal mentoring (e.g. Bower 1998; Cox 2005; Gorinski et al. 2010) or online teaching (McLoughlin 1999). Tensions, conflicts, and discomforts exist wherever there is social interaction and collaboration (Dasgupta 2005; Portes 1998). Peer mentoring network is no exception. Tensions are the product of complex social processes, social engagement, relations, connections, and collaborations, embedded in the social structure of a peer mentoring community (Esnard et al. 2015). Esnard et al. (2015) explored tensions in the social processes and relations of a cross-cultural peer mentoring network of women in academia and found the cause of tensions to be: (1) The techno-space structure of the network—meet more via conference calls and social media than face to face; and (2) Multiplicities of the cross-cultural, multi-generational, and cross-racial network that created sensitive issue that causes some degree of discomfort silence which made it difficult to confront or move beyond. Though the techno-space nature of the mentoring network often makes it possible to cross boundaries of race, gender, geography, age, and hierarchy that are rarely crossed in traditional mentoring relationships, challenges of such mentoring structure also cause tensions: (1) Difficulty in obtaining virtual intimacy, particularly if the mentors and mentees have never met in person or only meet once per year for a short period of time. It takes time, familiarity, and work to develop levels of trust and confidence in

order to sustain the relationship. (2) Miscommunications can occur on many levels, especially if members in the mentoring community have developed relationships mainly via virtual space (Bierema and Merriam 2002). The purpose of this study is to further examine the nature of tensions and sense of belonging in an informal peer mentoring network through the framework of the community of practice.

2 Communities of Practice (CoPs): A Perspective or Conceptual Framework

This study drew from the Community of Practice (CoPs) (Lave and Wenger 1991) as a lens to examine tensions and sense of belonging among members in an informal mentoring community. The CoPs serves as the context as well as the content of all the dynamics such as relationships, learning, and negotiation of participation within the community. In such context, members develop an identity, make meanings, learn about the practice of the community, and develop sense of belonging (Wenger 1998).

3 Three Dimensions: Domain, Community, and Practice

Each community of practice has three dimensions that shape the characteristics of the community: domain, community, and practice (Snyder and Wenger 2010). The domain defines the physical attributes of a community, that is, the shared goals and objectives that form and guide the community. Community is the context of the CoPs, which includes its members, their social interactions and relationships, and learning that occurred through these interactions and relations (Wenger 1998). The practice of a community is the "actions" taken place in the community. While these three characteristics can be identified as individual concepts, in a CoPs they are not separate entities, together they help to define and give the CoPs a sense of identity. In the academia of higher education, this practice can be members spending time and socializing together, writing and critiquing each other's work, providing advice and suggestions to each other, collaborating on research projects and co-authoring in publications (Bottoms et al. 2013; Cordoba and Robson 2006). It is through practice that a community achieves its coherence (Wenger 1998).

4 Learning, Identity, Participation, Tensions and Sense of Belonging

Learning and identity are two essential foci of the CoPs. Learning in a community is the process in which members collaboratively co-construct knowledge through their social interactions and participation of practice in the community (Handley

et al. 2006; Wenger 1998). Learning is an integral part of socio-cultural dynamics of the community. Thus learning is situated in the context of the community and its broader social-cultural environment. The cultural richness and complexity of such broader context creates a fluidity and heterogeneity that belies the communities become cohesive and homogeneous. Learning is not just about acquiring new knowledge and practice, it also involves the process of understanding individuals as who they are, what "position" they have within a community, and which communities of practice they are accepted and have a sense of belonging to. Members of the CoPs bring their identity: personal background (e.g. ethical, social, cultural) as well as professional background (e.g. work experience, expertise, work style) into a community. The norms or characteristics of each individual's identity may complement or conflict with one another, or be coherent or in disagreement with the norms of the community. Such variation and conflicts cause tensions that need to be "negotiated and reconciled at least in part if the individual is to achieve a coherent sense of self" (Handley et al. 2006). Lave and Wenger (1991) argued that the development of identity provides a sense of belonging and commitment. When opportunities to participate in their community of practice come, depend on how fit or alignment these opportunities with members current senses of identity, they make the decision of embracing or rejecting opportunities, and marginal or full participation in the practice.

Participation is central to the learning in the communities since it is through participation that identity and practices develop (Wenger 1998). Participation involves both physical action and social relationships and connections. Thus, it brings the possibility of mutual recognition and the space to negotiate identities. However, participation does not guarantee equality or respect, or collaboration. The issue exists in the dynamics of power within the community (Huzzard 2004). For instance, newcomers initially may feel or have more constraints that prevent their full participation. As they observe, learn, and understand the practice of the community (e.g. language, culture, relations, underlying assumptions and values) they may then adapt and develop their own practice in which match both the norms of the wider community as well as their individual sense of self (Ibarra 1999). The other perspective on various levels and forms of participation is not what every member in the community aspires to (or can) achieve full participation at all time (Handley et al. 2006; Wenger 1998). The dynamics between identity-development and forms of participation within the community are crucial to members' sense of belonging and how they internalize, reject, or leave the existing practices of their community (Handley et al. 2006).

5 Multiple Communities and Tensions

Individuals participate not just within one community or network but within multiple communities, each of which has different domain, practice, identity structure, norms of community, etc. (Brown and Duguid 2001; Roberts 2006; Wenger 1998).

Even though each community has the characteristics of "mutual engagement", "joint enterprise", and "shared repertoire", potential tensions and conflicts exist because members have to manage their identities, roles, actions and relationships within multiple communities. Individuals often behave differently in each community, and construct different aspects of selves and gain different perspectives (Wenger 1998). Members' continual negotiation of identities within and across several communities of practice may generate intrapersonal and interpersonal tensions as well as conflicts within the community (Handley et al. 2006). Such tensions then interact with the level of individuals' participation in the communities of practice. It is important to understand the impact of individuals' diverse background (e.g. gender, social class, ethnicity, geographic location) on the tensions with their continuous effort of re-constructing identities in multiple communities (Whittington 1992).

6 CoPs in Higher Education and Mentoring

In recent years institutions of higher education have started to use communities of practice to support faculty research and collaborations (Bottoms et al. 2013; Henrich and Attebury 2010). Cordoba and Robson (2006) showcased communities of 30 practices in academia that have researchers or faculty work collaboratively on projects, writing publications, and participation in conferences. The community of practice provides content and context of mentoring that is based on the structure of mutual engagement. Through such structure, members come together and develop collective objectives with a common sense of purpose and language (Wesley and Buysse 2001). Bottoms et al. (2013) described how six mathematics and science education researchers formed an informal peer-mentoring network with their mutual desire for advancement in scholarship. It was through the communities of practice that members found important support for their transitions as early career faculty in academia and for the development of their personal and professional identities as education researchers.

7 C-Y-F: Communities of Practice

Curve-Y-FRiENDS (C-Y-F) is a group of 21 female academics, whose ages range from mid 20s–70s. The C-Y-F group has been active as an informal mentoring group of women in Higher education since 2011. This group of women worked in universities in Australia, Canada, Egypt, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, and Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Texas, California, New York, South Dakota, Colorado and Florida in the United States. This informal mentoring group has enabled C-Y-F members opportunities to collaborate to meet, and for many to successfully achieve professional goals and our Institutional expectations.

Within the C-Y-F communities of practice, members have collectively worked in various partnerships to produce an extensive body of work that focuses on our unique experiences of peer mentoring. C-Y-F's professional activities primarily revolve around collaborative exchanges which seek to negotiate and construct knowledge, and deconstruct meaning regarding the shared mentorship and re-constructing knowledge of the process. These processes afford the members of the C-Y-F community an opportunity to learn the dynamics of working with other women who share similar goals and professional expectations, while providing critical spaces within which members of the group develop a common sense of belonging.

It is important to note that members of C-Y-F are located in different geographical spaces, thus they must utilize various methods of technology to negotiate communication such as SKYPE, email, Google, Dropbox, in addition to telephone and text messaging. Members of the community actually meet face-to-face when attending an annual professional conference. These yearly meeting generally lasts at most four hours, includes a group presentation for the professional meeting, networking to determine leadership for research projects in the next year, and discussion on directions for long-term sustainability of the informal mentoring group. This community was created to provide a forum to support and strengthen the professional prospects for the C-Y-F members. Ultimately this group has been able to operationalize and realize their work through the use and application of new technologies.

8 Methods and Data Sources

Two research questions guided this study:

1. *How and why members choose to participate in, contribute to, or temporarily abstain from the projects within the C-Y-F community?*
2. *How do members perceive and respond to tensions in mentoring?*

An ethnographic case study was created to address the research questions. As participant-researchers in the C-Y-F informal mentoring group we sought to further understand the dynamics of tensions and reasons for continued participation in the group. Through the lens of communities of practice (CoPs) the researchers analyzed group interactions in terms of benefits and tensions due to group collaborations, well as perceptions of self, identity, and sense of belonging among our members.

The data included two survey questionnaires distributed via an online mechanism in the spring of 2014 (Y1) and spring of 2015 (Y2). In addition, artifacts and anecdotal data gleaned from emails and conversations among C-Y-F group members provided additional sources for analysis and construction of the narrative. The two anonymous surveys were sent to current C-Y-F members. In Y1, 12 out of 18 members completed the survey and in Y2, 13 out of 21 submitted the survey.

The reason for the difference in number of members in Y1 and Y2 is due to the fluid and increasing number of members to C-Y-F.

Each survey was comprised of a number of open-ended and Likert scale questions. The Y1 survey (Appendix A) had four open-ended and eight Likert scale questions, while the Y2 survey (Appendix B) encompassed three open-ended and five Likert scale questions. The Y1 survey asked about reasons for joining and participating with the C-Y-F group, while the Y2 survey asked questions about belonging to and tensions among interactions within the C-Y-F projects and group collaborations.

Glasser's comparative method of qualitative analysis (1965) was used to analyze the open-ended questions. The participants' responses were read and re-read. A constant comparative coding procedure was implemented to abstract themes and supporting narratives. As the themes emerged, data was collected in a table and cross-referenced. The artifacts and anecdotal data from emails and conversations within the C-Y-F community were also examined to provide additional support for the emerged themes.

9 Results

This study examined how tensions exist within an informal peer mentoring community (C-Y-F) and how members of the community react and negotiate through those tensions. The guiding research questions were: (1) How and why members choose to participate in, contribute to, or temporarily abstain from the projects within the C-Y-F community; (2) How members perceived and responded to tensions in mentoring.

C-Y-F members' response to how and why they choose to participate in, contribute to, or temporarily abstain from the projects within the C-Y-F community included results from both surveys. Findings revealed that members chose to participate or withdraw based on personal conflicting constraints in research priority, time, and energy. The majority of members (70–90 %) viewed the community as supportive and not pressuring for different levels of participations. One driving force to participate in the writing groups was the opportunity to develop scholarship and a research agenda. This was consistent with the literature in that the mentoring community provided supporting partnerships in scholarship and professional learning (Alfred and Nanton 2009; Angelique et al. 2002; Bottoms et al. 2013; Darwin and Palmer 2009; Driscoll et al. 2009). Several members reported they would abstain from participating in groups in order to avoid interactions with specific members. For example, one respondent reported "there are some members I feel very strongly tied to and others I would rather not interact with." Overall, members expressed that they preferred to avoid confrontations and/or attempt to address the issue via conflict resolution.

Regarding members' perceptions on how they perceive and respond to tensions in mentoring, data from both surveys were consistent regarding members'

recognition that there were tensions throughout the C-Y-F members and also in the subgroups. However, tensions were rarely or never discussed as a whole group. About 40–70 % members disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the community provides space, open dialogue for members to discuss within and without perspectives, to develop understanding/solutions when there was tension. Members attributed the perceived tensions and a lack of opportunity to deal with tensions to the fact that the group interacts primarily in a virtual space, and only interacts in person once per year for less than four hours at an annual conference. Thus they felt very strongly that the lack of social time to develop true collaboration did not allow members to learn about each other and develop a genuine relationship. This phenomenon confirmed the limitation of techno-space structure on mentoring network (Esnard et al. 2015).

Due to the technology dependent nature of interaction within the C-Y-F group, there was sensitivity regarding email interactions, which had led to misunderstandings and resentment. Bierema and Merriam (2002) reported that in a mentoring community, where relationships had developed mainly via virtual space, miscommunications could occur on many levels. Several C-Y-F members perceived some of the email communication among members were "pushy and forward," while others were simply offended by the email communication. A couple of members viewed other members' reactions as "disrespectful." While use of cutting edge technology has afforded the group to connect with each other globally, utilizing technology to work on research projects presented several challenges, resulted in miscommunication, and created tensions among the members.

Another source of tensions C-Y-F members recognized was the differences in racial-ethnic, cross-generational perspectives and work styles. Multiplicities of the cross-cultural, multi-generational, and cross-racial network could create sensitive issues that cause some difficulty to group members (Esnard et al. 2015). Some members perceived the harmony within the subgroups was "more hierarchical than collaborative and more directive than shared decision making." Several members expressed they preferred to avoid a confrontation and were uncertain regarding how to communicate sensitive issues. One of the members reported that, "When I see other members having tensions (e.g. heated discussions, back and forth talking on the same topic for a long time), I don't quite know what to do rather than listening to them." Similar findings were reported by Esnard et al. (2015) that when there were tensions, certain degree of discomfort silence made it difficult to confront or move beyond.

Most of the members expressed hesitancy to use their voice during conflicts and or tensions between the members, as they did not feel they had the skill set to address conflict resolution. For example, one of the members shared that "when the tension is caused by personality differences, especially when I feel that one or a couple of the group members get hurtful feelings from such tension, I really wanted to help the group work on the tension so that it does not impact on our relationships. But, to be honest, I really don't quite know what to do when the discussions got so heated." Instead of speaking up and addressing the issues of tensions, members opted to avoid confrontations. Learning how to engage in conflict resolution is an

The result of surveys

area for growth for the group members of C-Y-F in order to promote a healthy and safe environment in the community.

In summary, C-Y-F members reported they felt a strong commitment to scholarship and shared a strong sense of belonging to the community. About 90 % of members agree or strongly agree with the statement that they have a strong sense of belonging to the community. In addition, regarding tensions within the community, three overarching themes emerged from both surveys. (1) Participants in the C-Y-F group were very well aware the existence of tensions within the community. (2) Members believed there was a lack of space, action, and opportunity to resolve conflicts. (3) The last theme was regarding the members' hesitancy to use their voice to resolve the conflicts. These results were demonstrated in Fig. 1.

10 Discussion and Conclusion

In the CoPs framework, participation of practices of the community has two folds: action or doing the work and connections or relationships (Wenger 1998). C-Y-F has plenty of actions because members are very production-driven, but the social relationship piece is missing significantly. This is one of the core causes of tensions. Since 2010, our group has grown steadily. The community continues to welcome other women in academia who seek external informal peer mentoring opportunities. However, because of the multi-geographical, multi-cultural and linguistic, cross-generational, multi-discipline, and virtual space nature of our community, members of C-Y-F have not been able to cultivate deeper relationships. While some of the members had existing connections with other members of the subgroups,

most of the members were not deeply acquainted with other members except for the interactions while working on writing projects in subgroups. As a result of the dynamics of working together in writing projects there has been a lack of opportunity to develop a deeper relationships, and/or connections, in order to establish trust and a culture of open communication. The key to a productive collaborative group is open communication, where everybody has a voice and trust. Stanley and Lincoln (2005) discussed the characteristics of successful mentoring relationships: "trust, honesty, willingness to learn about self and others, and the ability to share power and privilege." Without a sense of trust, when there is tension or conflict, people have hesitancy to voice or discuss the issue. Instead, members choose to silence or passively abstain from a project. Belenky et al. (1997) argued that women's way of collaboration includes the need to have relationships based on trust and deep dialogue.

Members of C-Y-F choose to participate or withdraw based on personal conflicting constraints in research priority, time, and energy. It is important to be aware that the situated learning within multiple communities of practice is one potential source for tensions and conflict (Handley et al. 2006; Wenger 1998). Each member is involved in multiple communities and play different roles. Such multiplicity makes the identities of individuals, how much one wants to or can afford to participate in the C-Y-F, much more complicated. Sometimes one chooses to marginally participate not because of any tensions within the C-Y-F community, but because of our responsibilities and duties from other communities that she is involved. This is also consistent with other research on the barriers that women faculty face: balancing personal and professional identities and responsibilities (Bilimoria et al. 2008; Menges and Exum 1983; Winkler 2000).

One of the challenges women in academia face as they navigate in the white male dominated academia is the hidden agendas and scripts regarding confronting others during conflict. Typical conflict resolution style in higher education is not consistent with a woman's way of constructing knowledge (Belenky et al. 1997). Using the results of this study, it is needed to develop an implementation plan and learn how to find our voice as women in academia. We need to explicitly learn about women's way of constructing knowledge and then, mentor each other in specific areas that require growth such as effective conflict resolution skills consistent with our needs. Thus, it is crucial to develop healthy interpersonal practices within a multi ethnic, cultural, cross-generational, and globally dispersed.

It is important to notice that the existence of subgroups (sub-communities) within the larger C-Y-F community has played important roles in keeping members feel a strong sense of belonging (perhaps because in the subgroups there is more space and opportunities to have social interactions/build friendships and relationships). Even though at times it seems that tensions within the larger C-Y-F community arise and group members have not yet figured out how to work through them, this does not underpin the overall "pros" that this community has brought to each its participants. This is why overall the group has a very strong sense of belonging toward the C-Y-F community. It is a learning process as the community continues on this journey and collaboratively constructs the identity of C-Y-F.

The researchers of this study propose that it is time that the C-Y-F community intentionally create some space and opportunities to develop better understanding and agreement on: (1) the identity of its members; (2) some norms of the C-Y-F community (e.g. what our working style and communication protocols are; when there is disagreement, conflict, or tension, and how to address these within the professional boundaries; (3) how to better provide mentoring in C-Y-F, rather than previously focusing on production. It is understandable that the initial need of the group was to keep the "research production" as the shared common objective, because that is on the top of our professional needs. "Mentoring" is another essential reason that brought everyone together, and the members have not been actively explore/develop this in the community. It is challenging to address such need, especially within the structure of C-Y-F when the majority of communication is via internet. For instance, the multicultural subgroup of C-Y-F has developed several professional development modules to address the need of "mentoring". However, the group has encountered challenges during implementation stage of the modules. We are aware of the danger of not building relationships and development of stronger mentoring within the practice of C-Y-F community, and our group is planning on a one-day face-to-face retreat in the coming year to collaboratively work through this.

11 Significance of the Study

There is a lack of research on the tensions within a peer informal mentoring community in the existing literature. It is essential to examine how tensions and sense of belonging are created, negotiated, and resolved in a mentoring community. This study examined a unique group of female faculty members who share common professional goals. In order to provide effective mentoring and support in the context of this informal community, which mostly communicates and interacts through technology, it is essential to further examine this phenomenon. C-Y-F members continue to share a common goal of constructing knowledge regarding women in academia and to add a female voice. In addition, we aim to support collaborative communities to address the need to intentionality explore all aspects of collaborative productivity and provide suggestions for ways to resolve conflict when working in informal mentoring communities as well as formal mentoring groups.

Appendix A

2014 (Y1) Survey Questions

Open-Ended Questions

1. When and how were you introduced to the community?
2. In terms of participation in research projects in the community (i.e. proposal for presentations, and or manuscripts for publication): (a) How and why do you decide to participate in the research projects? (b) If applicable, how and why do you decide not to participate in research projects? (c) How and why do you decide to change your role or involvement in research projects? (d) What motivated you to decide to participate in the research project?
3. In a collaborative setting where participants share a common goal, inevitably tensions might arise due to interactions, pressure from our jobs and personal life, working style, personality and interpersonal tensions, conflict of schedules, limitation or capability of technology to connect with each other, etc. (a) What kinds of tensions (if any) have you experienced in the community? (b) How do you negotiate and respond to these tensions? (c) What is your perception on how other members respond or react to tensions?
4. In terms of leadership roles in research projects, please identify different leadership roles you had and describe how tensions might impact your role. Leadership roles such as: Main leader: responsible to ensure project is successfully submitted; Supporting roles: assigned with components of the project and providing support for the team; 1st author, second author, third author—other

Likert-Scale Questions

Rate the following statement from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The "community" refers to the C-Y-F community as a whole as well as your experiences with some subgroups. Feel free to add comments after each statement.

1. The community supports individual member's decision to participate or not in different projects based on the member's interest, goals, status, etc.
2. The community pressures individual member's decision to participate in different projects based on the member's interest, goals, status, etc.
3. The community has created opportunities or space for open dialog within and with outside perspectives.
4. The community has created opportunities for dialogue to develop collective understandings and solutions when there is tension.
5. The community welcomes and allows different levels of participations for members.
6. The community has created opportunities for participants to explicitly discuss the value and productivity of their participation in the group.

7. The structure of the community (pace of activities and media through which members communicate with others) is effective to maintain members' engagement of the community.
8. I have a strong sense of belonging to the community.

Appendix B

2015 (Y2) Survey Questions

Open-Ended Questions

1. Have you experienced any conflicts in your C-Y-F interactions? If so, how did you deal with those conflicts?
2. Have you had any "negative" experiences or felt a sense of marginalization in any of your dealings with C-Y-F members or events? How did you deal with it?
3. Have you ever decided to step away, abstain, or limit your participation from a C-Y-F event or project? Please share the reason for not participating in an event.

Likert Scale Questions

Rate the following statement. The "community" refers to the C-Y-F community as a whole as well as your experiences with some subgroups. Feel free to add comments after each statement.

1. In regard to my participation, I feel connected to the C-Y-F community.

   never
   occasionally
   most of the time
   always

2. I feel that I have the same amount of power as any other member of the C-Y-F community.

   never
   occasionally
   most of the time
   always

3. Within the C-Y-F community, I feel I have the opportunity to communicate and discuss tensions, disagreements, or diverse ideas to develop collective understandings and solutions.

   never
   occasionally
   most of the time
   always

4. I have a strong sense of belonging to the C-Y-F community

   never
   occasionally
   most of the time
   always

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Part III
Ethnic and Sociocultural Issues and Faculty Responses

Mentoring for Faculty Engagement from a Socially and Culturally Situated Perspective

Jose W. Lalas

Abstract Faculty Mentoring facilitates success and can also be rewarding for both the mentor and the mentee as they engage in scholarly activities. Mentoring is a lifelong process, because as faculty interacts in various activities, they have the opportunity to work across different fields with others from diverse ethnicities, and in different contexts. This involves understanding of one's identity, examination of the effects of inequitable treatment on traditionally marginalized people, and deep understanding of how a person's unique worldview can enrich the exploration of academic and social endeavors. Mentoring for faculty engagement and successful career development carried out from a socially and culturally situated perspective becomes a transformative tool for a successful career development and social change.

Keywords Mentoring · Social capital · Critical race theory · Transformative mentoring

Mentoring has been perceived as a mechanism for facilitating the success of a person, colleague, or co-worker at a particular workplace. It has been found in several studies that mentoring works well at institutions of higher education where its mode of implementation is collaborative, respectful, and transformative (Borders et al. 2011). Some researchers have described mentoring as a formal or informal process (Mullen and Hutinger 2008) and many have used Kram's (1985) delineation of career mentoring and psychosocial mentoring as domains. While career mentoring refers to functions that help career advancement such as coaching, working on collaborative projects, advising on effective teaching, inviting as co-author or co-presenter at conferences, psychosocial mentoring involves assisting junior or underrepresented minority faculty members with the cultural practice in the particular setting. It also requires helping faculty make personal adjustments

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related to ways of interacting with members of the university community. This can be accomplished through collegiality, role modeling, and by presenting opportunities for positive interactions with other faculty and staff in informal social situations. No matter what the academic and social functions and contexts are, mentoring is important for all university faculty to succeed, and especially for traditionally underrepresented minority faculty (Zambrana et al. 2015).

In a study conducted by Cowin et al. (2012) on mentor-junior faculty relationships, they defined mentoring as a:

> …collaborative process whereby one's development is assisted by a more experienced other, an expert in the area, who works with a learning partner for extended hours and over a long period, on the skills, perspectives, approaches, and techniques that are required for success. It is a relationship involving multiple dimensions of the teaching/learning process, including the affective, cognitive, and cultural domains…It requires the development of trust and negotiation to work through past power issues and develop a relationship that is mutual and synergistic (p. 38).

In my experience as a university professor for over 25 years, I have concluded that mentoring, as a collaborative process of guiding a fellow faculty or a graduate student, and as a creative process of developing one's knowledge, skills, and abilities, is a protracted process of building trusting relationship with a less experienced colleague. It is also influenced by racialized social relations and discrimination or acceptance of other cultures. The term "Racialized" is used here to denote and recognize the infusion of race, consciously or unconsciously in social interactions, networking, and in building authority and trust relations during a faculty career. Mentoring, to a large extent, involves the use of "social capital," a social phenomenon that triggers individual interactions, personal relations, and network of relations that creates or establishes trusts, expectations, information sources, and norms between and among individuals (Coleman 1990). It could be that mentoring via the influence of social capital facilitates the mentee's achievement of personal career goals that potentially could not be achieved in the absence of a supportive mentor. Putnam (2000) views social capital as the "universal lubricant of social relations" that is facilitated through bridging and bonding.

I believe that mentoring could also be facilitated by what Bourdieu called "cultural capital," a kind of capital that covers a variety of resources including an individual's embodied disposition and habits of the mind, objectified cultural awareness and knowledge, and institutionalized educational credentials (Swartz 1997). The concept of cultural capital emerged from Bourdieu's research in explaining dispositions, class differences, power, and inequality in the society or social field (Grenfell 2008). Bourdieu defined this concept as "knowledge, skills, education, experiences, and/or connections one has had through the course of life" (Howard 2010, p. 55). Winkle-Wagner (2010) elucidated that cultural capital may be attained through family legacy and education.

This book chapter is an attempt to explain and frame mentoring from a socially and culturally situated perspective or the use and application of social capital and cultural capital. Definitely, the role of race as part of one's social and cultural capital,

as I view it, influences the manner by which a mentee is viewed by his or her mentor. Although a very difficult issue to bring about as a determining factor for the success of a mentee, there has been numerous collections of research, commentaries, and shared lived experiences that convey the message that "race matters" (Leonardo and Grubb 2014; Trepagnier 2010; Ladson-Billings 2004). Culture, defined broadly, includes a myriad of factors that situate the mentor-mentee interaction and relationship. Applying Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital (Grenfell 2008; Swartz 1997) and Coleman's social capital (1990), it becomes obvious that the more cultural capital and social capital the mentor and mentee share, the better their interpersonal interaction and professional relationship. Thus, this book chapter employs critical race theory and the notions of social and cultural capital in discussing the dynamic roles of race and culture in mentoring. It is through a socially and culturally situated perspective that faculty career and psychosocial mentoring can be effective and foster a socially- and educationally-just learning environment for all.

1 Racialized Social Capital: Using Critical Race Theory in Viewing Mentoring

Although colleges and universities aim and attempt to increase diversity as one of their major institutional goals, all practically face the challenge of retention and promotion of underrepresented minority faculty. While efforts in many institutions have been made to retain minority faculty through mentoring by senior faculty in teaching, forming writing teams for scholarship, and committee assignments for service, more efforts must be made to understand and remedy the problem of minority retention and promotion. Although there is discomfort in bringing up the issue of race in the mix of explanatory influences, critical race theory (CRT) may be helpful as a framework for examining issues involving race, racism, culture, and achievement (Leonardo and Grubb 2014; Howard 2010; Ladson-Billings 2004; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995).

CRT evolved from the advocacy and theoretical work of critical legal theorists such as Derrick Bell, Kimberly Crenshaw, Cheryl Harris, Richard Delgado, and many others (Delgado and Stefancic 2001) and was later applied as an analytical lens in the field of education by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), Howard (2008), and Solorzano et al. (2001). CRT is used to understand the role of race in the broader context of society and its dynamic impact on human interaction, in general, including the way a person views another person or how one university colleague, consciously or unconsciously, marginalizes or idolizes another colleague, in particular. In my review of literature on CRT, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and several other CRT theorists identified several principles of CRT in education such as the existing major roles played by race and racism in American society, the problems caused by the misconceived view of neutrality, objectivity and color-blindness, focus and commitment to social justice, the importance of experiential knowledge, and whiteness as a property and privilege (Harris 1993).

CRT starts with the premise that race and racism are fundamentally inherent issues that influence how U.S. society and its inhabitants function and view the world (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). As a critical set of theoretical lenses, CRT challenges white privilege and refutes claims of meritocracy, colorblindness, objectivity, neutrality, and equal opportunity, which promote the majority point of view to the detriment of the minority population of color. Through CRT, the injurious effects of "color-blindedness" and other forms of marginalization were revealed and examined.

In a classic article "Whiteness as Property," legal scholar Harris (1993) traced and examined how "whiteness" was constructed as a form of racial identity and evolved into forms of property and property right as historically portrayed and acknowledged in the systematic dominations of Black and Native American people. She wrote that following the period of Black slavery and Native American conquest, "white identity became the basis of racialized privilege that was ratified and legitimated in law as a type of status property" (p. 1714). She explained that even after the abolition of slavery and the period of colonization of the New World, "whiteness was the predicate for attaining a host of societal privileges, in both public and private spheres. Whiteness determined whether one could vote, travel freely, attend schools, obtain work, and indeed, defined the structure of social relations…Whiteness then became status, a form of racialized privilege ratified in law" (pp. 1745–1746). CRT views whiteness as property which entitles the dominant cultural group the right of disposition, greater economic and social privileges, better reputation, and right to exclude others (Kincheloe et al. 1998; Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995).

Moody (2004) in her book, Faculty Diversity: Problems and Solutions, presents the challenges faced by faculty of color on majority campuses. The problems encountered range from being presumed incompetent to enduring the psychological stresses of not belonging or being an outsider; from being treated as invisible whose opinions are ignored to unfair evaluation of their worthiness and their work; and from vulnerability to "raising the bar" syndrome to little or lack of mentoring inside information and connections to valuable networks. These identified problems if not recognized would reinforce the stereotype that merit and ability of members of the majority group significantly contribute to their rapid advancement; whereas the deficiencies of underrepresented minority faculty significantly hamper their academic progress or contribute to their slow advancement.

CRT could clarify the role of race and racism in the interaction and the ways in which members of the minority faculty are usually disadvantaged at the same time that the majority faculty members are usually privileged. For a constructive mentoring to occur, both the mentor and the mentee must rise above racial and ethnic stereotypes and understand the cumulative disadvantages on the part of the underrepresented minority faculty members for being viewed and marginalized as outsiders, incompetent, not fully qualified, culturally deprived, and not belonging in the academe. CRT could demonstrate that while there is prevalent assumption that "whiteness" is a type of status or property that provide the majority faculty the social privilege, better reputation, and the right to exclude others, a mentor must

make it clear to any reluctant mentee that self-promotion of one's work and intellectual competency is essential in academia.

While on the surface, it may sound "selling" the mentee's capabilities, in reality it means making sure that mentors are assisting their mentees (faculty of color) to be assertive in presenting their work at professional conferences, informal faculty research events, school district workshops, university symposia, and other academic opportunities.

The study by Zafar et al. (2012) on mentoring perceptions and experiences of culturally diverse tenure-accruing faculty revealed how mentoring impacted the transition and performance of minority faculty to becoming a successful faculty member. International faculty members from South Korea, India, Columbia, Brazil, Spain, and Guatemala expressed the need for varied support "to fulfill their social, legal, economic, and institutional requirements" (p. 65). Another study on the importance of mentoring for underrepresented minority faculty by Zambrana et al. (2015) identified several barriers to effective mentoring that included benign neglect, feeling uninformed, and unsupported, experiencing a patchwork of mentors, and perceptions of limited understanding and limited acceptance of their research agenda. Underrepresented minority faculty revealed during in-depth interviews these barriers, which stemmed primarily from the lack of racial awareness and sensitivity of mentors working with minority faculty. There were ideas expressed by minority faculty research participants that it was common occurrence for mentors to make their research palatable to White audiences and dismiss research interests that focus on addressing social inequality. Participants also expressed a feeling of intellectual isolation and self-doubt as mentors demonstrated paternalism in working with them; paternalism shown as a form of racism, with mentors projecting unconscious view of minority faculty "as inherently inferior or unable to fit within the values and ideals of the academy" (p. 56).

It is important that mentors and mentees are aware of the reality of race and racism as inherent phenomena in the U.S. society and more importantly, how they are manifested in human interaction and our ability to forge connections and collaboration for career advancement and identity development as members of a community of professionals and scholars.

2 Consideration of Social and Cultural Capital in Mentoring

The relevant theoretical notions of social and cultural capital are taken primarily from the work of Coleman (1990) and Bourdieu (1983). Social capital refers to the network of relationships, friendships, and social connections that provide advantageous opportunities or resources available for individuals who are members of the

group (Putnam 2000). It provides individuals with access to resources by way of whom they already know, in a particular setting or by their familiarity with the context by which events, activities, or human interactions happen. It is a set of networks of social relations, personal or professional connections, and accessible resources that provide the social and academic support for someone to be able to navigate through any kind of system or career challenges.

According to Coleman (1990), social capital is vested in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. Once social relations begin, the person or persons involved in the relationship may become obligated to reciprocate favors between them or among them, share sources of information, and maintain norms and sanctions to make social capital effective, functional, and dynamic. Coleman (1990) warned that, "…social capital depreciates if it is not renewed. Social relationship die out if not maintained; expectations and obligations wither over time; and norms depend on regular communication" (p. 321). In the case of mentors working with minority mentees, both must be cognizant of the racialized social capital that they have to maintain in order to keep the mentor-mentee relations effectively going by attempting to understand each other's worldview, exerting efforts to trust each other, and making relations stable through transparent obligations and expectations.

Applied to effective faculty mentoring, it is apparent that social capital could influence faculty engagement given the trustworthy networks of human relations that it implies. For all faculty members, but especially for underrepresented minority faculty, it is imperative that they experience the necessary feeling of belongingness in a particular learning environment as a comfortable place with friendly and supportive colleagues. Conceivably, social capital as a possessed human advantage could foster positive interaction with others and promote positive social and affective growth that could pave the way for increased faculty achievement. At a university or any other professional context, all personnel involved must make sure that all faculty and other colleagues members, especially underrepresented minority faculty, develop their social capital which could translate to positive and caring collegial relationship (Zambrana et al. 2015), sense of belongingness to the community of scholars (Moody 2004), and a feeling of being cared-for to increase their participation and positive self-identity in a setting that attempts to establish integrated pluralism (Bennett 2004).

Like social capital, cultural capital, as formulated by Bourdieu (1983), is an important consideration in faculty mentoring. It is what an individual brings in any human events, social processes, and interactions. It could be construed as a person's background knowledge, possessed set of disposition, and perspectives in any given social contexts. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital exists in three forms: (1) in the form of objectified possession of cultural goods such as certain material things and kinds of art creation, literary work, or paintings; (2) in the form of embodied dispositions, norms, traditions, habits of mind and body, and understanding of culture that are incorporated into one's everyday life; and (3) in the form of institutionalized norms, traditions, or attainments within establishments such as college degrees and certificates (Grenfell 2008; Swartz 1997). These three forms of

capital may operate simultaneously as in families with high socioeconomic status that have members who have attended universities or attained graduate degrees. They have the objectified financial resources and the embodied knowledge and experience needed to guide and assist their children achieve the institutionalized college diplomas or career certificates. They allocate time and energy to accomplish these goals and are willing and able to assist their children in the means necessary to gain college entrance or business connections for financial opportunities and career advancements.

In a more practical comprehensible sense then, cultural capital refers to common practices and/or resources possessed by individuals that may put them at an advantage over others. Examples of culturally-based resources, materials or practices include understanding the university tradition and philosophy of teaching, cultural awareness of the regional origins of the colleagues and staff in the learning community, knowledge about educational and university academic practices, going to art exhibits and shows, educational credentials and recognitions, academic qualifications or degrees, access to computers and other resources, and aesthetic preferences such as taste of music, art, food, and other creative forms.

Cultural capital can be acquired through social origin by way of one's family or through education or schooling and could be identified easily as one's set of doing things or disposition accumulated from childhood, or as a possessed set of skills, works of art, and scientific instruments that require specialized cultural knowledge and abilities to use (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). Applied to faculty mentoring, mentors and mentees must make sure that both recognize each other's cultural capital or practices and act correspondingly with respect regardless of socioeconomic, immigration, religious, academic, or political status.

Several responses by underrepresented minority faculty from the study conducted by Zambrana et al. (2015) revealed that an effective political guidance from their mentors' "privileges the transmission of social capital in the form of knowledge about institutional norms and the role of race and power relations in higher education institutions without assimilation" (p. 60), and at the same time "protecting their autonomous pursuit of research ideas, scholarship, professional values/priorities, and goals for broader social change" (p. 60). Their study also implied that effective mentoring of minority faculty helps them understand the, often times, opaque culture of academic institutions related to the "informal rules, norms, and values that are part of the power exchange among actors in the academy" (p. 60). One of the research participants explained: "I think a lot of mentoring relationships don't do enough to explain all of those invisible things that make success possible." Another even commented about the cultural match between the mentor and the mentee that "…my realization that I had someone who was a Latina like me and a mentor and a good scholar was just something that was just very unique and rare. And I think that has made a world of difference…" (p. 61).

3 Faculty Engagement Through Mentoring

It follows then that in order to elicit active engagement of all faculty members including the underrepresented minority faculty, it is imperative to recognize and activate the faculty's social and cultural capital that comprised his or her personal identity. There have been studies among adolescents on the positive impact of identity development on classroom engagement and disengagement (Cooper 2014; Erikson 1968). In an insightful study of engagement, Cooper (2014) operationalized the concept of engagement as a process that may be driven by connection to a person's identity, praise and appreciation, sense of belongingness, special caring relationship among peers, opportunities for meaningful interaction, and the appropriate match between cultural practices. Applied in the process of mentoring faculty including underrepresented minority faculty, it is implied that faculty engagement could be fostered by nurturing the mentee's racialized social and cultural identities and taking place in a dynamic, creative, and collaborative guidance by an experienced caring mentor. Subsequently, all beginning faculty, especially the underrepresented minority faculty, need an understanding of the roles, obligations, and expectations of each faculty's (both the mentor and the mentee) social and cultural capital identities and how mentoring could help in building them for career advancement and active faculty engagement. The engaging element of collaborative mentoring with emphasis on the mentee's identity development honors and acknowledges the underrepresented faculty mentees as developing professionals with talents, research interests, perspectives, experiences, and unique characteristics and personalities. Moody (2004) suggested that "mentors should be prepared to offer more encouragement and ego boosting" to minority mentees than "ordinarily offer, in a routine manner, to others" (p. 133). To help with productivity, mentors must encourage and the mentee must initiate joint writing projects, conference presentations, and career-advancement discussions. The mentors and the underrepresented or new faculty mentees, in tandem, should include in their conversations issues related to retention, tenure, and promotion. Both the mentor and the mentee should also include the discussion about balancing work and life outside work including life satisfaction and social capital (Pugno and Verme 2012).

4 A Brief Revisit of Bourdieu's Concepts: Related to Mentoring and Engagement

A brief exploration of Bourdieu's ideas of habitus, field, and capital and their interactions will help to gain a better understanding of how the notions of social and cultural capital may contribute not only to the development of positive identity but also to the understanding of the continuing perpetuation of inequalities found in education (Grenfell 2008) including the engagement or disengagement of faculty and other professionals.

Bourdieu postulated *habitus* as a person's set of lasting, transposable dispositions that developed as a product of socialization since birth. *Habitus* shapes a person's individual actions, aspirations, expectations, attitudes, and perceptions consistent with the social, political, economic, historical, and cultural conditions under which it was produced (Swartz 1997). However, *habitus* can also "adjusts aspirations and expectations according to the objective probabilities for success or failure common to the members of the same class for a particular behavior" (Swartz 1997, p. 105).

Habitus provides individuals the dispositions to react and adjust to varied social situations or "*fields*" which comprise a network of social contexts where people occupy certain dominant and subordinate positions based on types and amounts of social, cultural, and economic capital. Field refers to the space where particular norms, dispositions, or capital exist and may be recognized to be more valuable than other forms of dispositions, norms, or capital. When field changes, what is recognized as valued also changes. Dominant and subordinate positions in a particular *field* are also established by a person's accumulation and monopoly of "production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge, or status" (Swartz 1997, p. 117). An individual *habitus* adapts to the needs of a particular *field* or social, political, economic, cultural, historical, and other contexts. The development of an individual's social and cultural capital is directly related to one's habitus or disposition of using them as influencing factors for career advancement, motivation, and engagement. Applied to mentoring, it is imperative to understand the concept of "field" as it pertains to the social and cultural conditions and contexts by which the mentor and the mentee carry out the career and psychosocial mentoring processes. The mentoring issues that the mentor and mentee have to cover are dictated by the social, cultural, political, economic, and historical contexts (fields) that characterize the institutions of higher education where the mentor and the mentee carry out their professional duties and responsibilities.

In a study on enhancing engagement, Turner et al. (2014) found belongingness, competence, autonomy, and meaningfulness as helpful constructs in explaining why students engage or disengage in school tasks. They found that teachers who employed motivation by providing opportunities for students to experience belongingness in the classroom, competence in performing and organizing a particular task, autonomy in pursuing their individual interests and beliefs, and meaningful learning, had students who were more engaged. In short, the more the teacher motivates his or her students, the greater the degree of student engagement. Borrowing these constructs, it could be inferred that faculty engagement may be improved with mentoring that focus on the minority faculty's sense of belongingness, autonomy in pursuing their interest and community advocacy, and meaningful interactions and experiences that recognize and highlight their intellectual competence. Similarly, the work of Cooper (2014) on eliciting engagement in the classroom emphasizes the centrality of the emotional and meaningful

connections of the teacher, the content, and the instruction to the learner's personal background, identity, and experiences which relate to the notions of social (Putnam 2000; Coleman 1990) and cultural capital (Grenfell 2008; Swartz 1997; Bourdieu 1983) as applied to describing and identifying the learner including his or her race and social class. Borrowing Cooper's theoretical framework of engagement and applying it to mentoring, the more the mentor establishes connection to the personal identity, background, cultural practice, and psychosocial well-being of the mentee, the more prepared, intentional, determined, and engaged the mentee is going to be for career advancement and tenure.

5 Social Justice: Mentoring Beyond Career and Social and Cultural Capital Enrichment

In conclusion, as a collaborative process of working with a fellow faculty, as a creative process of assisting a junior colleague advance his/her career, and as an engaged process of building a less experienced colleague's social and cultural knowledge of how the university's tenure and promotion work, mentoring goes beyond guiding one's career advancement and nurturing one's identity development. It could also provide the opportunity to raise the mentor's and the mentee's level of understanding about the issues of race, racism, and diversity in the classroom. Specifically, they can engage in courageous conversations about enduring social inequalities, privilege, color-blind racism, and gender-blind sexism in the classroom (Stoll 2013). While social capital and cultural capital are key engaging elements, both the mentor and the mentee should also study, discuss, and share information on issues related to curriculum and racism, culturally relevant education and racism, school funding and racism, as well as high-stakes testing and racism (Leonardo and Grubb 2014). By having the mentor and the mentee cover the issues of race, social and cultural capital, and factors that influence faculty engagement such as sense of belongingness, identity, respect for one's competence and independence, and meaningful experiences, mentoring also becomes a vehicle for social justice as it creates a space for conversation and advocacy for equity, democracy, criticality, equality, and ethic of care (Marshall and Oliva 2010).

As a way of advancing social justice mindset for both the mentor and the mentee, engagement in mentoring becomes a lifelong process that involves understanding one's identity, examining how inequality affects opportunities of different people, exploring experiences and how those inform a person's unique worldviews, perspectives, and opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al. 2002). In a democratic, vibrant, and diverse society of United States, mentoring for faculty engagement and successful career development carried out from a socially and culturally situated perspective becomes a transformative tool for social change.

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Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Alliance (MGSA): Crafting a Diverse Peer Mentoring Network Within and Beyond a Predominantly White Institution (PWI)

Wilfredo Alvarez, Patrick S. De Walt, Maria Genao-Homs and Julie Yun

Abstract This chapter engages the formation of an interdisciplinary peer-mentoring group that empowered graduate students of color to navigate varied and complex challenges within a predominantly white institution (PWI) in the Rocky Mountain Region. In doing this work, both intended and unintended barriers were exposed and navigated. The chapter describes the journeys of three students and their advisor, who are from diverse backgrounds. Their journeys are followed from the formation of the group through their matriculation and subsequent steps in their respective professional careers. The auto-ethnographic techniques, derived from self-study, involved an application of those utilized by CURVE-Y-FRiENDs (C-Y-F) global network. The challenges identified based on C-Y-F were: (1) intellectual identities, (2) cultural/racial/ethnic/linguistic identities, (3) pursuit of professional careers, and (4) personal/professional relationships. In our work, we identify our journeys' salient outcomes and provide practical recommendations for various university stakeholders.

Keywords Mentoring network · Peer support · Graduate students of color · Co-mentoring · PWI · C-Y-F

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Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Alliance (MGSA): Crafting a Diverse Peer-Mentoring Network within and Beyond a Predominantly White Institution (PWI).

This chapter takes an unorthodox approach to engaging the CURVE-Y-FRiENDS (C-Y-F) a network, "…made up of female academics who are connected in some way (through work or personal friendships) to individual members of CURVE or FRiENDS" (Bristol, Adams, & Johannessen, 2014, p. 397). In this chapter, we apply the concepts of C-Y-F as both a method and a framework for sharing our stories as we navigated the ivory tower's academic, professional, and social landscapes through the formation of our student group, the Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Alliance (MGSA).

MGSA was a multidisciplinary student peer-mentoring group that spanned different disciplines such as education, journalism, communication, sociology, and ethnic studies. It served not only its members but also engaged, through its membership, active supportive roles with university staff, faculty, and undergraduate students. In line with the principles found in C-Y-F; while simultaneously acknowledging our differences, (we included both women and men and occurred independently from C-Y-F, we see this current chapter as our initial contribution and recognition as a representation of the "*Y*" in C-Y-F principles. We share our stories to illustrate the need for these types of networks as supportive vehicles for scholars' success in the academy. The goals of MGSA were aligned with the goals and purposes of C-Y-F and this is further illustrated through our contribution to this edited volume.

Furthermore, Bristol et al. (2014) state, "C-Y-F is first an example of a complex, developmental mentoring arrangement that goes beyond peer mentoring through its project-based orientation. Its work is geared toward professional and personal support mediated through the completion of writing and tasks" (p. 401). In many aspects, this manuscript is an iteration of this purpose for members of MGSA. We also acknowledge in our work that in the midst of studying and/or working at Tier One Research Universities, in such contexts our identities were routinely limited or rendered invisible.

In the spirit of hooks (1989), Anzaldúa (1987), and others, we seek to offer our stories from the margins and borderlands in an effort to situate them in the center. We recognize our duality in terms of our existence within the academic and public spheres through the social and cultural capital we gain and often lose. Our stories, we hope, will resonate with those who read its pages as they recall their own stories and/or prepare themselves for the journeys ahead as students, faculty, and/or administrators. Our stories are unique, yet each signifies and/or seeks to offer places of collegiality and camaraderie (Ellis and Bochner 2011).

As the curtain, or Veil, that Du Bois (1999) so eloquently illuminated over a century ago, we seek to borrow from his perspective as we attempt to take a similar approach to problematizing "the Veil" that many of us experienced while navigating institutions of higher education. In this context, we incorporated a process

that speaks to and lends itself to further creating meaningful spaces for intellectual, social, and/or personal growth for all who wish to participate within the higher education academic system.

1 Needles in the University Haystack

Students from underrepresented groups enrolled at PWIs experience many challenges. For instance, a common challenge is the search for students who look like you, a process that resembles searching for "needles in a haystack". Table 1 illustrates this situation through the graduate students headcounts based on race/ethnicity and international status. Depending on your need to socialize with others that phenotypically represent your own identity, this table suggests, in a larger picture, the isolating nature of institutions of higher learning in the US.

Our stories unfolded in a university that had an overall student enrollment of 29,461 students in the of Fall 2007, 27,203 students in the Spring 2008, 30,128 students in the Fall 2008 and 27,955 students in the Spring 2009. We emphasize this timeframe because it coincided with the formation and activities of the group. Of these listed headcounts, the authors' focus on the graduate student demographics in comparison to the overall student enrollment for each semester. We also focus on the identity labels "Black/African American" and "Hispanic/Latino/a" as these two identity labels are associated with three of the four authors during each of the four semesters discussed in this chapter. Comparing each of these identity labels for graduate students to both the overall number of graduate students and overall total number of students help to illustrate their group's

Table 1 Student demographic data MPU fall 2007–spring 2009

Semester and year	Total enrollment students				Graduate students			
	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Asian American	1753	1619	1735	1622	188	175	172	174
American Indian	241	231	240	226	53	50	53	52
Black/African American	442	408	476	442	63	64	70	65
Hispanic/Latino	1783	1631	1823	1679	226	219	212	199
International	1123	985	1221	1153	757	742	824	768
White	22,469	20,749	22,960	21,276	3037	2881	3083	2936
Unknown	1650	1580	1673	1557	317	290	322	291
Total all students	29,461	27,203	30,128	27,955	4641	4421	4736	4485

Data taken from PBA MPU 2014

presence at the university. Reflecting on these numbers also helps to contextualize certain aspects of the graduate experience for students of color and their lack of overall representation on PWIs. In many cases, we were often the only one or one of the only two in our classes and other contexts on the campus and surrounding community.

2 Method

In recognizing the function of MGSA, we situate our reflections within our experiences through C-Y-F as an important component of the overall method and framework. In particular, we draw from what Bristol et al. (2014) highlight as the following three values: *mutuality, collaboration,* and *interrogation* while recognizing *respect and temporality* as guides to and for the network. Furthermore, these five values helped us to inductively and deductively analyze the data collected through an auto-ethnographic approach. We used a series of semi-structured questions to interrogate not only our experiences within the group but also those experiences that occurred prior to the group's formation and post graduation.

Although we use C-Y-F as both method and framework, we also highlight the importance of its use within our implementation of personal narratives. Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) identify four criteria when reviewing a particular type of ethnography. These four criteria applied to a manuscript are: *Substantive contribution*; *Aesthetic merit*; *Reflexivity*; and *Impact*.

Each of these criteria, when thinking about writing personal narratives, lent themselves to our goals and purpose. In taking such an approach, as Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) suggest, "Writing stories sensitize us to the potential consequences of all of our writing by bringing home—inside our homes and workplaces—the ethics of representation" (p. 966). Notions of representation are essential to what C-Y-F works to offer scholars who are also women. Our chapter's construction is part of what C-Y-F purports, we are, in a sense, initiated into our roles as the "Y" by our active participation in furthering the discourse on why mentoring at the professional and personal levels are needed for communities who are often marginalized within the academy.

Simultaneously, each question served as an additional theme for coding the data to form what we refer to as thematic vignettes. The following questions set the *lived scripts* for this academic and personal performance as we positioned ourselves as social actors (Coffey and Atkinson 1996).

According to De Walt (2009) a lived script:

> …represents a collection of lived experiences creating an understanding of the societal role (s) of a given person by examining their educational, cultural (which is meant to specifically include such factors as gender, race, cultural identity, and sexual orientation), psychological, emotional, political social, and/or spiritual path(s) (p. 28).

Through the recognition of our narratives, we engaged the following questions:

1. Why was forming MGSA and seeking help from the Center for Multicultural Affairs (CMA) our approach to support us through graduate school?
2. What are the major themes/issues that surfaced from our personal narratives related to forming the group, main challenges faced in graduate school, and retrospective perspectives that infuse our current practices as faculty and administrators in higher education?
3. What are practical implications of those themes/issues for providing support to graduate students of color at PWIs?

To achieve our goal, we organized this chapter as follows: in the first section we share the journey that brought us to Mountain Park University, discuss salient themes/issues that surfaced during our time there, and provide some reflections where we consider lessons learned during our graduate experience as persons of color at a PWI. Second, we engage our personal narratives using C-Y-F as a conceptual framework and method; thereby, embedding our struggle within the overarching struggle that C-Y-F formed to combat. Specifically, we discuss how our personal lived scripts tie to broader social, cultural, and institutional narratives that functioned to constrain our social performances, mediated by our marginalized identities of race, ethnicity, gender, and social class. Lastly, we provide practical recommendations for organizational stakeholders, particularly higher education professionals responsible for developmental support to graduate students of color at PWIs.

3 Scene 1: Steps Toward Our Arrivals and Experiences

The following thematic vignettes offer a glimpse into the lived experiences of each author as we began our respective journeys to Mountain Park University (MPU). The following names are representative members of MGSA: Patrick S. De Walt, Wilfredo Alvarez, and Maria Genao-Homs. Julie Yun served as the group's advisor. While other members' names and stories are not explicitly captured here, through our collective narrative, we hope to illuminate elements of their stories through the telling of our own. In each narrative, certain aspects of who we are and what we wanted to accomplish are highlighted. Some of the challenges that occurred are also described, as we perceived them upon our arrival to both the state and university.

3.1 What Is Your Cultural Background? How Did the Institution Speak It?

Patrick. Prior to moving to Mountain Park and having these types of experiences, I was just finishing my fourth year of teaching at an inner city elementary school in

Houston, Texas. So much of who I was entering into my doctoral program was the result of the growth and experiences I had during those four years. Working at my school was one of the most memorable, challenging, and impactful experiences I had ever had. At this school, a community comprised of educators and a Principal fostered my personal and professional growth. Being that I grew up in the neighboring community, I was fortunate enough to teach the children of some of my own classmates from either High School or Middle School. I learned quickly the importance and impact that being a male educator of color played within the community. To this day, I carry with me the memories that I have of functioning in so many different roles for the sake of my students and their families. I am so honored when I still hear some of the things that my former students are now doing. At my school, we were a community in so many ways and as I prepared to leave I had so many reservations and doubts in my mind. How could I leave what had been the catalyst for so many aspects of my life to that point?

Even more intimate aspects of my background both culturally and educationally were centered on a two-parent household. Yet, neither of my parents went to college. My mother graduated from night school and my father did not go beyond the eighth grade. While each grew up in a different era within US history that helped to shape why their paths went the way that they did, I am thankful for their support of me furthering my education.

While we may talk about culture, I will start by stating the racial components of my family, we have at various points in my lifetime been identified as "Negro," "Black," or African American. With each transition of identity labeling, there resides a rich contextual history and legacy that continues to drive me even as I self-identify as a "Person of African Descent". Furthermore, when speaking of this identity, the context of the South, in particular, Texas, these identities carry their own set of symbolic memories. My family's memories include the plantation in which our family name was derived. While I have yet to process that knowledge, I know that my revisiting that space will be important to me in terms how I situate myself within the communities that I inhabit.

This level of understanding was constructed through my own process of *nigrescence-the process of becoming Black* (Cross 1971, 1991; Cross and Vandiver 2001). It was not until my entry into MPU did I ever so clearly see my complexity as a result of notions of race and culture. My introduction to Mountain Park included essentially being racially profiled by local police and racially stereotyped by fellow students and school faculty. These stimuli along with being exposed to a vast array of literature through the exposure to university departments such as Anthropology and Ethnic Studies helped me to develop a lens for seeing, engaging, and surviving my new world. How far did my focus stray from my students from the neighborhood elementary school? How significantly did the person I knew over those four years transform as a result of his educational experiences?

Wilfredo. I come from an Afro-Spanish-Indigenous nation in the Caribbean. I was born and raised in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (DR). Most people in the Dominican Republic are characterized as "mestizo." That is, a mixture of various peoples and cultures. Our culture is expressive, folkloric, direct, rich in

traditions of music, food, dance, and a key part of the early history of the Americas. This history shapes our national identity and how others perceive us.

According to United Nations statistics, DR has one of the lowest numbers regarding education, health care, infrastructure, and overall economy in the American continent and the world. We are a poor and illiterate nation that has a bloody racial past primarily fueled by conflict between France and Spain and continued in modern times by Haiti and the Dominican Republic (DR). We share the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. Our two nations have had a conflict-ridden history and this dynamic also shapes our cultures. Haiti is a nation made up mostly of people of African descent who were French colonized. The Spaniards colonized the DR. As a result, many Dominicans view themselves as descending from Spain and thus primarily having a European ancestry. This collective identity has placed Haitians as the "other" in the white supremacist influenced social imagination of many Dominicans. It is in this cultural milieu where I spent my formative years and thus it is the place that provided my early socialization. After the DR, I relocated to NYC where I attended High School and lived until I moved to Western New York to attend college. Today, through understanding the DR, I came to understand my new home nation, the United States, and myself.

Juxtaposed to such a background, Mountain Park and MPU were very different and spoke little if nothing at all to my previous lived experiences. Mountain Park is a predominantly European American city nestled in the mountains of a conservative state. Although the city is labeled as "liberal" it is only so in the context of the state in which it exists. Having moved there from New York City, my notion of "liberal" was vastly different. I perceive those stark ideological differences as some of the reasons why I experienced constant clashes in my everyday interactions with people. Mundane exchanges, such as greetings or discussing safe topics like the weather, often became awkward, borderline hostile, with people in the town and at the university. For example, what I would perceive as humorous often seemed offensive or just plain odd to the locals. This type of interaction happened regularly in interpersonal encounters. I have reflected on my time in Mountain Park and retrospectively it feels as if few interactions with whites were positive.

Maria. I come from an Afro-Spanish-Indigenous nation in the Caribbean, known as the Dominican Republic, an island considered a colony of the United States, Puerto Rico. Most people in the Dominican Republic are characterized as "mestizo." That is, a mixture of people from various ethnic backgrounds. Most people on the island of Puerto Rico are also characterized as "mestizo" with some of the inhabitants experiencing an identity crisis due to the island's colonization by the United States. The culture of both islands is expressive, folkloric, direct, rich in traditions of music, food, dance, and a key part of the early history of the Americas. This history shapes our national identity and how others perceive us.

However, my upbringing was not all in my country of origin. Specifically, I was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and raised in Puerto Rico until my ninth birthday. My family's relocation to the US mainland moved us through several regions in the United States. All, except one of which my family was the sole minority. Since that move, I lived in four states as a child and an additional

three states as an adult. Florida is the state that I call my "home." It is there that I finished high school and where most of my immediate family currently resides.

During my upbringing, my parents made a concerted effort to keep our cultural traditions, norms and identity intact. Once we had a grasp of the English language, they resorted to only speaking Spanish in the home. These experiences have allowed me the opportunity to be socialized in the "American way." They have taught me how to better navigate the racial dynamics in the United States, especially as a member of the racial minority and the gender minority. I would argue, because I have learned how to move fluidly through these boundaries, I am better able to stand my ground and advocate for the needs of others.

Julie. I was born in Seoul Korea before immigrating to the US in the early 1970s with my family. I spent my formative years in Iowa, attending Catholic Schools. My parents moved us to Mountain Park the summer following my freshman year in high school. I lived in a white middle class suburban area of Mountain Park and I graduated from a local High School in 1985. I am a first generation Korean American from a long line of educators in Korea but the first in this country to go to college so there was a lot that I had to navigate on my own. College was always a *given* but my parents could not prepare me for the process of applying for admission or the experience of attending college here in the US.

I had always been a good student but I have to say that the first year in college for me was challenging. I did not have the preparation to help me anticipate and negotiate things such as the relative absence of structure, the need to pace myself, creating a schedule that worked as opposed to trying to cram in all hard science classes into a semester and expecting to excel at everything. But the thing that I lacked the most was a sense of direction and connection because I did not see myself reflected at MPU. I was very fortunate in that I stumbled across a social psychology course during my sophomore year of college. In taking that course, I found a mentor and guide who helped me get through my undergraduate and graduate education. This is one of the reasons why I have been such a passionate advocate of support especially for first generation and international graduate students.

3.2 What Are Your Educational Background and Career Experiences Prior to Coming to MPU?

Patrick. Prior to attending the university, I had just completed two masters' programs, one program was in elementary education and curriculum instruction while the other was in business administration. Prior to that I earned a bachelor's degree in Biology with the idea that I was going to medical school. While I did not fully recognize it at the time, each of these degrees and subsequent experiences would be the fuel and resources for how I would shape my dissertation thereafter. Professionally, I fully embraced being an educator by my third year of teaching.

I embraced the reality that I had to be more mindful of all the things that I did or sought to do. My own moral code was essentially enforced 24 h a day and seven days a week. If I was out I would be mindful of what I did and if someone was watching. Yet, through that process, I attribute much of its application for my heightened consciousness in other areas of my development.

Wilfredo. Prior to enrolling at MPU, I studied interpersonal communication at the undergraduate and graduate levels. I also worked as an enrollment management officer at a four-year University in New York City (NYC). I have had diverse professional experiences such as being a substitute teacher, teaching English and mathematics to eighth graders, in the NYC public education system and teaching English composition and computer skills to adult learners in Orlando, Florida. These experiences have informed my orientation toward and understanding of the education process at various levels including higher education.

Maria. My bachelor's degree is in organizational communication with a focus on media technology. My master's degree is in journalism with a focus on ethnic studies. Prior to attending MPU, I lived and worked in New York City as a television producer for companies like Sony Pictures, Burnam and Murray (home to MTV), NBC-Universal and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia.

Julie. I actually had the experience of being an undergraduate at MPU as well as an employee. I have a BA in Psychology and Sociology from MPU; an MA from Boston University in Applied Psychology; an MS in Family Studies from the University of Arizona; and finally a Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology from another university in the region. I came to complete my doctoral internship at MPU's Health Center's Psychiatry Clinic [now called Psychological Health and Psychiatry] and fell in love with working with college students and never left.

3.3 Why Did You Want to Pursue Your Degree/Career Path?

Patrick. I envisioned that I was leaving my first grade classroom with the hope of making a difference. That difference, for me, was in the form of my pursuit of a graduate degree in education at a tier one school. I wanted to have the credentials such as a doctorate to enhance the value of my voice and message. What I would eventually come to observe as advocacy was a driving force in what and why I wanted to pursue my degree.

Upon my arrival, I soon learned that what I sought came with a series of costs that I was unaware of before. Twenty-two doctoral students entered as a cohort. The cohort's makeup consisted of eighteen phenotypically white students along with four others. These four others represented two pairs (male and female) of persons of color. As time passed, I would come to see us, these two "exotic" pairs, as the saved animals from extinction collected aboard Noah's Ark.

Wilfredo. As seen through the eyes of a teenager, it was difficult for me to understand why I could never have a "normal" conversation with my mother. My memories of interacting with my mother are mostly about her scolding me for something that I had done. If I had to use one word to describe my relationship with my mother I would use the term "precarious." My father and I were on the opposite relational extreme. He was a dream parent, from my standpoint. Loving and affectionate, loved playing with us and was highly expressive and communicative. Sometimes I tell people that I grew up with Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde. This relational polarity acted as the impetus to further my understanding about relationships and particularly family relationships. In this search, I was seeking not only to understand my relationship with my parents but also myself. Ultimately, my pursuit of academics/degree/career is shaped by this family history.

Maria. Like most things in my life, my answer to this question will not follow a linear path. There is a statistic that I read at some point, but cannot definitely point to a source, that said most members of Generation X entering the workforce would change careers at least twice in their lifetime. I fulfilled that statistic before my 30th birthday, while pursuing a master's degree. It is not something I set out to accomplish intentionally. I simply knew I wanted to tell stories that advocate for social justice issues. In my mind, being a member of the media allowed me to share these stories on a large-scale platform. However, as I navigated through the media world and lived out a very successful career, I was not fulfilled. It was not the image that had played out in my mind. The passion was slowly dying out as I began to realize and witness the deep-seated flaws of the media industry. It was then that I actively began to search for graduate programs and eventually went on to pursue that degree full-time with every intention of going back to work in the media industry.

While working on my master's degree, I simultaneously accepted a 30-h per week graduate assistantship with the Division of Student Affairs at MPU. That hour-per-week allotment is substantially more than most graduate assistantships offer, but I pursued that level of commitment on my own. It is during that time that my flame for social justice work began to reignite, however through a different medium. This time I was seeing the impact of my actions first-hand. It was invigorating and gratifying and something I did not want to lose again. That time in my life marks the moment when a seed was planted that would eventually lead to my career switch from a television producer to a higher education administrator within the profession of student affairs. It has been almost eight years since that seed was planted; I have never looked back and consider myself immensely privileged to have enjoyed two passions in my professional life. Both passions have equipped me with the tools to make a tangible impact in the world.

Julie. I started off my career providing mental health services to children and families in mainly hospital contexts. While I loved the work, it really wasn't until I completed my doctoral internship at MPU's Health Center that I knew I had found my calling. I fell in love with working with college students. I enjoyed doing clinical work but I also solidified my sense of social justice and the role of educational opportunities in meeting the social justice mission.

I moved through several positions at MPU but always worked with the intention of providing support and helping students persist in their academic careers. College can be very high stakes for students of color so when students don't persist, it can have long term consequences for the individual, their families and their communities at large.

3.4 How Did You Come to MPU, by Yourself or with Someone? Did You Have Any Preexisting Social Networks? If so, What Were They?

Patrick. I came to the university physically alone but I made a point to bring my host of friends and family with me in all the ways that I could. This included through pictures and lots and lots of phone calls. I quickly learned how important my social networks back home really were. I was also encouraged to reach out to the fraternity I was a member of as well. That was also a major addition to my experience in Mountain Park. I met my mentor and fraternity brother along with his family through that process and he, because of his support and wisdom, helped me to stay grounded and persevere at times in which I did not see a way. There were other communities that I was able to connect with that still are very active in my life after so many years. We, in my eyes, became an extended family who genuinely cared for and about one another.

Wilfredo. I came to MPU by myself my first year and then my partner joined me when I started my second year. We did not know anyone in the area so it took some time to create community and meet people with whom we could have mutually enriching relationships. The CMA was instrumental in connecting me to other individuals who were having similar experiences to mine. Connecting with the staff at the CMA was a turning point because at the time that they reached out to me I was contemplating leaving MPU. My transition there had been so tenuous that I felt depressed and hopeless. I did not see myself staying in Mountain Park for too long much less completing my degree. Meeting and connecting with the people who would become part of the MGSA was a critical reason why I was able to stay in Mountain Park and complete my degree. These individuals helped create a sense of community that I did not have anywhere else. They satisfied two central mentoring functions: Instrumental and psychosocial. They gave me advice on academic matters when I needed them, but we also broke bread together and enjoyed social activities that fulfilled a major need during that time. As the MGSA was formed and we developed our relationships, I began to feel human again. The group provided a counter narrative to the dominant narrative that existed both in the city of Mountain Park and MPU.

Maria. I moved to MPU with a partner already waiting for me. We did not have preexisting social networks in place.

Julie. I had no existing social network when I arrived at MPU outside of a few old classmates from high school.

3.5 What Were Your Expectations upon Coming to the University? Socially? Academically? Communally? Spiritually? Etc.?

Patrick. I had a lot of expectations upon arriving to the campus. I wanted to most importantly grow, learn, and graduate with my degree. But I also wanted to create a community and/or family to help me through the process of pursuing the degree. I expected that I would be around a diverse group of people who would help me to grow in meaningful ways. I expected for the university to be the catalyst for that process to some degree. I visited the campus and surrounding cities and those visits helped to better shape my view and expectations of where I could and could not live. One element that I knew that I needed was the feel of a city. Being from Houston, I missed the feeling of a city. The only place that remotely gave me this type of feeling was living in the nearby metropolitan city to Mountain Park, yet that would turn out to be a struggle.

Wilfredo. Before I arrived at the university, I imagined that I would spend four years collaborating with peers who shared similar interests, being mentored by caring faculty, and overall having a deeply enriching and stimulating graduate experience. I expected to become part of a community where I would be appreciated, and I would grow intellectually and emotionally. Instead, I found a place where I felt devalued, unwelcomed, misunderstood, and where most of my interpersonal encounters had a subtle aura of hostility. Metaphorically, I would describe my time at MPU as being in a war zone where everyday interactions with whites represented an intense exchange of ammunition.

I perceived that I lived in a symbolic environment where many of the messages sent in my direction expressed thoughts and feelings of fear, disdain, disrespect, and sometimes plain disgust for my person. I perceived that the collective had a taken for granted orientation that I was someone who was from a different caste and thus fundamentally inferior. I noticed those dynamics in my interactions with people on campus and in the city. For me the most painful part was the taken for granted-ness of people's attitudes. Their perceptions and attitudes were part of a larger culture. It took me a while to decipher, but eventually I came to the painful conclusion that many people in the town viewed me as a creature of inferior stock. When I discuss this experience with others, I characterize it as having experienced the dark side of humanity.

I had a difficult time relating to people at MPU. However, I found solace in other graduate students of color. We shared some of the painful experiences of living in Mountain Park and attending MPU and thus we constructed relational spaces where we could be ourselves without fear of retribution. Relational challenges also infused my academic department. The mostly white faculty had little context when interacting with someone like me and this structured our relationships. I also did not finding any mentoring as there was not anyone with whom I had similar academic/research interests. I went to MPU hoping to work with an individual with

whom I could not connect and thus our work relationship was never established. The challenges of being a graduate student from a minority group (Latino) at MPU were varied and complex. This is an experience from which I will continue to learn the rest of my life.

Maria. Other than the excitement of relocating and all the implications that come with that action, I did not have many expectations upon relocating to MPU. I eagerly looked forward to finally living within close proximity of my significant other. Though we were successful at a long-distance relationship, it was not ideal. Living together was going to be an adjustment and something we were excited to attempt. We would finally be able to be of support for each other in-person on a day-to-day basis. Being a very social and inquisitive person, I looked forward to building a new community when moving to Mountain Park. I also looked forward to living a much slower paced lifestyle than the one I experienced in New York City. I was very excited about living in the western part of the United States. That is one region of the country my family's relocating adventures never afforded us. Academically, I have always loved the higher education environment. I love the classroom. I love learning, so going back to the life of a student was an exciting respite from the "adult" world. This was an opportunity that I recognized as a great privilege.

Julie. As an undergraduate, I had no idea what I was getting into. As an employee of the university, I can say that I had great colleagues but it was hard to find colleagues who reflected my experiences. Just like students, it is hard to find connection and safety when you don't find yourself reflected in your environment. It really wasn't until I moved to the Center For Multicultural Affairs (CMA) at MPU that I felt like I had found my community. The Director of CMA created a wonderful environment where the employees and the students were regarded and treated like *familia*. He created a "home" for students of all backgrounds but in particular for students of color. Many of our students came from close knit families and communities and that sense of community helped them feel safe enough to learn and excel.

4 Scene 2: Our University Experiences and the Birth of MGSA

4.1 How Was MGSA Formed?

Patrick. In a nutshell, it was a time where people were also interested in forming a group that would support us as we matriculated through our respective programs. Maria took a major role as I was preparing myself for graduation once we really got the group rolling. We really benefited and actually had an impact on the community through our relationships with other graduate students and even some undergraduate students who had an interest in graduate school down the road.

Wilfredo. The group was initially formed from the recommendation of our advisor in the CMA. She had a front row seat to our struggles as graduate students of color at a PWI. It was her vision that a graduate student co-mentoring group would serve us well as an additional support system. She understood the power and effectiveness of peer support. Our advisor connected the key players with each other and provided the institutional support necessary in terms of where to go for paperwork and the faculty and staff members that would be central to support our endeavors. Once a core group of individuals was assembled, we decided that it was time to move forward with the group's formation. We filled out the paperwork, and after waiting for the necessary steps from the office of student groups, the group officially became MGSA.

Maria. Patrick had developed a relationship with Julie when he arrived to campus. In that time, they had multiple conversations revolving around the lack of support for graduate students of color at MPU. Though there were safe spaces, micro-aggressions and other issues plagued the experiences of graduate students of color in their departments, on campus and in the city of Mountain Park on a daily basis. When Wilfredo arrived, Julie introduced him to Patrick. They began a relationship and the idea continued to take shape. When I arrived on campus, Julie shared the idea. From there we began the process to become a recognized student group. Patrick and I brought in other members. Other newly arriving graduate students joined the group.

Julie. I was the Coordinator for Graduate Student Services at MPU's CMA for 4 years from 2004 to 2008. I took the job of the Coordinator of Graduate Student Services at MPU at the request of the Director to assist in the retention efforts of graduate students of color, many of whom were first generation students. This is significant as these students often lack the guidance and support from families to persist successfully to completion of their degrees. Underrepresented graduate students on campuses such as MPU are also challenged because of the low diversity numbers in many departments. It was not unusual to encounter students reporting that they were the one and only person of color in their cohort or one of two or three. A sense of isolation and lack of support over prolonged periods of stress could make graduate school unbearable for many of our graduate students from diverse backgrounds and contributing to attrition. It was for this reason that CMA created support services for graduate students.

CMA had existed for over 30 years to support underserved populations on the MPU campus in Mountain Park. CMA worked hard to promote social justice on campus and beyond. The support services provided by CMA included mental health and multicultural counseling, advising, advocacy, resourcing, and community building. All of these components were necessary to create wrap around support to address a plethora of issues that could derail students from completing their degrees. A key aspect of the support services provided by CMA that must be articulated is that all of these services were provided in a "naturalistic" community context that made it quite unique and hard to replicate in traditional Eurocentric academic settings.

Mental Health Counseling was provided on a one on one basis but no appointments were needed, sessions were not limited in frequency or time, and a multicultural perspective was used in addressing student issues. This counselor's door was always open and students could come into access support as they needed around whatever issue was relevant for them in the moment. Common issues included stress associated to being on a predominantly white campus, isolation and not seeing themselves reflected in their environment or studies, communication issues with faculty advisors and peers, racism and fears of not completing their degrees.

Advocacy and resourcing were also services that were often provided to students on a regular basis. The university could be a large system that was hard to navigate especially for students who may be first generation or international as they would be unfamiliar with "the rules" as it pertained to successfully completing their degrees. As a result, students would often encounter issues within their programs or with the university at large. In such instances, CMA could help in advocating on behalf of students to help them navigate the system more effectively.

Advising was also a function played by the graduate coordinator because students often felt hesitant to go to their departments about issues or questions that they may have for fear of letting on that they did not know what they were doing or were supposed to be doing. A common example involved what to do if they did not pass their comprehensive/preliminary exams or if they did, how to go about starting their dissertations. It was not unusual to encounter students who reported that they did not have an academic advisor to whom they could turn for such basic advice.

Community building was a key goal of the work as a way of countering isolation and the sense of not seeing themselves reflected. Workshops and social events were created to try to build a sense of community. The creation of MGSA represented the pinnacle of this work. When I came to CMA, I realized the need for peer-to-peer support. But there are limits to what I could accomplish as it needed the commitment and participation of students to come to fruition. It needed students who would be persistent and see the same need for community as I did to get it off the ground. So I sowed a lot of seeds in the course of my work for several years and waited to see whether the idea would take root with some students. It did with Patrick De Walt. Patrick and I discussed this idea for several years waiting for the right combination of fellow students to emerge. One day I introduced Wilfredo to Patrick. They connected and then Maria came into the picture via Wilfredo. This is really the turning point for the group as the combination of these three students took an idea and made it into a reality—MGSA was formed. Maria is a natural organizer. She took the idea and organized the students and it grew from there.

4.2 What Was/Were the Most Important Thing(s) You Gained from the Group and Why?

Patrick. I think that there were two things that I gained from the group: The first was the support system that felt and still feels like an extended family. As a group,

we did things together and/or supported one another in pursuit of our degrees. For me, the group helped me with feedback for a mock prospectus defense. I could bounce off ideas with them and I was just glad that I had them around. To this day we still check on each other as we can to continue to support one another. Different members connect with one another at different levels of course, but the bond that we have created has lasted for nearly ten years and that says a lot about the group and the members.

The second thing that I wish to mention is our intellectual support that we provide one another. It was great having people who you could talk about various areas of interests whether or not they had the background or not. Today, I realize how members of the group have influenced my current endeavors. Those seeds planted then are still major factors in my current career and life. While we all have moved on from MPU, we have not moved on from each other.

At various points during my time at the university as well as upon graduating and working at two different universities in two different roles, I have found that the members of the group continued to check in and on each other. Through this process, members offered support and critical feedback in regards to the experiences occurring in our lives. Both required and created a level of trust that I have for each of them and that is extremely important to me as I continue to navigate the next steps of my life and career.

Wilfredo. Being part of MGSA provided me with the kind of supportive interactions and group climate that I desired during my initial months in Mountain Park. The group consisted of people that identified with each other's challenges connecting with others. What we learned together was the significance of community and having other humans acknowledge and engage each other beyond the thick fog of stereotypes. This proved to be an important element that helped fulfilled the psychosocial function of being in relationships with people. I learned that just studying and developing my intellect was only one aspect of my personal development at MPU.

Maria. The group brought together an amazing group of people that I am honored to call my family. They are talented, brilliant, caring individuals who have impacted the lives of many, including mine. They went to MPU to complete degrees so that they could continue to help others.

Julie. The group was amazing. Up until the formation of the group, I had been supporting a lot of students one-on-one. But hearing something from me as a counselor is not going to hold the same degree of street cred as hearing the same thing from the group. So the wisdom of the group, knowing that people were not isolated in their experiences, seeing themselves reflected in one another and drawing strength from the group were important components of what made the group work. I really saw students step up and take care of each other and that was empowering to see. The group truly created an opportunity to address many of the things that can make navigating a graduate experience difficult: sense of isolation, stress, lack of support and lack of safety.

4.3 Resource Usage: Who Helped to Get These Resources and/or Advising of Mentoring?

Patrick. As a member of MGSA, we were able to request access to various university services as a university recognized organization. Prior to acquiring that status, we were supported through our Julie and CMA. For me personally, I found that members of my social network developed outside of MGSA also helped out in various ways. Namely, the Department of Ethnic Studies was very supportive in terms of advice and actual resources. Also mentored other students and in some cases faculty. Yet, it apparent to me that university provided more of its student support and services for undergraduates as opposed to graduate students. In many ways this was a major factor in the formation of this group. Other organizations such the Student Academic Service Center and the Women's Resource Center were also very helpful.

Wilfredo. The group became a "hub" of resources regarding to whom to go for support in the eyes of many undergraduate students. Members provided informal mentoring to undergraduate students when we interacted at events and in places such as the lounge of the SOURCE office. We acted as an informal resource for undergraduate students who were struggling with the culture of MPU and students who were interested in pursuing advanced degrees. The group provided a mechanism to take advantage of MPU's resources such as rooms, money from SGA, and the attention that came with being a recognizable student group, especially because we were graduate students. We were connected to CMA, Ethnic Studies, SOURCE and other units that provided support services for students of color.

Maria. By offering financial and socio-cultural support, the Women's Resource Center (WRC) was instrumental in the success of the MSA and its members. The Director, at the time, went above and beyond as a strong advocate for our needs.

Julie. From my standpoint, the key ingredients necessary for the formation of the group were an investment of time and relational capital. There are graduate groups formed all over the country. But MGSA was not a regular graduate support group or a skills building group or even a professional development focused group. It was a community. Communities don't form overnight and the cornerstone of a community is the relationships that need to be created. So yes, it is great to have a space, have an advisor, maybe some funding to help create the context in which to form a group–but the most important ingredients are the intangibles of time and connection.

4.4 What Were Things About the Group that Could Have Been Improved and Why?

Patrick. For me, I was leaving as the group really was starting to take off. I had to focus more on my dissertation and my impending graduation. I wasn't able to

attend all the meetings like I had before and I also had a few more family deaths that really shook me. I received phone calls from my mother about the passing of my aunt while I was with one the group members. That was one of many instances where it was clear that we had become more like a family than just an organization. I think an area of concern was recruitment of new members. We did have a few new members but the group was no longer sustained the same way.

For me, the group offered me a lot but I was so far ahead in terms of my tenure in my program that I was often the elder statesperson and I often didn't want to be seen as the drive behind the organization. I also recognize as I do now that we are in different stages of our careers and lives, which impact the roles we are able and/or willing to play when new situations arise. Those are some major challenges for me as I often forget that at different times.

Wilfredo. The group needed to do more extracurricular activities together. We concerned ourselves with having meetings and setting up programs for graduate students. I think spending more time together doing leisure activities would have enhanced cohesion and built a stronger sense of group identity. Part of the reason why we formed the group was to support each other through the pressures of a graduate program. We could have been more intentional about spending time as a group going to the movies, cooking meals together, having picnics, etc. We did engage in these activities, but we could have done more of it. I believe these activities were vital in countering all the sources of stress that were in effect during graduate school.

Maria. Because students who were busy attending to their schoolwork essentially created the group, not to mention the natural cycle of students entering and exiting the University, it was hard for the group to develop a strong foundation without institutionalized support. MGSA lacked the full-time attention necessary to create stability and develop a sustainable model. The hostile campus climate and lack of support for graduate students of color at MPU was pervasive. As a current student affairs professional, it has become more evident to me that an initiative like MGSA needed the student backing to develop, however, it was the institution's responsibility to ensure the full weight of responsibility not fall on the shoulders of students. Julie, and other staff, should have been given the resources necessary to ensure the group lived on.

Julie. Because it was a graduate community, the students would get very busy. So member attendance could fluctuate at times depending on what was happening. I wondered at times how these fluctuations might impact momentum and motivation to attend. In the end, you had enough regular members showing up consistently that it kept going but it did speak to a need to continue to fold new members into the group to keep it sustainable. The group was tight knit and operated because of the passion of the students to keep it going. But when you have students leading the work, the inherent challenge is how you will deal with member transitions as graduate students graduate and launch themselves into careers. I think I was so happy that the group was off the ground that I did not help the group anticipate these transitions and succession plan as well as we could have to keep the group going after the original members moved through their programs. This group served

the purpose of helping to create a sense of connection for the initial members and really helped everyone persist and graduate but it didn't have enough of a formal structure and institutional support to persist in itself.

4.5 What Happened After Matriculation?

Patrick. The core members of the group have all, for the most part, achieved what the purpose of the group was, to earn a degree and build a bond with interdisciplinary minds or thinkers. We are still supporting one another emotionally and intellectually as well as in other facets. It varies based on each relationship but I think that adds an additional layer. Our relationships are still strong. Yet, I do wish we could spend more time together. Unfortunately, our lives do not always allow for that to occur. Yet, we have talked about having reunions of sorts or retreats so that we can reconnect. As a group we have come back together for graduations and most have been able to connect for major life events like weddings.

Wilfredo. The primary goal of the group was to form and foster community: A community of people that supported each other through the highs and lows of graduate school. This is an orientation that must continue wherever we are. We know that there are many people going through difficult times in college. It is our responsibility to help create spaces that provide support to those students. The key becomes finding allies, maximizing resources, and making ourselves available to the communities that we inhabit (e.g., as you run into a student in the hallway, "hey, come see me"). Make yourself visible through service and committee work and articulate your values in various ways (i.e., through your committee work, research, teaching). Express clearly the ideas to which you are committed. People will gravitate toward those ideas. The ones who need to gravitate toward them will do so. The work becomes the reproduction of supportive communities that help those who were once in our shoes. That is one of our primary responsibilities as people of color who possess the great privilege of calling ourselves "educated people."

5 Scene 3: Recommendations Through the Lens of C-Y-F

5.1 What Are Recommendations for Students, Faculty, and Administration?

Patrick. I believe now more than ever that it is extremely challenging for faculty who are also seeking tenure while building a "brand" to be able to work with students in ways that are mutually beneficial unless they are strategic and deliberate.

As a faculty member, we have to carve out time and make a concerted effort to be present for students to see, approach, and engage us. I realize more now than before that I didn't always and still don't do that nearly enough. I hold back often. So I think about the faculty and that sentiment remains. How willing are you to be present in the lives of your students and still be able to accomplish the other aspects of your job? That is just challenging. It is so easy just to mind your business after you have taught your lesson for the day. That does not even take into consideration the level of patience that is required by most who teach at the university level.

Wilfredo. One of the main recommendations for all stakeholders is to find ways to connect with each other beyond the classroom and academic-related events. Just like leisure is important to contemplate and develop ideas, spending time in a relaxed leisurely atmosphere such as picnics, home gatherings, dinners, etc. can offer opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to connect. The extent to which we get to know and understand each other can determine the extent to which we are to provide and receive service/mentoring/teaching to each other. I feel that the there should more intentionality around spending time together beyond academic settings.

Maria. Major reform is needed to develop supportive environments for graduate students of color. I am not sure that it is as simple as creating more groups or programs. Though helpful and constructive, from policy changes to setting clear expectations for the way faculty work and nurture their graduate students, an overhaul is critical to even begin creating a culture of care. For Administrators/Faculty: Track students through graduation. Are students entering and completing their intended degrees? Intentionally reach out to graduate students —both domestic and international. Collaborate with the Graduate School and department cohorts—both in social and hard sciences. Consider the families of these students. When families feel supported, they can then better support the student. For Students: Ask questions. Seek out administrators/faculty that can serve as safe spaces. Get involved! Coursework is challenging, but getting involved outside of your department can make a difference. Plus, you never know whom you will meet.

Julie. As a diverse society, it is vital that our educational systems factor in the importance of context in the academy. By that, I mean we do not arrive at institutions of higher learning having lived in vacuums. Many students come to college from very tight knit communities and families. For them, a sense of connection and community is vital for creating a safe environment conducive for learning and healthy living. Many graduate programs are created thinking about how to address academic deficits and creating a supportive space for students to talk about their issues. But this is different than creating a community. Creating a community takes a longer investment of time and the need to focus on things other than skills. The focus needs to be on relationship building. Relationships contribute to engagement. Engaged students are students who have a higher likelihood of persisting and completing their degrees.

6 Discussion

Using C-Y-F as a method and framework for illuminating our lived scripts was an important exercise. It illuminated how we, as a group, shared similarities in the formation of our group. In a reflective process of generating our narratives, we found that what Bristol et al. (2014) identified as components reverberated throughout our experiences. Our own personal narratives bring additional voices to the chorus that champions the efforts that resulted in the inception and ongoing work of C-Y-F. In the following section, we will highlight how both C-Y-F's values guides were both also demonstrated within MGSA.

7 C-Y-F's Three Values

Mutuality (***drawing on the strengths of each other***)—MGSA offered a platform for our different research and personal interests to be engaged. Through such things as "practice dissertation defenses" and critical conversations, members of the group were able to remain intellectually engaged in areas that may not always have been available otherwise. One special aspects of MGSA was the diverse experiences, perspectives, and expertise that each member brought with them into the group. Through our engagement with one another, we also were able to gain insights into other disciplines and frameworks that we may not have had access to within our own disciplines.

Collaboration (***purposefully exploiting the relationship to promote and enhance our professional, academic, and personal lives***)—Collaborative processes were at the core of MGSA's purpose. As a group that was multidisciplinary, depending on the task or content, different members worked in support of one another. In smaller segments, members of the group worked to generate co-presentations, social/intellectual projects, guest lectures/presenters in classes, and efforts toward blending research interests for the purpose of publication. Part of this spirit of collaboration is from what we, as members of MGSA, have seen other faculty of color experience in their pursuits of tenure.

In a similar vein, MGSA operated under criteria comparable to C-Y-F's. As members have dispersed throughout the country, the use of technology (e.g., Skype, Google Drive, Google Hangouts, and email) became essential to keep each other motivated and focused on career enhancement and advancement. As with C-Y-F, during this academic process, ideas of mutuality are embedded within the manner we based and nurtured collaborative efforts and social elements that affected our roles in these efforts.

Interrogation (***challenging assumptions and practices of mentoring in and through community***). Our experiences at MPU, through our participation within MGSA offered many existential moments. For example, the multiple ways in which PWIs forced many underrepresented group members to question themselves in intimate ways (Feagin et al. 1996). As a result, the level of interrogation of beyond

ourselves to reach each other and the roles we experienced impacted our personal identities. Aspects of our identities were challenged and/or relegated to invisibility in ways that created in us cognitive dissonance with our roles as Graduate Students and/or Graduate/Research/Teaching Assistants.

While mentoring may have been a secondary purpose and/or outcome of the group, we cannot undervalue its importance we continue to move moving forward in our respective careers. We are each other's sounding boards, we give each other honest feedback and advice (personal, professional, and familial), and inform each other, from our own cultural worldviews, to create a broader perspective on topics that we may incorporate within our professional spaces.

8 C-Y-F's Guides

Respect—Notions of respect are also another important facets of MGSA. Members were and remained as family. As Bristol et al. (2014) state, "Our relationships, though initiated and influenced by political imperatives of international academia and publications standards, were guided by *respect*" (p. 399).

Temporality—As two of the authors are Assistant Professors in tenure-track positions, there is a level fluidity that is experienced within our collective work. Even as we worked in the creation of this manuscript, we faced the challenges of our respective positions as well as the time of the academic year in which different constraints are placed on us. We also recognize that temporality can also apply to the level of commitment one can make during the fluctuating experiences that consistently occur in our academic settings.

9 Engaging the "*Y*" in C-Y-F

The themes that surfaced from our personal narratives shed light on challenges students of color face in the academy as students and/or scholars, as well as of institutions who need to support them. The major themes that emerged were: (1) the emergence of a situated new mentoring structure, (2) emphasizing psychosocial mentoring provisions, (3) institutional opportunities for flexible mentoring relationships, and (4) building individual resilience through strategic group collaboration. With these themes in mind, we compare our collective academic, emotional, and intellectual journeys with the purposes of C-Y-F. In particular, we see common ground through the application of thoughts offered by Bristol et al. (2014):

> C-Y-F is an aggregate of smaller mentoring groups; responding to individual and collective *sustainability needs* required a variety of processes for interactions,…fostered through project-based collaborations. Despite evident differences across the compositions of the smaller groups, we shared common processes of mutual respect and collaboration which nurtured and sustained purposeful contact, and which went on to be the connecting threads of collaborative practices within the larger C-Y-F network (p. 404).

While our stories have a different beginning, the commonalities that brought them together are also important. The multidisciplinary nature of our group bridged the various silos often maintained/reinforced in numerous ways by the university's culture.

Even though MGSA was envisioned as a community—not as a "network", it ultimately became an extended family. In a sense we are brothers and sisters and those who we meet as a result of our bonds become an extension of what was born via MGSA. When thinking of the C-Y-F, our extended family connections could also be viewed as the "Y". As a result of this facet of our group, in retrospect, both the purpose and function of the group essentially required a linkage to the concept of a network. As a group, MGSA worked with undergraduate students, faculty, administrators, and other community members in a variety of capacities. In each of the collective and individual roles, members were being prepared for the next stages of their professional careers in which members would continue to connect with and respond to one another.

The experiences captured in this chapter were meant to articulate how MGSA, as a result of its formation and culture, embodied the "Y" that is described by Bristol et al. (2014). More importantly, by means of plotting our paths, we hope to better identify how we see ourselves as community members through our own journeys although we were not members of either CURVE nor FRiENDS as well as not being solely comprised of women.

Emergence of a situated new mentoring structure. MGSA proved to be a "purpose-built community of practice" (Bristol et al. 2014, p. 400) in that several graduate students from various academic disciplines came together and collaborated to craft and maintain a well-functioning goal-driven social collective.

Emphasizing psychosocial mentoring provisions. Psychosocial support, which is different from career/instrumental support, underlines the individual's personal situation and the role that mentoring plays in improving it. MGSA group members supported each other by also attending to each others' personal needs.

Institutional opportunities for flexible mentoring structures. In addition to facilitating traditional mentoring, university policies need to include, as part of the formal rules in educational organizations (Ewing et al. 2008; Wanberg et al. 2003) flexible forms of mentoring. Our graduate student group illustrates how flexible mentoring processes can help establish a mentoring relationship by getting to know each other and deciding if and how the individuals want to maintain an institutional relationship.

Building individual resilience through strategic group collaboration. As we discussed and analyzed major thematic elements of our time at MPU, the theme of resilience surfaced as a core aspect of our journey. As graduate students of color at a PWI, hardship was present at every turn (e.g., difficult interactions with professors and peers, living in an environment that challenged our identities, interpersonal prejudice, etc.). Simply put, faculty and students need to be supported in order to develop and/or enhance the resilience needed to survive as an academician.

10 Practical Recommendations

As our personal narratives show, the needs of graduate students, in general, are unique. The needs of graduate students of minority identities add additional layers of complexity in regards to the support services that are needed to ensure their success. Our list of practical recommendations outlines practices that university staff can apply to attend to the diverse needs of graduate students of color at PWIs. For instance, based on our experiences as graduate students and through forming MGSA, we suggest a more involved role for Student Affairs staff in supporting graduate students' needs. This is the case because the focus of Student Affairs professionals is to address the development of university students from a holistic perspective. Although the structure of the academy has historically favored the development of the undergraduate students, this focus transcends the undergraduate population (see Magolda 1992). For these reasons, we offer the following practices to support graduate and professional students.

11 Reduce Underrepresented Populations' Marginalization

Good practice in graduate student engagement occurs when Student Affairs divisions offer special-interest groups and mentoring programs for graduate students in departments that lack racial/ethnic diversity or typically enroll fewer students. These services can assist in alleviating loneliness, cultural taxation, feelings of discrimination and minimizing the characteristics of imposter syndrome as cited in the research literature (Patton and Harper 2003). Institutions can begin this process by identifying agents who can provide advising as well as culturally responsive support for the these students.

This responsibility should not be exclusively housed in traditionally determined spaces such as a cultural and/or counseling centers. These type of services need to also be available in their respective departments and in a variety of forms in student affairs units.

12 Develop Meaningful Partnerships Within Academic Affairs

Meaningful and sustainable change does not happen in a silo. Cooperation and strategic planning amongst student affairs professionals, academic affairs administrators, faculty and student services staff within academic units will encourage best practices. Engagement should be at the center of these conversations in order to develop plans on how to better connect graduate students to the larger community thus positively affecting learning and outcomes in and out of the classroom.

These conversations could can come in the form of an institutionalized advisory committee tasked with seeking best practices to better engage the graduate student population with the goal of lessening attrition, ensuring best retention strategies thus creating an environment that encourages the completion of the intended graduate degree. This type of group should be supported as a collaborative effort between the Office of the Vice-President of Student Affairs and the Vice-President and/or Dean of Graduate Studies. Another suggestion is the institutionalization of special-interest groups such as MGSA.

Orientations should not continue to be offed in respective departmental vacuums, but incoming academic cohorts need to be exposed to cross-campus services via presentations and visits with student affairs units. This would, in particular, encourage relationship building amongst graduate students of color across disciplines and introduce graduate students to available campus resources in a proactive manner.

13 Focus on Assessment, Best Practices, and Intended Outcomes

Assessment tools such as surveys, questionnaires, and individual and focus group interviews should be consistently used in order for university units to be informed on how the students needs are changing in their interactions both in and out of the classroom. The findings would also assist in shaping future strategies for engagement and intervention. They data need to be shared with key stakeholders (faculty, staff, and academic and faculty affairs administrators).

14 Diversify Current Conceptions of Diversity

Diversity within the university space must transcend current practices that just look to bring in a critical mass of marginalized community members. Diversity programs need to operate from a model that recognizes the need for membership of historically and traditionally marginalized groups and be mindful during the hiring, tenure, and promotion practices that reward and value forms of meaningful advocacy that are clearly established by those who are added to the university ranks.

15 Conclusion

The terrain of university and intellectual life is one of paradox. It is isolating and communal; privileging and denying; and functional and dysfunctional. As a result of these hidden truths, the path for persons of color, women, and other groups who

are and have been historically marginalized remains one of many visible and invisible hurdles and barriers. Through this collection of personal narratives underlined by C-Y-F's principles and guides, forming the framework and method of our inquiry; we have taken our truths from the margins to the center by means of our peer-mentoring group, MGSA. For each of us, the educational journey that began prior to, during, and after our matriculation from our graduate programs into our careers still links us together through the bonds created as a result of MGSA. These bonds were forged through the participation in this scholarly enterprise, enables us to align ourselves with CURVES and FRiENDS in a modified form of the "Y".

As peer and academic allies, MGSA members situate themselves within the larger discourse that C-Y-F has worked within and against. We do not take this opportunity lightly as our personal narratives suggest, there are safer spaces needed to provide those who are underrepresented to become visibly represented in their institutions through collaborative efforts such as this one. We further encourage both graduate students and higher educational institutions to rethink traditional methods of support with adaptive practices for peer-mentoring that are culturally, socially, and intellectually grounded in an advocacy framework that fosters not only student advancement, but are also sustainable means for operating within the professoriate.

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Julie Yun is a clinical psychologist who has enjoyed a rich and varied career in higher education. She has a doctorate from the University of Denver and has worked in academic settings since 2001. Throughout her career, she has been a passionate advocate for social justice and breaking down barriers to support and success. Dr. Yun has been an advocate for diversity in multiple arenas—higher education in her work with graduate and undergraduate students of color; mental health in her work with diverse populations in university settings; and in her community outreach efforts. In recent years she has been a strong proponent of revising mental health service delivery to promote better access for under-served communities in roles such as the Director of Counseling at University of Massachusetts Boston. She is currently serving a new role as Assistant Dean of Diversity and Inclusion in the Graduate School at Princeton University.

Critical Multicultural Latin@ Mentoring in Higher Education

Regina L. Suriel and James Martinez

Abstract Despite the initiatives for diverse faculty, the recruitment, retention and percentage of faculty of diverse cultural backgrounds, Latin@s in particular, remain low. This speaks to the apparent disinterest of many institutions in acknowledging the visible and invisible obstacles that impede the full and equal integration of Latin@ faculty into the ranks of the professoriate and academe. Assistance from a mentor can help this transition by clarifying short and long term priorities, as well as balancing strategies to move forward in teaching and other scholarly work. Of course, when first-year tenure-track faculty thrive, recruitment of quality colleagues and retention increase, as well as the respective programs and the students enrolled within the programs. The authors examine current themes of their mentoring experiences in higher education and highlight the importance of critical multicultural mentorship in closing the gaps in mentoring for non-dominant faculty in higher education. In their conclusion, the protégé and mentor suggest the need to disrupt deficit ideology by engaging in critical reflections on the complexity of cross-race/ethnicity mentoring in higher education.

Keywords Deficit ideology · Educational research · Latina/os · Hispanics · Multicultural mentoring · Latin@ faculty mentoring

1 Background

All new tenure-track faculty need help adjusting to new workplace environs (Turner et al. 2008). This is especially so for some new Latin@ faculty members who enter two new cultures (academic and mainstream White community). The study, presented in this chapter, takes place in a small, quiet and beautiful Southeastern city home to some hardcore football fans. Most Friday nights during football season, the

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majority of the citizens are busy attending football-related events. The predominantly White and traditionally Christian Title Town USA city experienced periods of racial unrest during the early nineteenth century. Racial discrimination, including casualties of the racial divide are engraved in its history. Amidst the Black and White racial dichotomy endemic to the Southeast, Latin@s are often invisible, and acknowledged as the third Brown race (Lippard and Gallagher 2011).

It is important to note that race and ethnicity are socially constructed to distinguish different populations (Valencia 2010). For the purpose of this chapter, we situate Latin@s in the racialized context in which mentorship takes place. Thus, in a spectrum of racial categories based on skin color, the Brown race refers to people who are not identified as Black or White, and have brown skin hues, such as Latin@s and some Asians and African Americans (Lippard and Gallagher 2011). Furthermore, because "Hispanic" has evolved into a political term referring to Latin@ people as a separate population (Guadalupe and Donato 2010; Martinez et al. 2014), the authors, use "Latin@" as an all-inclusive label instead of "Latina/o" to deemphasize "o/a" and uneven "Hispanic" terminology regarding individuals of Latin American heritage in the English language (Cantú and Fránquiz 2010; Obiakor and Martinez 2016). This more all-encompassing term envelops the packed unity of Latin@ diverse communities (Espino et al. 2008) to ensure thoroughness and accountability for individual identity (Wallerstein 2005) and integrates sociocultural associations with place of birth and/or masculine and feminine gender preferences (Obiakor and Martinez 2016). Therefore, the term Latin@ in this chapter refers to both genders unless when specifically addressing a Latino (male) or Latina (female).

The faculty at this regional Southeast University in Christian Title Town USA reflects the demographics of the city (University Report 2014). The number of Latin@ faculty remains small at 1.6 % (University Report 2014). The authors are the only ethnic minorities in a department of 18 faculty members and two of the three Latin@s in the college. Santiago and Rachel, pseudonyms, are junior faculty. Santiago is one year senior to Rachel and informally assigned as her collegiate mentor. Rachel met Santiago during her job interview and through mentoring; both have grown as colleagues and friends.

Prejudice and discrimination from students and colleagues continue to influence promotion and tenure approval stamps (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Stanley 2006). Multicultural mentoring has been suggested to support Latin@ faculty success in their careers (Rodriguez and Sjostrom 2000). Current literature on empowering mentorships of Latin@ faculty is limited (Cowin et al. 2012; Ek et al. 2010). Thus, we begin this chapter by defining Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) to serve as the foundation in explaining (a) assumptions about the centrality of Latin@s in higher education, (b) the development of a critical consciousness and (c) the difficulties encountered when working within a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). We define faculty mentorship, Latin@ faculty mentorship in particular. We also discuss mentoring grounded in intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991), and positionality (Zamudio and Rios 2006) context of our experiences. Lastly, we offer suggestions for the development of critical

consciousness and how it dismantles deficit thinking (Valencia 2010; Zamudio et al. 2009), and informs culturally sustaining multicultural mentoring (Barrett 2005; Stanley 2006).

2 Critical Race Theory, LatCrit and Intersectional Relationships

Critical race theory (CRT) is a concept, method, pedagogy, and theoretical construct working to eliminate racism and other oppressive forms of subordination such as gender, class, and sexual orientation in U.S. education (Crenshaw 1991). LatCrit extends CRT to intently focus on Latin@ issues and realities (Zamudio et al. 2011) and further examines and analyzes Latin@s' multidimensional identities addressing the intersections of xenophobia, chauvinism, heterosexism, classism, and other forms of oppression (Zamudio et al. 2011). Both CRT and LatCrit are significant and dominant theoretical frameworks that help expose the complex forms of oppression. Using CRT and LatCrit, we build on the literature to further develop a framework that examines and interprets Latin@ scholars' reflection on mentoring for participation in higher education (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Gabriel et al. 2015; Stanley 2006).

The intersectional framework of this study supports the idea that females have multiple and layered identities derivative from biological tradition, socially constructed norms, political scuffles, economic status, and a specific Eurocentric power structure (Collins 2003; Crenshaw 1991). Social and cultural patterns of oppression intersect race, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity to the experiences related to each identity that shapes individual existence (Collins 2003; Crenshaw 1991). This inclusive lens is useful because of the limitations of race or gender-only frameworks where intersectional approaches contextualize the lived experiences of the "us and them" mentality that constructs race and gender as comparable and different systems where Whites oppress non dominant groups, oppressors victimize the oppressed, and men govern women (Collins 2000, 2003). Attention to the intersection used in this study provides a deeper and wider understanding of the many identifiers expressed in the experiences of discrimination and oppression by Latin@ scholars within higher education and communities (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Gabriel et al. 2015; Stanley 2006).

Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) provides an alternate framework to mentoring females in academe. RCT rejects traditional Western notions of human development that focus on the individual. Rather, RCT is collectivistic in nature and proposes that mutual empathy, synergistic growth along with dismantling the effects structural power can help buttress successful mentorship, particularly with females. The main idea of RCT is developing connections with others particularly valuing cultural diversity (Duffey 2006; Frey 2013).

3 Mentorships in Academe

Traditional curriculum and narratives embrace and sustain the common history, theory, and practice of public universities. Therefore, the merge of Relational Cultural Theory, Critical Race Theory and Latino Critical Theory provides needed discursive strategies to offer the Latin@ scholar a safe "color space" (Diggs et al. 2009) and voice to transform, maintain, and reproduce the many intersections of identity. When mentees and mentors are guided in examining positions of power, they both can critically reflect on deficit views and work to dismantle common myths that permeate a capitalistic university system's effect on professors from non-dominant cultures (Valencia 2010).

4 Definition of Mentorships

Struggling to balance teaching, research, service, and a personal life at a new university is a common experience for many first year members of the faculty, and success in academe is highly relational to appropriate mentoring relationships (Diggs et al. 2009; Turner 2003). Often, mentorship is established in two ways. A new faculty may be formally assigned to a mentor or mentorship is established informally with both mentor and mentee gravitating toward each other. A faculty mentor is usually a more experienced individual in the field who (a) commits to sharing knowledge, expertise and advice about the field in an effort to nurture and enhance the success of the mentee, (b) acculturates the mentee in the field, providing access to support systems and social networks, (c) is a friend and trusted advisor in both professional and personal arenas, providing direction and modeling success for the benefit of the mentee (Levinson 1978). A mentee, or protégé, is the incoming or new faculty who accepts advice, supports and challenges the mentor's knowledge and perspectives amidst new developments and social networks (Carey and Weissman 2010).

According to Carey and Weissman (2010), successful mentoring needs to be clear about the mentor-mentee roles so that goals and boundaries of the relationship are kept in check, competition is minimized, and imprinting is suppressed because the mentor, "is not a parent or a savior, nor is the mentee a child having to heed all advice" (p. 1376). Open communication, dedicated time, and commitment are required from both parties for the mentorship to be successful.

Mentoring Latin@ faculty. There is limited research that focuses on Latin@ faculty mentorships, particularly in traditionally Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) (Barrett 2005). Even more extant are studies that examine mentoring between Latin@ faculty of different cultural backgrounds (De Luca and Escoto 2012). The intersections of gender, inherited and practiced culture, and linguistic diversity, for example, between the mentee and protégée add layers of complexity affecting the kind of advice and support they provide to each other.

Diverse cultural backgrounds. Successful mentorships in faculty of diverse backgrounds have been noted (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Turner et al. 2008). What appears to be most important in this type of relationship is the mirroring of tenets of democratic practices in pluralistic societies, especially in acknowledging and advocating for individuals who are different (Diggs et al. 2009; Turner 2003). Often, Latin@ faculty come from various cultural backgrounds. This is due mostly to Latin@s heterogeneity in social, religious and political orientations and places of origin. Spanish speaking Latin@s share a primary ancestral culture from Spain and Indigenous people in the American continent. However, Latin@ culture is flavored by regional culture hosting its own unique social and biological history (Valencia 2010). For example, due to sociocultural histories, Chicanos and Dominicans are distinct Latin@ species. Thus, when two Latin@ mentor-protégé faculty of different cultural backgrounds come together, cultural differences may be salient. However, this may be a starting point in which to begin communicating, particularly drawing on the intersectionality of their shared socio-cultural history. Furthermore, this shared history supports learning and safeguards that neither voice is muzzled. By facilitating inclusion and participation for the next generation of Latin@s, multicultural mentoring creates "spaces of color" for transformations and revels in fairness (Rodriguez and Sjostrom 2000).

Impact of inherited culture. Many factors, such as social, financial and political orientations are often inherited from parents and are advantageous for some groups more than for others. For one, place of nativity is an important factor in understanding Latin@'s place in the social hierarchy. For example, social opportunities are different for immigrants compared to the U.S. native born. Educational opportunities, for instance, are different between first and second-generation immigrants (De Luca and Escoto 2012) and between immigrants and native born (Aretakis et al. 2015; Suriel 2016). Bilingualism is another example where the differences among Latin@s are acute. Non-Spanish speaking Latin@s are often frowned upon by those who are bilingual or by both, White and Latino communities (Rodriguez and Sjostrom 2000; Urrieta and Villenas 2013).

Gender differences. Latinas often embrace motherhood and professional roles; thus, it is important for Latina academes to balance personal and professional lives. To be successful, mentors to Latina faculty need to acknowledge and support this balance, especially drawing from female ways of knowing (González 2007). Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) emphasis is to first develop human connection, paying close attention to the human factor, and emphasizing commonality of bicultural and bilingual experiences.

Given the shifts in Latin@ demographics in the United States, more faculty of diverse backgrounds are needed, and of those, Latin@s in particular (Pew Hispanic Center 2011). Mentoring is a suggested strategy to increase retention rates of diverse faculty in institutions of higher education (Zambrana et al. 2015). However, little or no research focuses on the unique challenges of multicultural mentoring in PWIs (Stanley 2006). Moreover, when the mentor and protégé are of different cultural backgrounds, the demand for further research associated with Latin@ mentoring is germane (De Luca and Escoto 2012; Turner et al. 2008).

With the realization that mentoring is personal in nature, our qualitative data share the actual experiences of mentoring from both the mentor and protégé perspectives within the context of mentoring junior faculty members in higher education (Zamudio et al. 2012). Race and gender in mentoring have been investigated in relation to power structure (Cowin et al. 2012) yet we speak of and suggest that future examinations focus on the differential impact of mentoring with female and non-White faculty (Stanley 2006; Turner et al. 2008) to contextualize Santiago and Rachel's mentor-protégé perspectives.

5 Experiences of Two Latin@ Faculty in a Southeastern University

This section presents findings emerging from conversations and experiences regarding the mentoring relationship between the researchers as narrated by the protégé.

As a new faculty, our department leader informally assigned a mentor to me. Santiago is a second generation Chicano, former middle school Language Arts teacher and tenure-track faculty. I am Rachel, a 1.5-generation Dominican and former bilingual high school science teacher. Though we have different backgrounds, Santiago and I share similar experiences, due in part to our Spanish heritage and Latin@ identity. We are the only two faculty members from non-dominant cultures in our department, nested in a predominantly White, Southern University. We met for mentoring meetings in Santiago's office for two hours every week during my first year.

Santiago's adherence to appropriate mentoring practices. Santiago effectively addressed the seven mentor roles (teacher, sponsor, advisor, agent, role model, academic coach, and confidant) suggested by Tobin (2004). First year faculty accolades resulting from our mentoring relationship, and supporting tenure and promotion requirements, include membership in advisory boards and dissertation committees, grant and publication collaborations, networking with local and professional communities, and commendable Student Opinion of Instruction feedback. As his protégé, I felt continuously reassured, supported and shielded from the unnecessary professional pitfalls.

Santiago's office becomes the safe color space to share *familismo* and *personalismo*. The small-enclosed office space next to the bagel shop became a refuge, a physical space where Santiago and I felt free to be who we are, be socially accepted and share familismo, a sense of connectedness as extended family (Rafaelli and Ontai 2004). Santiago and I shared conversations that pointed to the value that we place on personalismo and professional relationships (De Luca and Escoto 2012). We shared feelings of empathy, trust, and relief from our culturally oppressed environments. Furthermore, Santiago acknowledges the camaraderie of having a fellow Latin@ faculty. Our conversations point to these realities. In the

following excerpts, we recognize the ability to share openly, to be understood and acknowledged.

Rachel Yes, I feel that I can finally be open. This is an (empowering) experience for you as well because you did not have anyone to talk to (the way we do).

Santiago Right. LatCrit calls this a safe space.

Rachel We have a safe colored space where we can share openly.

Santiago And it is a safe space! I can start with no explanation of who I am and where I've been. I just start with what I am experiencing. While I do this with others, they are like, hum. Because I do have tons of support but not necessarily the support of a Latin@.

When attempting to distinguish our mentoring relationship from previous experiences and those shared in the literature, Santiago and I identify key elements that are successful and empowering in our mentoring experience.

Rachel What makes our relationship an empowering mentoring relationship? Let's say we put our mentorship through a funnel and distill all great mentorship qualities, what would be the essence of our mentoring relationship? What would be the oil for a perfume? To me, it narrows down to the following elements: a safe space, a common discourse, similar ways of knowing the world, and similar perspectives.

Santiago The oil in the perfume; the essence. It is a metaphor that works because that is the life that we are living, you know… Because we are the "other," we're not the center, we are marginalized, and in here, we can return to the Other. And we have a common ground, we have a common vision of what it is to be of the non-dominant group, living in a dominant world, and with that type of oppressive regimes. Here is the emancipation. We start to free ourselves. This is where we connect on the personal and professional level.

Rachel I can talk about what has empowered me in this relationship. That is, the fact that I have a role model. Most Latin@s do not have this opportunity. It is reassuring to see another Latino break through… We found solidarity in this unique relationship. However, the uniqueness of our mentoring relationship is not based just on the fact that you are a Latino.

Santiago You hit it right on. Race plays a part but it is only interchangeable. Because, like what we had shared before, to have a good therapist is to have someone who does good therapy, you know. And theory is therapy, as is good mentoring. Therapists don't have to have that (cultural) connection necessarily, yet it helps with empathy and being personable.

Santiago and I discovered that empathy and trust are fundamentally the most important elements of our mentoring relationship.

Santiago This is where empathy comes in and helps build trust. It's really about breaking down the walls. Putting up a wall is a behavior that is automatic when you don't know anyone, when you don't know the person. But after a while… I remember another breakthrough in our mentoring. I remember you saying it best, "I really like that you help put me at ease. Because this (job) is really stressful."

Rachel Yes.

Santiago You know, this is a stressful environment.

In another conversation, Santiago admits his frustration as new faculty and shares his empathy, desires and approaches for the mentorship that he did not necessarily receive himself.

Santiago	From the start, I had sound colleagues, yet did not necessarily have any support with what I was experiencing as a Latino professor. I did not want others to experience what I did as a new faculty or as a Latin@… In addition, I get some confidence in knowing that what I am sharing with you has worked for me too… Your success is important to me. I also feel encouraged by your success…In my mentoring. I came to you with anti-deficit thinking. This approach is totally unlike the ones used by some of our previous [mentors] (during our graduate programs) where we were made to feel that we were not good enough.
Rachel	Now, I understand that we are strangers to each other. But I think that our level of trust over the last couple of weeks has been magnified by our search for similar things. I think it is because we are trying to explain…find our [color space] place. But I think we are able to do that because we are on the same side and facing the same wall. That's how we continue to build trust between us.

While there is not a single strategy or a specific "to do" guide for non-dominant mentorship in higher education, as shown in the above critical dialogue, there are substantial steps that can be taken, not as an agenda for critical mentorship, but to resituate effective, diverse mentoring within U.S. and global contexts (Ek et al. 2010; Gabriel et al. 2015).

Founded fundamentally on social, political, and educational differences (Gorski 2013; Valencia 2010), this chapter is further evidence that the possible relationship concerning social and cultural patterns of oppression intersect race, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. Latin@ faculty experiences are related to multiple facets of identity within higher education and may now be further considered as part of solution-building for the university mentorship process (Rodriguez and Sjostrom 2000; Stanley 2006; Turner et al. 2008).

In this chapter we highlighted the significance of Latin@ mentorship using a Critical Race Theory, Relational Cultural Theory, and LatCrit lens, so to move beyond individual acts of addressing and understanding each other and seeking places of commonality while affirming our social differences, but also building a capacity for social change (Gabriel et al. 2015; González 2007; Turner et al. 2008). Mentoring in a safe colored space (Diggs et al. 2009) enables a critical dialogue about the importance of dismantling deficit views. The importance of acknowledging the historical context, intersectionality, and critical conciosuness in effective mentoring will help the full and equal integration of Latin@ faculty into the ranks of the professoriate and academe. Targeted approaches for multicultural mentoring that engender empathy and trust are necessary to support new faculty, Latin@ faculty in particular. We, the protégé and mentor, suggest the growing need to disrupt deficit ideology by engaging in critical reflections on the complexity of cross-race/ethnicity multicultural mentoring in higher education.

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Part IV
Mentoring in International Contexts

The Cross-Cultural Mentoring of Graduate Students: Evidence from Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Academy in Central Asia

Svetlana Vlady

Abstract In this paper, the author describes the academic and cultural experiences of mentoring graduate students at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Academy located in Central Asia. Students from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan studied and completed their Master in Economic Governance and Regulation Program degrees entirely in the English language. Most of them held undergraduate degrees in economics or accounting and were proficient in three or more languages. Even though the academy's program was similar to those in USA, cultural differences between Asian and Western education programs were apparent. Therefore, cross-cultural mentoring was integrated to help students create new visions and pathways for future success and to enrich mentor-student relationships across different nationalities, races, genders, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic and socio-cultural backgrounds. The findings showed that due to the complexity of cross-cultural mentoring, mentors needed to have certain characteristics needed to develop trust between mentor and mentee. The author offers recommendations on ways that mentoring in higher education could better serve international students' integration into the new global community.

Keywords Cross-cultural mentoring · Graduate students · OSCE academy · Central Asia

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1 Introduction

Living in a global community, in the 21st century makes it critical to have or gain greater insight into the diversity of cultures that surrounds us. This is of great importance when it comes to learning about and applying cross-cultural mentoring and teaching. An understanding of intercultural differences leads to clearer communication, breaks down barriers, builds trust, strengthens relationships, opens horizons, and yields results in terms of successful mentoring.

In this chapter I describe and analyze the academic and cultural experiences related to mentoring graduate students at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Academy located in Central Asia. I believe it is important to, first elaborate on the demographic characteristics of Central Asian students.

The Central Asian students in this study were from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. All students had completed their master's degrees in economic governance and regulation at the OSCE Academy. Most held undergraduate degrees in economics or accounting and were proficient in three or more languages.

The OSCE Academy teachers were also from various parts of the world, including the United States, Eastern and Western Europe, Australia, and Asia. In addition to holding graduate or doctoral degrees in business, they were proficient in at least three languages: namely, English, Russian, and their "mother tongue." Although the academy's business program was similar to those found in the United States, differences between Asian and Western education programs, as well as cultural differences between students, were apparent.

Many institutions around the world have internationalized their degrees and programs, and their teachers need to be prepared to teach cross-culturally in international environments. However, faculty members are often unaware of culturally competent pedagogical strategies for responding in culturally sensitive ways (Page and Goode 2009). In numerous research studies, it has been found that faculty members are not sufficiently prepared by their institutions to teach internationally (Dunn and Wallace 2006; Leask 2008; Smith 2010) and that faculty members do not receive sufficient preparation on formal intercultural competency training to teach diverse students (Smith 2010; Wang 2010). When faculty members do receive cross-cultural teacher training, it is often basic and generalized (Gribber and Ziguaras 2003; Leask 2008). There is scarce research focused on preparing faculty to teach and mentor cross-culturally; moreover, no research has analyzed cross-cultural mentoring in the context of Central Asia. Thus, the purpose of this research is to fill this gap in the literature by describing cross-cultural mentoring in the Central Asian context. Moreover, the purpose of this research is to offer a view on how to enrich mentor–student relationships across different nationalities, races, genders, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic and socio-cultural backgrounds. This study will describe and analyze effective mentoring, which considers the cultural tendencies of students, and will attempt to

respond faithfully to mentors' natural characteristics and sensitively to the mentees' cultural expectations.

If a mentee and a mentor learn more about each other's cultural expectations before engaging in teaching, it will improve the communication, understanding, and relationship between them. In this study, the Process Model of Intercultural Competence will be applied to analyze how mentors and mentees interact effectively and appropriately in cross-cultural situations based on their intercultural attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

The following section will discuss the cultural history of Central Asia and its six *stans* (countries). It provides a brief discussion on the history, geographical position, ethnic groups, languages, and religions of these countries. The following sections will describe education in Central Asia and present a literature review of studies on mentoring, culture, and cross-culturing mentoring. Subsequent sections provide a discussion of cross-cultural mentoring of graduate students in the context of Central Asia. Finally, the conclusion section gives recommendations related to how mentoring in higher education could better serve international students' integration into the new global community.

2 Background

2.1 Central Asia

Central Asia is shrouded in mystery and wonder. This large region is associated with irrigated deserts, endless steppes, the world's highest mountains, and brave horsemen. Central Asia consists of five *stans.* Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Afghanistan is also traditionally considered part of Central Asia. Central Asia and is bordered by Russia to the north, China to the east, the Caspian Sea and Caucasus Mountains to the west, and Iran and Pakistan to the south (Akyildiz and Carlson 2013a, b).

Central Asia covers an area of 3,994,300 km^2, and its population of 51 million people includes more than 100 different ethnic groups, from Central Asian nationalities to Germans and Austrians to Tibetans and Koreans (Central Asian Centers 2015). Historically, the region was home to the Silk Road, the ancient trading route between Asia and many Middle Eastern and Western countries in the first centuries of the Common Era. During this time, trade routes spread across Central Asia that stretched from China into Southern Europe (Wild 1992).

In the last 100 years, Central Asian societies and communities (former Soviet countries) experienced three forms of government: A Russian Tsar, the authoritarian control of the communist party, and liberal capitalism. A century and half ago, Russia colonized much of the region, and the five stans became a single large

country, Turkestan, filled with people of various ethnic groups who identified with their own territories. Later, the USSR separated Turkestan into five stans, which required the different ethnic groups to adapt new identities. Thus, it is not surprising to find people of Uzbek ethnicity in Kyrgyzstan or Tajik people in Uzbekistan (Akyildiz and Carlson 2013a, b).

The end of 1991 was a critical moment in the history of the world. Boris Yeltsin, the president of Russia, and the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus signed a treaty that dissolved the Soviet Union. Even though the Central Asian leaders themselves had not been consulted, their five republics became suddenly independent. Angry, frustrated, fearful, and feeling abandoned by their "mother Russia" and terrified about the consequences, the people of Central Asia began to build their futures (Rashid 2013). The Central Asian countries survived despite a lack of reforms in all five states; a civil war in Tajikistan; protests; massacres; and economic decline in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Only the energy-producing states of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan became more prosperous (Rashid 2013). After 1991, and the independent governments fostered national interests, identities, and languages. To some degree, the communities of Central Asia have become integrated into global political, economic, social, and educational systems. Today, more than 20 years after their independence, all of these countries (except Afghanistan) have shared a common history for over 70 years, and this common history continues to shape their political, social, and educational systems. Moreover, all of these stans and their systems are now significantly influenced by the West (Akyildiz and Carlson 2013a, b).

This article generalizes the term "Central Asians" to include the Uzbek, Tajik, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, Kazakh, and Afghan populations. The five ex-Soviet republics, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, have more in common with Russia than with Afghanistan, which shares roots with Iran. Nevertheless, Afghanistan and the former Soviet Central Asian republics share, not only a demographic connection, but also certain customs, traditions, linguistic roots, and a cultural and religious identification with Islam (to varying degrees).

Central Asia boasts a plethora of languages. Each stan has its own language, and different dialects are spoken in the villages. However, the ex-Soviet countries continue to also actively speak Russian, which is either a first language (as in Kazakhstan) or a second language (as in most of the other stans). Nevertheless, there are substantial differences among all five stans in terms of secularization and Russification (Russian influence), which is much stronger for Kazakhs and Kyrgyz than for Uzbeks in Uzbekistan. There are other further regional subtleties within each ethnic group. Thus, the countries in Central Asia have many similarities. However, this collective image is only partly true. Central Asian republics also exhibit important differences in terms of economic development, structure, and resources, as well as cultural differences in ethnicity, language, and religion.

2.2 Education in Central Asia: The Five Stans

Under the rule of the Russian Tsarist government (1860–1917), the population of Central Asia was uneducated or poorly educated. During the Soviet Union era (1930–1991), the school buildings, textbooks, curricula, and teaching and assessment methods were controlled by Moscow. Only a few regional differences were allowed, and Russian was the common language. All students in Central Asian countries used the same textbooks, wore the same uniforms, and conformed to the same codes of behavior as the students in Moscow. The Central Asian students faced such challenges as studying in second language and in a cultural context that was not their own (Educational Encyclopedia 2015a, b, c, d).

From the 1930s, despite the existence of a centralized state, multiculturalism was written into the constitution and native folk culture, dress, and music were supported and promoted. Women's rights began to play a large role in the societies of these countries, and these changing roles had a significant positive effect, particularly on women's education. Many women completed undergraduate and graduate degrees. From 1960 to 1990, the Russian language became the first language for most Central Asian students. On one hand, following graduation, all students had similar opportunities for future education and training; while on the other hand, Central Asian students began to lose their identity and knowledge of their own languages (Educational Encyclopedia 2015a, b, c, d).

At present, Central Asian countries have attained many advances, including a high degree of industrialization and excellent public transportation and health systems. They all place a strong emphasis on high school education and a high premium on higher education and research in engineering, sciences, and mathematics. Their science academies produce some of the world's best scientists, mathematicians, and engineers.

Public schools are found in all towns and villages offering schooling from first to eleventh grade. Education is mandatory for both boys and girls. Primary and secondary education is free and nearly universal within Central Asia. In this region, children are usually assigned to classes of approximately 20–30 students in the first grade. Students stay together until the completion of eleventh grade. Each class has the same teacher from the first through the fourth grade and then a different teacher from the fifth through the eleventh grade. These teachers become like second mothers or fathers who place to the students in their classes, and good behavior and discipline are important. Homework is extensive and students are grade-conscious. In these classes good grades are difficult to achieve, so students must work very hard to get them (Educational Encyclopedia 2015a, b, c, d).

Schools stress the basics: literature, mathematics, geography, history, grammar, and foreign languages. Workdays are held, during which students clean the school and the town. After school, arts and dance performances are very popular. Diversity

festivals from the Soviet times, during which students dressed in traditional clothes of other nationalities, performed traditional dances, and sung songs in foreign languages, are still very popular.

Between 1991 and 2001, Central Asia began to transform intellectually, in that tens of thousands of the region's students began to study at the best universities abroad. Today, many high school students—often at rates as high as 75 %—go on to attend some form of schooling after graduation (US Central Asia Education Foundation 2007).

Liberal arts schools, many of which are run by teachers from Europe, the US, Russia, and other foreign countries, are opening in the bigger cities. Technical schools and state and private universities are also widespread and very popular. A tendency still exists to pigeonhole students by making them choose a profession before they enter school; this is a Soviet remnant, one that preached that every citizen had a specific role in society and should realize and learn his or her trade as soon as possible. Unfortunately, this practice does not allow for flexibility in the rapidly changing global economy and leaves many young people under-qualified for emerging jobs.

In 2007, the American Council on Education and the Educational Foundation began to encourage and assist the development of an open-market private business sector in Central Asia by supporting the quality of—and affordable access to—Western business know-how and practices at a number of universities in region that have adopted Western curricula and teaching methods. The Foundation provides opportunities for educational, vocational, and cultural experiences in five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan), which serve as positive examples of an open market economy operating within a democratic environment (US Central Asia Education Foundation 2007).

Increasing numbers of professors, lecturers, and students have become fluent in languages other than their native tongues and Russian. More and more members of the younger generation also speak English, French, and German. Some universities in Central Asia have also organized exchanges of university professors with faculties abroad, a trend that is expected to increase in the immediate future.

International exchange is an enriching experience on many levels. It affects both personal and professional development, stimulates creative ideas, enhances relationships, and strengthens multicultural understanding.

Professors at these universities can experience different approaches to higher education, teaching styles, research, and student mentoring. Interacting with new professional environment offers them the perspective of a teacher in a global community. They gain opportunities to practice cross-cultural sensitivity in their daily work experiences and to lead the way in appreciating the diversity of people and cultures.

2.3 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the OSCE Academy

All five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan are members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE prescribes a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses politico-military, economic, environmental, and human aspects. Therefore, it addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism, and economic and environmental activities. The organization comprises 57 participating states from three continents—North America, Europe and Asia—and more than a billion people. The OSCE traces its origins to the détente phase of the early 1970s, when the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was created to serve as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between the East and West (OSCE 2015). The CSCE also seeks to encourage intercultural cooperation, social cohesion, and peace between those countries during periods of transition or post-conflict situations.

The OSCE Academy in Central Asia is a regional center of postgraduate education and a forum for regional security dialogue and research. In 2004, the Academy launched its flagship program, a master's program in political science with focus on Central Asia. The program was designed to serve the young generation of intellectuals from the whole region; thus, efforts have been taken to ensure a balanced representation of each Central Asian state. In line with international efforts to assist political transition in Afghanistan, the Academy began accepting students from Afghanistan in 2008 (OSCE Academy 2015).

In 2011, the Master's in Economic Governance and Development graduate program was launched. This came as a result of the Academy's efforts to maximize its contribution to developing human professional capital in the sectors of particular importance for Central Asian states and societies. This multidisciplinary program has attracted students from various fields and with various backgrounds, but with a common commitment to contributing to economic development, governance, and policy-making in Central Asia (OSCE Academy 2015).

The mission of the OSCE Academy is to promote regional cooperation, conflict prevention, and good governance in Central Asia through postgraduate education. The OSCE Academy is a Central Asian regional center for postgraduate education, capacity building, research, and dialogue. It is supported by Norway, Finland, Germany, the United States, Denmark, Canada, and other OSCE-participating states. Its arts master's programs are designed for young people who wish to broaden their education in the areas of politics, security, international relations, conflict prevention, international development, economics, and governance (OSCE Academy 2015). Of particular importance the Academy's development has been its cooperation with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). These two institutes have greatly contributed to organizational development, research and teaching at the Academy,

including being directly involved in teaching, supervising students' dissertations and hosting Academy students and graduates in their respective organizations in Geneva and Oslo (OSCE Academy 2015).

3 Literature Review

3.1 Cultural Differences and Global Mentoring

Mentoring is often used as a synonym for teaching, training, or coaching. However, approaches and objectives associated with mentoring are quite different (Mangion 2015). Nevertheless, teaching, coaching, and mentoring are all provided every day by higher education faculty. More and more, teaching and mentoring are becoming cross-cultural and intercultural activities.

Numerous institutions around the world have internationalized their degrees and programs. Many have established branches in foreign countries to provide intellectual resources to other countries. However, faculty members are often unaware of culturally competent pedagogical strategies for how to respond in culturally sensitive ways (Page and Goode 2009).

Gopal (2011) noted that, faculty need to be prepared to teach cross-culturally in international environments. However, numerous research studies have found that faculty members are not sufficiently prepared by their institutions to teach internationally (Dunn and Walllance 2006; Leask 2008; Smith 2010). Further research indicates that faculty members do not receive sufficient preparation or formal intercultural competency training to teach diverse students (Smith 2010; Wang 2010). Some faculty members receive cross-cultural teacher training, but this is often basic and generalized (Gribber and Ziguaras 2003; Leask 2008). Thus, understanding cultural issues and pedagogical strategies is critical when teaching and mentoring in an international context is a concern and needs to be a priority for institutions of higher learning.

The increased ethnic diversity in the workforce, increased educational opportunities, and expansion of global organizations and institutions increased the challenges related to cross-cultural understanding (Marquardt and Horvath 2001; Tullett 1997). Mentors and teachers are now required to have cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills (Brislin and Yoshida 1994).

Furthermore, people can belong to multiple groups and cultures (Mangion 2015). Humans belong to various cultural groups, and the combination of groups and experiences acknowledges culture as dynamic—never static. This suggests that there is a need for more international studies on educational issues to support innovation in mentoring and that those involved in mentoring role in a global context are required to be even more cultural responsiveness when there is diversity in tradition, customs, gender, or race. Thus, research that is oriented toward global education can increase knowledge of cultural commonalities and differences

(Kochan and Pascarelly 2004) and according to Mullen (2012), the research in this area is still in an early stage of development and needs to be extended to include a ore global perspective. Mentors whose culture, ethnicity, citizenship, language, or other identities differ from those of their mentees need to be more creative when mentoring (Mullen 2005).

3.2 Effective Cross-Cultural Relationships

Culturally appropriate behavior or conduct that is meaningful from different cultural perspectives facilitates effective mentoring relationships (Ting-Toomey 1999). Cultural competence or effectiveness can be seen as the behavioral outcome of cultural awareness, which is critical in the development of the mentoring relationship. According to Collier (1989), cultural competence involves conduct that is appropriate and effective for the particular cultural identity adopted at the time and in the specific situation. Ruben (1976) defines intercultural communication competence as the ability to function in a manner that is perceived to be relatively consistent with capacities, goals, and expectations.

A number of researchers have found that an effective mentor will consider cultural attributes and will attempt to respond faithfully to his or her own natural tendencies, while being sensitive to the mentee's cultural expectations (Collier 1989; Rosinski 2003; Ruben 1976; Ting-Toomey 1999; and others). A mentor who exhibits cultural competence may significantly influence mentees through intercultural interaction. This will result in mutually competent behaviors for both of the cultural identities being advanced (Collier 1989).

Comparative research in cross-cultural relationships was conducted in area of collectivist and individualistic societies (Hofstede 1997; House et al. 2004; Osula and Irvin 2009; and others). It was found that in a collectivistic culture, communication can be very indirect, and in collectivist societies, harmony is a key value. Personal confrontation is considered rude, and one tries to avoid saying "no" to others, since this would imply confrontation. For example, on one hand, a mentee from a collectivistic country may express agreement that does not imply any real commitment. On the other, people from individualistic countries believe that speaking the truth openly, even if it causes conflict, is virtuous and healthy (Hofstede 1997). Also, the collectivist cultural tendencies of Asian countries lead people to emphasize personal relationships over tasks (House et al. 2004), but due to the individualistic cultural tendencies in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, people in such cultures prefer to focus on task accomplishment, such as starting and ending meetings on time (Osula and Irvin 2009).

When a mentor and a mentee are from distinct cultural backgrounds, the possibility of miscommunication is high. If a misunderstanding arises, this can undermine the viability of the mentoring relationship (Osula and Irvin 2009). Thus, research that is analyzed and discussed the effective cross cultural relationships will contribute to successful mentoring.

The term "cross-cultural" is defined as the comparison of the cultural differences or situations in which such differences exist (Stewart and Bennett 1991). The term "intercultural" is used to describe the actual interactions among people of different cultures (Stewart and Bennett 1991). However, the terms cross-cultural and intercultural are often used interchangeably (Oshula and Irvin 2009). For this reason, in this paper, the terms cross-cultural and intercultural will also be used interchangeably. The present research will describe, analyze, and report the mentoring experiences and mentoring relationships in OSCE Academy, which is located in Central Asia.

4 Theoretical Framework

Following previous research in the areas of cross-cultural teaching and cross-cultural mentoring, this paper develops a framework that focuses on competence, sensitivity, and cultural differences. Being culturally competent and sensitive means having the capacity to be sensitive to other cultural systems and the ability to approach others with different cultural backgrounds without feeling insecure or threatened (Dearforff 2009; Hiller and Wozniak 2009; Gopal 2011). Moreover, differences represent a key concept. Effectiveness in reconciling cross-cultural differences often leads to creativity and innovation for productive mentoring, teaching, and performance. The process model of cross-cultural competency is a very useful model that may be encountered when faculty members mentor and teach at an international level.

4.1 The Model of Cross-Cultural Mentoring

Understanding cross-cultural differences is an important step; however, mentors also need to engage in learning processes to develop international cultural competence. The process model of cross-cultural competence, which was developed by Deardorff (2009), defines cross-cultural competence as a person's ability to interact effectively and appropriately in cross-cultural situations based on his or her intercultural attitudes, knowledge, comprehension, and skills. According to Deardorff (2009), cross-cultural competence is a non-static process that involves the recognition of being in a particular cultural environment, the appreciation of cultural differences, and the development of general strategies to adapt to cultural differences. Deardorff (2009) defines:

- cultural gap as an attitude as being open and motivated to understanding other cultures, having a positive outlook toward different cultures, and resisting ethnocentric behavior (Paige and Goode 2009; Teekens 2003).

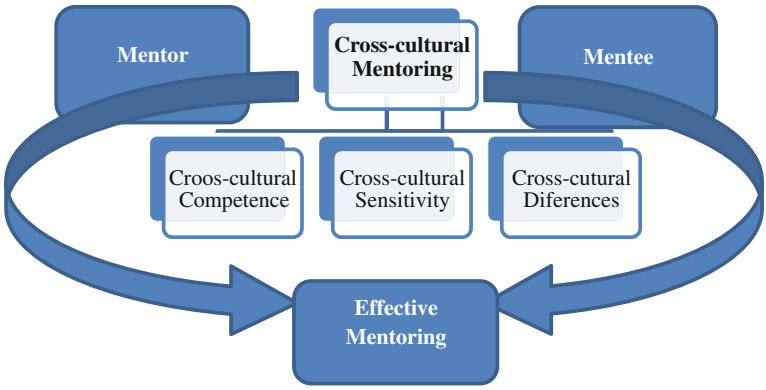

Fig. 1 Conceptual model of cross-cultural mentoring

Other definitions are offered by other researchers.

- knowledge and comprehension are described by Deardorff (2009) as involving cultural self-awareness; culture-specific knowledge of gender roles at home and in the workplace; linguistic knowledge (Paige and Goode 2009); and knowledge of national identity, customs, and traditions.
- skills are defined as those talents that enhance one's aptitude for engaging in critical self-reflection and communication across cultures (Spizberg and Changnon 2009).

The Process Model of Cross-cultural Competence is a useful model to explain effective mentoring relations between mentors and mentees and what is needed for successful mentoring, which is the ability to build relationships, often depending on being able to reconcile international differences that arise from different cultural backgrounds. This points out to the sensitivity and complexity of cross-cultural knowledge, which are important elements to consider in the mentoring process. Finally, in a successful and effective mentoring relationship, cross-cultural competence and cross-cultural sensitivity should be reciprocal and mutual. The present research modifies this model to develop the following Cross-cultural Competence and Effective Mentoring Model to describe and analyze the mentoring effective relationship in the context of the OSCE Academy (Fig. 1).

5 Cross-Cultural Mentoring of Graduate Students: Evidence from OSCE Academy in Central Asia

5.1 Sample: Mentors and Mentees

The mentors in this study are OSCE Academy teachers, fellows, and researchers from various parts of the world, including the United States, Eastern and Western

Europe, Australia, and Asia. The mentees are Central Asian students from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan, who completed their master's degrees at OSCE Academy.

Mentors. The OSCE Academy teachers, fellows, and researchers, who accepted roles as formal and informal mentors came from various parts of the world, including the United States, Eastern and Western Europe, Australia, and Asia. The Norwegian Institute of International Relations, the Geneva Center for Security and Peace, and the University of St Andrews are among the Academy's key partners for teaching, training, and student support. Moreover, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy is a long-term committed partner of the OSCE Academy.

In addition to holding graduate or doctoral degrees in business, the teachers and fellows are all proficient in at least three languages: namely, English, Russian, and their "mother tongues." The teaching experience of most teachers includes both undergraduate and graduate teaching in the areas of international business, international economics, international accounting, and cross-cultural studies. Each teacher belongs to multiple groups and cultures. For example, the author of this research is an Australian who graduated as an economist in the USSR, completed undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degrees in accounting and finance in Australia, and works in the higher education industry in the United States. This multicultural experience and knowledge allows mentors and teachers to understand and accept students from different cultures, speak with them in common or individual languages; understand their national customs, traditions, body languages, and behaviors; avoid uncertainties; and reduce misunderstanding.

Mentees. In this research, the mentees were Central Asian students from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan who completed their master's degrees at the OSCE Academy. These students were perceived to be committed, diligent, competitive, passionate, focused, and ambitious. Most of them held undergraduate degrees in economics or accounting and were already proficient in three or more languages. Most of the students spoke English, Russian, and their native language, while some also spoke German, French, or another foreign language.

Some of the students had completed their undergraduate degrees in Western Europe, the United States, India, or other non-Asian countries. Other students also received Western education, but completed their bachelor's degrees at either American Central Asian University or Eurasian National University, both of which are located in Central Asia.

All students had practical experience, and most had previously held positions that required cross-cultural competence. For example, some highly educated students with cross-cultural practical experience were from Kazakhstan. One worked as an administrative assistant at the Finnish Embassy in Kazakhstan, while another worked as an expert of procurement for the National Economic Chamber of Kazakhstan.

Turkmens belonging to the Russian and Tatar ethnic groups also participated in the research. One of them had employment experience as an accounting instructor at the International Cavendish College London–Bishkek, and another had worked

as a procurement assistant in Malaysia Marine and Heavy Engineering. A third was an organizer of international educational community projects.

A student from Uzbekistan had held a position as an assistant to the advisor for project formulation at the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Another had worked as a manager's assistant at the Management Development Institute of Singapore in Tashkent.

As mentioned above, in all Central Asian countries, women occupy very important roles in the workforce. For example, one female Kyrgyz student had practical experience in an international organization as a project administrator in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Reform Project. One young female Tadjik student worked for an international financial consulting firm. All other female students held positions as specialists, researchers, or consultants for international banks, audit companies, and financial firms.

Despite women's significant role in the workforce, they are often overlooked for top positions in national governments, since Central Asian culture is traditionally patriarchal, offering respect primarily to men. Nevertheless, a woman from Afghanistan held a position as the executive assistant to the deputy minister of finance and also worked as a project manager in the All Afghan Women Union.

5.2 Cross-Cultural Competence of Mentors and Mentees in OSCE Academy

At the OSCE Academy, the mentors and mentees were open to other cultures and had positive attitudes toward different countries. Moreover, as described above, the mentors and mentees had already gained cross-cultural experience during their educational and practical experiences. Many of them had lived, worked, or studied in different countries—and, thereby, had experience with cross-cultural differences and intercultural communication.

The mentors and mentees were very excited to experience new cultures, customs, and traditions. For example, I, as a mentor, was motivated was to understand other cultures, thereby avoiding any miscommunication or misinterpretations.

As a mentor, I explained to my mentees expectations regarding how to dress and behave in different situations in Australia or the United States. Other mentors discussed how to dress when giving a presentation or how to behave during a job interview in the Western world.

From the mentees, I learned to understand their traditions and customs and the methods of behavior in various situations. For example, I learned how to host visitors in Central Asia—the host should give guests a cup of tea, but not a full cup. Serving a full cup of tea signifies that the visitor should drink the tea and then leave, while serving a small amount of tea means that the host wants the visitor to stay longer and enjoy the tea. The mentees told me this after I had served a full cup of tea. This approach is opposite to those many other cultures, including my own.

It represents one example of how, if one does not understand the culture or traditions of one's guests, it can lead to frustration, confusion, and disorientation.

Understanding a student's language is another important issue. During classes, the participants communicate in English, but during the breaks or after classes, they communicate in Russian or their mother tongues. Thus, there was no language barrier in my mentoring experience.

In cross-cultural mentoring, it is important to note that the students have expectations of how the mentor walks, looks, stands, dresses, acts, speaks, and responds. However, it is understood that the best way to dress and behave depends on the culture of the country, the institution, and personal style. In Central Asian countries, people dress nicely when they are in their workplaces; this is part of their culture.

Short skirts and old ripped jeans are inappropriate way to dress for a mentor who is at the front of the room with students watching. An inappropriate appearance gives the impression of irresponsibility and disrespect. Business dress commands a much higher level of respect than casual wear. It represents authority, professionalism, and confidence. Teachers and mentors are role models for their students today, as they were in the past. As mentors, we teach students to act and dress professionally when they begin their careers after graduation.

5.3 The Sensitivity and Complexity of Cross-Cultural Mentoring in the OSCE Academy

In this research, I found that, due to the complexity of cross-cultural mentoring, mentors needed to have certain attributes to foster trust between mentor and mentee and among mentees. To build effective mentoring and trust between mentors and students at the OSCE Academy, it is very important to consider cross-cultural sensitivity and complexity.

The relationships among the students of different nationalities were friendly during their studies at OSBE Academy and after graduation. As a teacher and mentor, I (along with other teachers and mentors) encourage friendship and respect in the culturally, nationally, and ethnically diverse environment of the Academy.

I am pleased I was able to build an effective long-term mentoring relationship with a young female from Afghanistan. I was able to support this brave woman, who had protected women's rights in Afghanistan and who accepted me as a voluntary mentor, even with my Russian background, Australian citizenship, and later as a resident of the United States. Honesty, a nonjudgmental attitude, persistence, patience, willingness to help, and an appreciation for diversity were important characteristics when it came to managing good mentoring and student relationships.

To develop mentees' trust, a mentor must treat students with respect and dignity, and refrain from talking down to them. However, the respect should be mutual.

A mentor must learn from his or her mentees and must be human, fair, reasonable, sincere, and exhibit a sense of humor. It is important to talk to students in a normal tone, irrespective of their age. Mentors should also acknowledge when they are in the wrong and apologize when they have made a mistake.

Effective communication helps us better understand a mentee or a sensitive situation and enables us to resolve differences, while building trust and respect. It also helps to create environments that foster creative ideas and problem solving. More importantly, communication skills are helpful in avoiding misunderstandings, which can cause conflict and frustration in mentoring relationships. By learning effective communication strategies, we can connect better with our mentees. For example, active listening skills involve suspending judgment on how an idea is expressed. Sometimes, mentees have problems articulating their thoughts, and it is important to listen and ask clarifying questions. Successful listening involves not just an understanding of the words or the information being communicated, but also an understanding of how the speaker feels about what he or she is communicating.

5.4 Differences Between Asian and Western Mentees

There are a few differences between Asian and Western mentees (students), which are characterized below.

1. Asian students display a strong desire to improve the economic situations of their home countries, especially during transitional or post-conflict periods.

As mentioned above, the mentees at the OSCE Academy had experienced ethnic, internal, or external conflicts and/or wars. For example, one of my students sent me a letter, making the following comments:

- I believe that Afghanistan needs professionals to get the country out of [its] current misery. We are in [the] minority in Afghanistan—and, thus, only those can raise [their] voice and do something who are equipped with good skills. Unfortunately, in my country, we are being discriminated [against] and can rarely get good opportunities to improve. I think if we can study and work in professional places, we can learn to apply the knowledge to bring a[bout] change. I need your support in this regard.

2. Asian students exhibit significant respect for mentors and teachers.

The status of teachers in Central Asia is considerably higher than that in Western countries. Higher education is highly prized, and it is a great feeling for mentors to know that their mentees are not "customers." Mentors (teachers) are treated like students' second mothers or fathers.

3. Asian students belong to collectivist societies.

The mentees communicated with each other, not only in the academy, but also during the evenings, on weekends, and at special events. They celebrated everyone's birthdays and went to the cinema together. I was often invited to join them, and I completely enjoyed their company. For example, we went to the mountains during the autumn and winter. I was also invited to some religious celebrations. Beforehand, it was useful to ask how to dress, what to bring, when leave, and how communicate. It was very rewarding to know that all of these students from different countries would continue to communicate after they had completed their program and that they would help and support one another.

As mentor, teacher, and master's thesis supervisor, I provided students with reference letters and useful advice. I am happy to report that they also informed me about their achievements and success.

5.5 Differences Between Asian and Western Education Programs

Although the academy's business programs are similar to those in United States, cultural differences between Asian and Western education programs are apparent. International partner institutions from around the world provide assistance in elaborating curricular details, conducting classes, and organizing internships. Moreover, the Norwegian government has provided a large grant to launch the Master of Art program in Economic Governance and Development. The Master of Arts in Economic Governance and Development is a 15-month program that offers an interdisciplinary curriculum in economics, governance, and development based on international standards of teaching. One of the differences is that the program combines rigorous theoretical and practical training through multidisciplinary full-term courses, as well as short, modular, practice-oriented courses:

Full-term courses run throughout the entire semester and are designed to broaden the theoretical knowledge of students and strengthen their analytical and research skills.

Modules (modular courses) are one-or two-week short-term courses, intensively scheduled and taught by experts in a certain field. Modules deliver a practice-oriented approach and allow students to practice their knowledge using real-life examples related to the topics assigned for each class.

Other difference between the Academy's programs and those of the USA is that staff and researchers regularly conduct teaching modules at Master of Art program in Economic Governance and Development of the Academy. Moreover, the OSCE Academy works with a number of international institutes to deliver special courses and modules for students and/or for professional trainings:

- The Deutsche Welle Akademie,
- The Center for Policy Studies (PIR Center in Russia)

- The National Institute for Strategic Studies (NISI) under the Government of Kyrgyzstan
- The Near East South Asia (NESA) Center for Strategic Studies
- The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Sweden
- The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is a new partner of the Academy that will provide experts for teaching modules at the OSCE Academy
- The Geneva Centre for Security Policy is a long-term committed partner of the OSCE Academy.

Thus, the Master of Art program in Economic Governance and Development benefits from diversity through a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and teaching. Teachers and mentors from diverse backgrounds contribute individual talents, ideas, and experiences. A diverse collection of skills and experiences (e.g., languages and cultural understanding) allows the OSBE Academy to provide teaching and mentoring to students on a global basis. A diverse environment that communicates varying points of view provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences to meet the needs of students more effectively.

Moreover, differences exist with regard to specific courses or subjects. For example, I taught International Accounting Standards, which most Central Asian countries have officially adopted. These standards provide guidance that offer flexibility for each country. In Western countries, annual financial reports are prepared for external users, such as investors, creditors, and government agencies. However, in Central Asian countries, annual financial reports are prepared mostly for taxation offices, creditors, and the government. For this reason, the only reports available on websites tend to be the annual reports of banks, international banks, or large multinational corporations.

The students had an assignment in which they analyzed differences between their accounting standards (which are equivalent to the International Accounting Standards), and the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles Standards used in the US. The results indicated that significant differences exist, not only in cultures, but also in accounting standards, even if the standards are based on International Accounting Standards.

Understanding these differences will allow individuals to make correct, appropriate investments or decisions and to avoid unnecessary risks. Thus, the Master of Art program in Economic Governance and Development provides students with contemporary approaches and tools to work in the fields of economics, development, public policy and regulation—both in general and as applied in the Central Asian context. The program also familiarizes students with the OSCE mission and principles through a particular set of activities, including management, resolutions and post-conflict rehabilitation, with a special focus on Central Asian applicability.

6 Conclusion

Effective teaching and mentoring in a cross-cultural environment has become necessary in the context of today's global higher education. For this reason, cross-cultural mentoring should be integrated into programs to help students create new visions for future success and to enrich mentor–student relationships across different nationalities, races, genders, ethnicities, religions, and socioeconomic and socio-cultural backgrounds. A teacher who is mentoring a student from another cultural background should be prepared to interpret the mentee's answers and behaviors based on the mentee's own values. Furthermore, to communicate efficiently, mentors must identify cultural differences and seek similarities in order to build trust. Moreover, to build trust and effective relationships, a mentor must treat mentees of different nationalities, races, or skin colors with respect and dignity.

Teachers and mentors from diverse backgrounds contribute individual talents, ideas, and experiences. A diverse collection of skills and experiences (e.g., languages, cultural understanding) allows the provision of teaching and mentoring to students on a global basis.

It is essential to be culturally competent and sensitive, since this allows mentors and mentees to remain open to new ideas and experiences. Moreover, it helps mentors and mentees experience new cultures and traditions. In addition, cultural competency and sensitivity enhances our skills to perceive and understand similarities and differences between our own and other cultures. In sum, cultural competence will help to establish effective mentoring relationships between mentors and mentees from different cultures.

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Student Co-mentoring in Israeli and American Universities: Promoting Mutual Academic Success

Aram Ayalon

Abstract This chapter describes a peer mentoring approach that was incorporated in two courses that were at the beginning and at the end stages of students' higher education programs: Undergraduate freshmen and doctoral students. With the goal of providing students with academic and social support using student-to-student co-mentoring experiences, the students were divided into dyads or triads. The students were asked to function both as mentors and mentees throughout an academic semester with the purpose of engaging them in co-mentoring to better meet the challenges faced, either in transitioning from high school to college or in furthering the advancement in their doctoral programs. Students enjoyed the meaningful help received and given as co-mentors and found this opportunity fulfilling. The results suggest that effective mentors not necessarily need to be more experienced or more knowledgeable than their mentees as the research suggests, but a more important aspect of effective mentoring might be providing the opportunity for persons to help others, especially those who are in similar predicaments.

Keywords Mentoring · Student co-mentoring · Graduate · Undergraduate

1 Background and Literature Review

Peer mentoring has been widely used and seems to be helpful in a variety of fields. For example a literature review of the impact of peer mentoring on health behaviors of adults and adolescents shows that peer mentoring allows for the incorporation of skill-building activities; reinforcement of self-regulation; engagement in individual and group activities; and social support to meet personal health goals (Petosa and Smith 2014). In higher education peer mentoring has also been found to be

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successful in helping students. For example, peer mentoring has been regarded as an effective intervention to ensure the success and retention of vulnerable students. Students in higher education are often vulnerable when they are new comers to higher education or when they transition into a new higher education program. Furthermore, intellectually demanding and highly competitive programs such as doctoral and professional programs often create special challenges to students such as juggling studies and personal life. Therefore; many universities and colleges have begun to implement some form of mentoring programs as part of their student support services and course work. Nevertheless, the literature indicates that these studies explored how students can mentor one another, instead of relying on more experienced mentors, such as teaching faculty or advisors.

In this chapter I describe a peer mentoring approach that was incorporated into two courses that were at the beginning and at the end stages of students' higher education programs: Undergraduate freshmen and doctoral students. With the goal to provide students with academic and social support using student-to-student co-mentoring experiences, the students were divided into dyads or triads in which the students had to function both as mentors and mentees throughout an academic semester. The main purpose was to engage them in providing support to one another so they could better meet the challenges they face, either in transitioning from high school to college or in furthering the advancement in their doctoral program.

About 59 % of undergraduate students in the United States who began college in 2006 completed it within six years and the majority of undergraduate students dropout during their first year in college (National Center for Education Statistics 2014). Similarly, student drop out in doctoral programs in the US is high. According to Mullen et al. (2010), between 50 and 60 % of doctoral students dropout, and it mostly occurs during the transition from course work to dissertation. Among doctorate students, in the education field education, this is even more difficult, because they tend to be older, and it takes them longer to finish their programs than in most other fields (Smallwood 2006).

Traditional mentoring programs for college students are difficult to implement because they require recruiting faculty members or more experienced students. This requires additional time and resources. Furthermore, according Barnett (2008) students prefer help from peers rather than from traditional mentors, because this is not hierarchical relationship, but on the contrary, mentor-mentee are equal partners in the mentoring process; thus, engaging in a co-mentoring relationship.

The purpose of this study was to explore whether using peers, who take the same course together, could provide the quality of mentoring to each other that would guide them toward academic success in the course, and also to develop positive social relationships. Peer mentoring in this fashion, if well guided, could be easily implemented in any program and course, and creates the conditions for more positive impact in retention and success of college students, irrespective of their academic level.

In higher education, peer mentoring is usually defined as a formal relationship in which a capable or experienced student provides guidance and support to another student with the purpose of enabling the student to succeed in his or her academic education (Kram 1983). Peer mentoring is intended to provide the protégé with task career-related support, as well as psychosocial support. Although peers may have limited capacity to provide career-enhancing support, they can help students meet the requirement of post-secondary education (Terrion 2012).

While a mentor is defined as one who has more knowledge, expertise, wisdom, or experience than the mentee (Bozeman and Feeney 2007), in this study, I explore peer mentoring in the classroom where all participants are both mentors and mentees, and do not necessarily have more expertise or knowledge then their counterparts.

For first year students, research shows that meeting psychosocial needs is more important than providing task-related support (Allen et al. 1997), which may be considered, not a mentoring but coaching. Therefore, peer mentors may be most effective in meeting each other's needs, which may be attributed to the similarity and academic and social proximity between partners in the peer mentoring relationship.

For graduate students, mentoring has long been recognized as an effective strategy for retaining and supporting students in their programs of study (Luna and Cullen 1998). Hadjioannou et al. (2007) found that a mentoring group of four education graduate students working with a professor supported their learning of doctorate course material, encouraged participation in academic community, helped deal with the doctorate program, improved writing, and provided emotional support. Erickson and Travick-Jackson (2006) found that for doctoral students, peer mentoring creates a community of learners. More specifically, they found that candidates identify the mentoring process as leadership development, as well as a form of social and as psych-emotional support, and especially psychosocial support for first-year students (Tinto 1998). In general, mentoring doctoral students including peer mentoring, has been found to promote retention, academic persistency, and graduation. For minority students, mentoring helps close the academic gap between minority and majority groups (CGS 2010).

2 First-Year Seminar at Central Connecticut State University

A First Year Seminar (FYS) course was taught in the fall of 2012 semester at Central Connecticut State University with ten students attending this course. This course was intended to educate students and help them with skills and dispositions needed to succeed in college. It also centered on guiding students to explore issues related to the education field in preparation to apply for entrance to the teacher education program. More specifically, the academic content of the FYS course focused on causes of homelessness and its impact on children in schools.

First-year seminars have become a common practice in higher education in helping new students ease the transition from high school to college by: enhancing a sense of the university as a community, attaining study and survival skills, encouraging critical thinking, and becoming active learners. Incoming students at Central Connecticut State University are required to take the course, and most academic departments participate by offering at least one section of FYS.

3 Mentoring Assignment

The FYS course syllabus indicated the following:

> An important contributing factor to succeeding in college is having a support system. In class you will be assigned to mentor and be mentored by at least one peer. (In) each class you will spend some time communicating with your peer mentee/mentor and you should also keep in touch outside of class via face-to-face, e-mail or phone. As a mentor, your role is to listen and provide support; and as a mentee your role is to share your own thoughts and concerns and seek help. Record your experience in your weekly journal.

Students were assigned to dyads or triads, and were told that the main goal of this arrangement was to mix between students living on campus with commuting students. The purpose of the dyads was to enable students, who do not live on campus, to become familiar through their mentors who live on campus with the various campus' clubs and social events.

In addition to being a mentor and mentee and keeping a journal to reflect on this experience, students had to study various study skills and teach those skills to their peers as well as attend three campus events in areas they were not familiar with (e.g. a sports or a club they were unfamiliar with). These requirements were intended to provide further support to students in their transition to college life. Finally, students also had to mentor on a weekly basis at least one student in a local elementary school who was homeless.

In order to promote mentoring success, the course included icebreaker activities and trust-building exercises. For example, students took turns to be blindfolded and allow their partners to instruct them how to reach a certain location. Also, students had to share with their class on a weekly basis, how they were communicating and supporting their mentees, as well as how mentors were supporting them.

4 Doctoral Course at the University of Tel Aviv

An Advanced qualitative research course was taught in the spring 2008 semester in the school of education at Tel Aviv University in Israel and thirteen students attended the course. Doctorate (PhD) students in the School of Education at Tel

Aviv University are required to take 14–16 course credits before or while working on their dissertation proposal. However, other than a seminar, TAU did not list required courses for the doctorate program. The emphasis in the doctorate program was and continues to be on conducting a dissertation. Students work with their advisors to write a dissertation proposal that has to gain approval by a School of Education departmental committee. The committee, in turn, requests evaluation and feedback from outside evaluators who remain anonymous. The feedback from the evaluators is then communicated to the doctorate students. The challenge for the doctorate students is to modify their proposal through a give-and-take process in a way that gains committee's approval. Once approval is achieved, the proposal is sent to a university-wide committee, which decides whether to give the doctorate student the status of a research student. Students have up to two years to get their research proposal approved and up to five years to finish their research.

5 Mentoring Assignment

Similar to the FYS syllabus, the advanced qualitative research course called for students to mentor and be mentees at the same time. Students were given time during class to mentor each other and to keep a journal about their contribution as well as how they were being helped. Also they were expected to keep in touch with one another outside of the class through telephone or e-mail. Student had to keep a "field" journal as well as a final paper documenting their mentoring experience and how they contributed to their mentees.

In order to support the students' doctorate development, in addition to mentoring, several other assignments were incorporated. First, students had to present their dissertation proposals and disclose where they were in the process. Students then obtained feedback from the instructor as well as from their peers. Furthermore, students had to conduct a joint class research project using qualitative research. Students chose to conduct their class research project about their own difficulties and challenges in the doctorate program—a topic, they found, had little research about in the context of Israel's higher education.

6 Research Method

This exploratory study utilized qualitative research design because it enables to "gain a first-hand understanding of social realities involved … in describing and analyzing values, behaviors, settings and interactions of participants' (Sultana 1991, p. 59). The fact that I was the researcher and instructor of both courses enabled me to have a prolonged engagement with the students, which is one of the defining

qualities of qualitative research. Extensive engagement with students and reading their reflective journals provided important insights into the impact of peer mentoring and enabled me to better understand, interpret, and analyze the process and later the findings (Creswell 2007).

The use of reflective journals to analyze students' perceptions is a common and effective way in understanding the impact of social phenomena. In the field of teacher education research, for example, reflective research has been widely used to study teachers' understandings of their own learning and teaching practices (Borg 2006). Similarly, reflective journals have been widely used in higher education (Jarvis 2001).

7 Data Collection and Analysis

This exploratory research relied on the instructor's field notes, course syllabi material, classroom observations, and twenty-three student reflective journals that were kept by students in both classes throughout the semester. Data from each class was analyzed using coding, noting, and chronicle strategies (Miles et al. 2014). The codes were grouped into themes separately using constant comparison method (Bogdan and Biklen 1992).

8 Results

8.1 First Year Students

Freshmen students found peer mentoring invaluable. Students bonded, spent social and academic time together, often studied or prepared assignments together, and supported one another with transportation to the school where they were mentoring children. I present a variety of situations and how the mediation of co-mentors positively impacted and made students feel at ease. At the beginning of the semester students felt at ease by having been given a mentor, a student commented:

> I feel as though having a peer mentor will help break the ice and have everyone get comfortable. Being able to have someone there for you to support you and assist you in any troubles you come to find or even just there to talk to when you need it, is an excellent thing to have, especially in the start of our first year in college, when everyone can use a helping hand.

Students then continuously relied on their mentors to ensure they were on fulfilling their FYS course requirements as well as other courses they had in common. For example, one student wrote how her mentoring dyad supported both students in fulfilling course assignments,

> We also discussed the assignments in this class because Brandon just wanted to reassure himself that we only had to do a journal this week. In addition, we talked about how we have to find a video talking about racism and discrimination. We communicated well and helped each other out so we didn't do the wrong homework assignment.

The same student felt this continuous support by a mentor was essential,

> We continue to support and help each other out whenever we need guidance or just a reminder about what's due for either class we have together. Having a peer mentor in college is very helpful because I know I can always text him and ask him (for) help on a homework assignment and he can do the same to me.

Another student noticed that her mentor and an additional class member were taking the same history course and suggested that all prepare for a midterm exam,

> Next week in our history class Sarah and I have our midterm, but also Brianna (another FYS member) is in our history class as well. I believe that it would be helpful if the three of us met up together to help each other prepare for the midterm.

Through mentoring students could also find support in fulfilling their community engagement assignment that required them to get to a local school. One female student wrote about how helpful her peer mentor made her feel,

> This week I was able to help my mentor out and that felt good. I offered to give my mentor a ride to (elementary) school so that we could do our mentoring. Since he lives on campus, I thought it might be difficult for him to get to the elementary school which he agreed was difficult. He was so grateful for the ride and I was just happy that I could help him out.

Students not only provided transportation to their mentees but also attempted to make sure their partners came to class. In one case during a class field trip one mentor was trying to help her mentee catch up with the class,

> I supported my peer during last week's class, which was our field trip to downtown… He unfortunately missed the bus ride to the city so he texted me to figure out what was going on! I tried my best to help him find a way to meet up with us but we were unsuccessful so during our next class, I'm going to fill him in on all the things we did on our field trip.

Commuter students also found it helpful to be matched with students who lived on campus as one student indicated,

> I found it useful to have someone I know on campus in order to help me if I was lost or wanted to know what fun things were coming up. As a commuter, I often felt out of the loop, but my mentor made it a point to help inform me of everything going on at CCSU.

Due to the close relationship between the peer mentors, students often also co-mentored children together as one student recalled: *"I was also with (my mentor in the school to mentor children) because we were both nervous for our first mentoring experience so we wanted to do it together."*

Peer mentoring was also an opportunity to share how the first semester experience in college was going and allowed students to learn from one another about

such issues as time management, a common concern of first year students. One student shared:

> It (mentoring one another) also gave us a chance to catch up on how our semester is going. So far, we are both doing pretty well although we both need to work on time management. We also discussed how our mentoring went and overall it went better than we expected.

Another student emphasized the importance of having a mentor who was going through the same process of adjusting to a new situation,

> Peer mentoring was successful in establishing a support system, as well. Your mentor was someone that you could talk to and express your worries or problems with and they would try to help the best they could, mainly because they were going through the same struggles!

Students also felt responsible for their peers' success. For example, one student described how she checked on her peers' academic progress:

> I took the time to text message my mentor and ask him how his project and reading is coming along for this class. It's always nice to have someone check up on you to make sure you're doing ok with your assignments, so that's why I did it.

A student who missed class, alluded to the note her co-mentor sent to help her:

> This week Sarah missed the history class that we have together, and on that specific day we were assigned a take home quiz. I didn't want Sarah to miss the quiz; therefore I sent her the questions on face book.

A typical challenge first year students face is to plan their future undergraduate course of study. One student described the process and how rewarding the peer mentoring process had been for her:

> I am excited that both of us finally declared what our (academic) focus would be; it was a main goal of ours to help each other decide what we wanted to focus in. As mentors I believe that we should both feel very accomplished in the fact that we helped each other take a big step, and declare our focuses.

In addition to academic support, peer mentoring was instrumental in supporting student joining campus life. One mentors helped his mentee learn about campus clubs and student dorms,

> My mentor has helped me out in some unexpected ways this week. First, he told me about some clubs that I didn't get a chance to look at during the club fair and explained which ones looked good. In particular, we discussed a Frisbee club which seems really fun and that we both are looking into joining. He told me about what it's like to dorm, which I found really interesting and helpful since I might choose to live on campus in the future.

A student described how, being accompanied by her mentor had helped her feel more accepted by club members:

> It was nice having someone at the (club) meeting who I feel comfortable with, I believe that it makes it easier to meet other people if you are with someone whom you already know."

Making decisions on whether to join a sorority was difficult, but her mentor student explored the possibilities for her:

> This week my peer mentor…and I were both trying to get more involved on campus on a broader spectrum. She and I were talking about going to the sorority group meeting together…She was able to go. She ended up telling me all about the sorority meeting, and how much she really liked it.

In summarizing the FYI experience, a student noticed how mentoring and other course experiences complemented one another:

> This FYS class has been intellectually stimulating on many levels. Emotional bonds have been made throughout the class as well as in-depth learning about topics that are not explored in other courses. I had the opportunity to improve my communication and teaching skills while actively participating in mentoring. I also improved my studying skills and became more well-rounded and open-minded in general through the discussions.

9 Doctoral Students

Doctoral students found peer mentoring helpful in a number ways that deem important for them. First, they found the mentor-mentee structure and keeping a journal helpful. In addition to meeting during class time, most dyad groups met on a regular basis or set up a time to communicate by phone. Those meetings created a stable supportive structure where both partners were committed as one student wrote:

> The decision to meet on a regular basis, once a week, and to provide for an inclusive process as well as to set up goals, transformed our relationship from just being colleagues (sitting and near by rooms and sharing once in awhile) to being obligated to each other…. It included very clear anchors: what is the situation of each member, what problems do they face at the moment, how we could help them, and what they could do next.

Another dyad group described how the ongoing mentoring meetings supported their research and course understanding,

> Each meeting we started with an update about how our research was proceeding and ended up with writing a joint summary about what we learned from one another regarding our research topic and regarding topics related to the qualitative research course.

The ongoing support enabled students to become self-regulated as one student wrote:

> Every week I check myself and summarize to myself and to my mentor what I learned from the course and from the (field notes) writing process – what's missing…, what I still need to do to collect data effectively and professionally, and what needs clarification.

In addition to the structural impact of mentoring meetings in and out of class, students found keeping field journal essential. Reflecting on the mentoring experience, their own challenges, its impact on their wellbeing, and ways to overcome

difficulties seemed to have facilitated the mentoring experience. One mentoring group of three reflected,

> The process of writing the field notes became a therapeutic process that describes the difficulties, successes, and processes we all went through both as mentors and mentees. It's interesting to read it and see how we were able to progress in such a short time.

Another group found the mentoring journal useful tool for professional and personal development,

> The course mentoring opened for us a special tool – "field notes" that could become a research tool to collect data, to advance in our research, and for self development in general. We therefore, decided to continue keeping field notes and to continue meeting.

A second way students found mentoring helpful, was in creating a community of professionals with norms of exchanging knowledge, research, and other relevant aspects. One student received suggestions for new articles that could inform his dissertation topic:

> …we talked about general issues (related to our research). In another meeting I received from my mentors an important research article about my (dissertation) topic…my mentors recommended that I use (the information from this article) in the interviewing stage of my research.

Another student added how mentoring established a climate conducive for all, Mentoring and other course assignments enabled doctoral students to exchange a lot of information for the benefit of everyone. A student summarized the intellectual stimulation impact of being involved in mentoring by rephrasing a biblical saying, which suggests that one learns from everyone but mostly one learns from one's students by indicating, "*I learned from all my mentors but most of all I learned from my mentees*." Her point was that she learned mostly by helping her mentees, answering their questions, and sharing her knowledge and experience.

A third way mentoring was helpful was in overcoming obstacles in writing dissertation proposals. For example one student did not get feedback from her department dissertation committee and felt stuck,

> As a result of the mentoring and the course I was able become versed in the process (of creating a dissertation proposal) and now I know what to answer to my (doctoral) committee's questions. It (course and mentoring) allowed me to jump in the water and start swimming and it helped.

In the development of his dissertation, a student had a difficult time coming up with an appropriate conceptual framework for his proposal. He then indicated that,

> my mentors noticed that my conceptual framework…was too general and needed more focus. They also helped me to rethink whether I should add more variables…to my research.

A student who found it difficult to focus to finish his proposal, felt that his mentors helped him remove this block,

> In our first meeting…I complained that…I have a hard time focusing to finish my proposal despite the fact that it's quite ready…(My mentor offered) maybe we should talk about each research chapter in each meeting so we could pin point the main issues.. The mere fact that we talked about it caused us to reflect on what was standing in our way.

Similarly, another group provided for a problem-solving forum to help a student overcome a writing block as one mentor described,

> Sharon had a problem converting what she had in mind about the rationale for her dissertation to a written format. We offered her to "lecture" to us about her research proposal and we'll summarize that in an organized written format. This indeed happened. We organized the written rationale in a coherent and logical way…and as a result Sharon… finalized and submitted the proposal!!

A fourth way mentoring was by providing emotional support when facing adversity. One student wrote:

> My feelings improved (by listening to the difficulties of my mentees) because I understood that I, too, will experience difficulties that other (doctoral) students are experiencing."

Another student needed someone to listen, and he was not disappointed:

> I got a lot of support during a crisis…I felt that the choice (feedback) from one of my (dissertation) reviewers was wrong. I talked about it with my mentors and with the whole class who gave me basically a listening ear….not always one has to respond.

Emotional support in mentoring is perhaps one of the most significant results of mentoring:

> On the emotional side, (it helped us understand) the fears and dilemmas we had since the start of the doctorate program."

Another student found that the mentor group was a safe space to express frustrations both with the doctoral program and in other contexts:

> Our (mentoring) meetings provided an opportunity to release emotional pressure and complaints (including about the advisors)…and we are all under external pressures that are not professional."

Often mentoring groups mixed both personal and professional issues together as one group wrote:

> During the mentoring meetings it was difficult to distinguish between the content (of the research) and the personal issues related to the research… The contribution of mentoring was both professional and emotional.

A fifth way mentoring was helpful to students was by providing actual help in conducting data collection and write up of dissertation. Some students who were more advanced in their dissertation found help from their mentors in data collection and analysis, and in enhancing the validity and reliability of their research. One student described how her mentor sat in her interviews with children and provided helpful feedback,

> He (my mentor) helped me a lot with the children's assignment (for the research). He was present in some of the interviews with the children and commented when the questions were not clear or provided additional interpretation of the children's responses…His ideas were very helpful in modifying the children's assignments.

Another dyad of students who were even more advanced in their research provided meaningful help to one another. Hani wrote,

> I helped Helena in several of the crossroads in her research…I read her interviews and raised many questions that caused my mentee to rethink the structure of her interviews….I analyzed one of her transcripts to check for initial reliability and learned that her categories and mine were very similar.

Helena in turn was helpful to Hani in a variety of ways as well,

> Hani gave me one of her chapters to read. I read it wearing two hats – one as a reader who doesn't know this topic and a second as an expert. I asked myself, could I understand the uniqueness of the findings? Are the titles coherent?…Hani said that my comments helped her and gave an external point of view.

A sixth way that mentoring helped students was by providing a market place of ideas where students exchanged meaningful readings, gained new understanding, and reached new understanding through debate. One dyad described how they reached a consensus,

> In the beginning we had very different approaches to incorporating qualitative research in our area and we learned how to deal with that…At present we could say that our approach to incorporating qualitative research with mathematics education is very clear and similar.

Another mentor describes how they reached consensus expressing:

> The meeting started with a huge disagreement regarding our impression of the school… After joint analysis, we came to a consensus…

In summary, the mentoring groups in this class created a sense of camaraderie and community as one student wrote,

> I felt true friendship especially because of the informal tone of the conversation.

Another group of three students wrote:In the past three months we watched, listened, supported, provided suggestions, and mostly were there for one another…

A student creatively used a metaphor to express how the group felt in the doctoral program, as a leaky boat,

> We went into the boat together…The hole (in the boat) is still there but we're are pulling the water out more rapidly (than the water entering the boat).

Another student summarized well the advantage of combining mentoring and being mentee:

> I feel that the combination of being a mentor and a mentee at the same time is a very powerful combination. The connection between me and my partners just became more powerful and we feel close and that we could lean on one another and be a supporting arm.

10 Instructor's Perspective

Reflecting on my experience as instructor in both courses I noticed several advantages of this mentor-mentee scheme. First, student assignments in general, especially in the doctoral course were of higher quality than I was used to in similar courses. Students seemed have received more help than usual in accomplishing the course tasks. The most striking examples of quality assignment was a research paper conducted by two mentor-mentee group who conducted a qualitative study of the experience of one of them going through divorce while writing a dissertation proposal. The final paper was of publication quality. The quality of paper was remarkable—the best I have ever had in twenty-five year in higher education. In reflecting about this paper both doctorate students wrote:

> This research has been a new experience for us that contributed to us both personally and as researchers…Since even before the research we developed close friendship and in addition we collaborated on this research as interviewer and interviewee, we discovered and felt that the trust and connection between us (developed while mentoring) contributed enormously to the openness of the interviewee and to understanding of the phenomenon of this research. As a result, we understood that qualitative research together with a relationship of trust, are essential in discovering subtle meanings.

In addition, for first year student, the rate of assignment completion was higher than expected for freshman.

As an instructor, I found myself relieved from the responsibility of keep reminding my students in both courses about what assignments were due and when. In other courses, I normally have to revisit and remind my students what assignments are due despite having a detailed syllabus. In both courses, the mentoring groups seemed to provide one another on-going reminders about course assignments. This system provided me the freedom to focus more on course content rather than on course management.

Finally, I felt that by incorporating the mentoring groups students no longer dependent just on me as the leader—leadership has been distributed among students and I have become more of an equal member of a learning community.

11 Summary and Conclusions

Although first year college students and doctoral students are very different in their needs, in the tasks that they have to accomplish and in the challenges facing them, both groups benefitted greatly from being engaged in mentor-mentee experience. Both found a community of support in meeting the challenges facing them obtaining practical support for such task as commuting to schools, obtaining articles for their research, and making up for missed classes. While students enjoyed the meaningful help they received from mentors, they found the opportunity to give help and contribute to their fellow classmates even more fulfilling. Several students

even indicated that they felt they did not give as much as they received and expressed wishes that after the course they could reciprocate more and stay in touch with their partners. Students wrote:

> I felt that I receive more help than I provided. I hope that in future years I could provide more help.
>
> The feeling that you could give part of yourself and contribute, even a little, is not just joyful but also enhances your self-motivation.

As the results imply, peer mentors indeed are able to best identify the needs of their mentees since they have so many commonalities with their mentees as previous research suggests (Allen et al. 1997). A reciprocal system where everyone feels they need to contribute and give back to their mentors creates a community—an aspect research suggests it is crucial in effective peer mentoring (Erickson and Travick-Jackson 2006). Furthermore, similar to what Terrion (2012) found, mentors in this study were positively influenced by being engaged in the mentoring process gaining self-regulations and problem solving skills among other skills.

The results suggest that effective mentors not necessarily need to be more experienced or more knowledgeable than their mentees as the research suggests. Perhaps a more important aspect of effective mentoring is providing the opportunity for persons to help others, especially those who are in similar predicaments. Budge (2006) in a review of literature on peer mentoring in post-secondary settings found eight different definitions of mentoring, six of which focus on the mentor's characteristics that go beyond the mentee's characteristics such as experience, knowledge, or age; while two definitions focused on what mentors do and providing advice or sharing experience. Budge (2006) calls for defining mentoring in a consistent way that is applicable to the educational setting. The implications from this research is that peer-mentoring in the context of the classroom should define mentoring in terms of the type of support mentors provide to their mentees. Budge (2006) suggests that, "Mentoring must be multidimensional to allow for the inclusion of none-traditional aspects of mentoring" (p. 80).

Another implication of this study is that mentoring and being mentored by others are not easily distinguished. Mentors often learn as much from mentoring as their mentees and find themselves in reverse roles. This study suggests that it might be advantageous, especially in the classroom context, to provide each person two roles at the same time. This might allow for more equal power relationship in the college classroom.

A lens that could help interpret the results of this study is to examine it in light of the taxonomy of characteristics of student peer mentors in higher education. In their review of the literature on mentoring, Terrion and Leonard (2007) distinguished between prerequisites for the student peer, mentor characteristics that support career-related functions and those serving psychosocial functions. Several of the finding here fit well with the categories these authors provided.

Regarding prerequisites for the student peer mentor, the most frequently cited aspect critical in assessing suitability of mentor candidates was the ability and willingness to commit time. In this study, the weekly class time for mentoring as

well as the requirement for ongoing mentoring outside of class created a structure and incentives that ensured, in most cases, sufficient motivation and time commitment to mentoring. Regarding characteristics that support career-related functions, the most important variable was whether the mentor and the mentee shared the same program of study. In this study, most students in both classes were enrolled in the same programs. In the case of the FYS course, most students were committed to become teachers and shared similar course schedule leading to a certificate program at the junior and senior year. In the case of the doctoral program, all students were at different stages of a doctoral program in education that shared similar characteristics.

Finally, regarding mentor characteristics most pertinent to student peer mentoring serving the psychosocial function, some of the most frequently cited aspects were supportiveness, trustworthiness, interdependency, and empathy. Supportiveness has been one of the most important elements that mentors provided their peers in both classes. Students knew that they had someone in their class to help them with assignments and with challenges facing them in their program. Furthermore, the course structure and consistent reinforcement of the importance of mentoring created a trusting relationship between the groups. In addition, the fact that all mentors in the two classes operated both as mentors and mentees created a situation where all students were both helping and being helped rather becoming dependent only. Finally, it is apparent that since students in both courses were facing similar challenges they showed great empathy toward one another.

Another issue related to peer mentoring in the classroom is the goal of reducing dropout. While this study did not follow up the students who were engaged in mentor-mentee class experience, it would be helpful to conduct such a follow up study. Student dropout from universities could potentially be reduced if such peer-mentoring programs would be established consistently throughout students' programs. Future studies also could compare the impact of student-to-student co-mentoring and the influence of peer mentoring by more experienced students. Exploring the pros and cons of both forms of peer mentoring could inform higher education institutions. Another line of inquiry on this topic could explore how co-mentoring could benefit classroom instruction and more specifically cooperative learning. A third line of research could compare peer mentoring across countries to suggest how differences in education systems might affect the nature and structures of peer mentoring.

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Capacity Building of Early Career Researchers Through Cross-Institutional Mentoring

Angela Fenton, Kerryann Walsh and Amy MacDonald

Abstract Most early career researchers in the first five years following doctoral qualification are faced with research challenges and opportunities, which necessitate the ability to navigate and overcome barriers, and to identify and benefit from possibilities. In this chapter, the authors outline an intentional mentoring initiative aimed at building the capacity of early career researchers within the Excellence in Research in Early Years Education Collaborative Research Network (CRN) in Australia. The initiative involved partnering early career researchers with experienced researchers and the inclusion of an early career representative on the network planning committee. The chapter discusses the many benefits for the mentee arising from the initiative including increased publication, momentum and confidence, as well as exposure to new methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and productive collaborative partnerships. It is hoped, however, that the findings will be of relevance to similar and diverse (funded/unfunded) research programs and collaborative networks wherever mentoring is applied as a capacity building strategy to assist researchers.

Keywords Higher education · Mentoring · Early career researchers · Networks

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1 Background and Literature Review

Following the discussion from previous chapters, it is confirmed that there are various definitions and applications of mentoring internationally. In this chapter, we present a mentoring case study that aligns with Howell's (2014) definition of a *mentor* as "someone with knowledge and experience who is seen as a role model by others" (p. 565) and where a mentoring partnership is described as a "professional relationship" (p. 565). This definition applies to this particular mentoring case study, where reflective mentoring practice was intentionally embedded within a professional dyadic context (Eraut 2006; Hunt and Michael 1983) with a "traditional, hierarchical mentor-protégé relationship" (Janasz and Sullivan 2001, p. 263). Additionally, elements of peer mentoring also emerged during the mentoring initiative (Ensher et al. 2001). Kram and Isabella (1985) describe peer mentoring as occurring when support and advice is gained from colleagues of a similar position, status or experience. More specifically, we apply and evaluate mentoring processes in a case study of a single early career researcher (mentee) mentored by a senior researcher (mentor) with additional access to a peer early career representative (peer mentor). *Early career researchers* are generally referred to in higher education as researchers in the first five years following doctoral qualification (Bazeley 2003). The case study occurred within a large cross-institutional Collaborative Research Network (CRN) researching in early years education in the Australian higher education sector. As such, the findings are generated from a specific funded professional context.

In Australia, CRNs are intentional government-funded capacity-building initiatives that bring together researchers at various career stages and from a number of universities to form partnerships that will enhance research productivity and sustainability in an area of national significance. The early career researcher (first author and mentee) featured in this chapter completed a Doctor of Philosophy qualification in 2012 and was employed as a full-time academic engaged in teaching and research at a regional Australian University that was part of a CRN.

1.1 Early Career Researchers

The mentee in the case study identifies as one of "tens of thousands of researchers" (Johnson 2011) globally, in a range of disciplines and higher education contexts, which are recognized as early career researchers. In Australia (and internationally), these early career researchers are typically met at some point with both hurdles that restrict, and openings that progress, their research and academic careers (Bazeley et al. 1996; Bazeley 2003; Remmik et al. 2011). Indeed, the early career researcher in this case study experienced identified barriers and opportunities around key

research activities such as potential publication writing, grant proposal funding, forming collaborations and participating in networking and professional groups (Cox et al. 2006). It is not unusual for such barriers and opportunities to occur *concurrently*, which inevitably causes tension for early career researchers transitioning from dependent to independent research (Laudel and Gläser 2007). The ability of novice researchers to navigate research terrain, confront hurdles and take advantage of positive openings, however, appear to differ significantly according to both individual and institutional characteristics (Hemmings et al. 2004) and underlines the value of case by case examination of this phenomenon. For example, research suggests that forming effective networks is vital to progression yet these prove difficult to initiate and maintain for some early career academics (Asmann et al. 2014). Claussen et al. (2013) and Hemmings et al. (2004) believe that individual research success and promotion may also be influenced by the early career researcher's previous and personal experiences, social capital, discipline, research topic, workplace environment, and resources available to them.

Literature suggests that there are a number of strategies identified as best practice for supporting early career researchers to flourish in academia and these are pertinent to assist the case study analysis. At a systems level, the early career researcher's professional organization can foster strong collegial networks (Asmann et al. 2014). For example, via the widely adopted notion of "communities of practice" (Wenger 1998, p. 1; Wenger et al. 2002), novice academics can develop professional identities and support through familiar relationships in workplace communities (Remmik et al. 2011). Implicitly positive or negative institutional research cultures may enable or constrain progression for novice researchers (Hemmings et al. 2004). At a practical level, progression can be enabled by leveling the playing field, for example, by providing "special consideration in prestigious research funding schemes for early career researchers who will otherwise become disenchanted with academic research" (Bazeley 2003, p. 257). These key examples, underline the important capacity building role of research institutions and organizational systems, an important contextual factor influencing the case study.

Mentoring Early Career Researchers. Development and progression of early career researchers is vital for the continued growth and sustainability of educational research in Australia (Mann et al. 2007), and it is crucial for the discipline of education, as the oldest academic workforce in Australia (Cumming 2010), with one-third to one-half of academic staff nearing retirement (Nile 2006). Research into mentoring, as a key strategy for developing early career researchers, is promising in particular showing that individuals who have been supported by a mentor report positive outcomes such as career promotions and enhanced job satisfaction (Wallace 2001). Some mentoring relationships, however, are reported as being more supportive, productive, long lasting, and effective than others (Ragins et al. 2000).

Whilst most research in mentoring has, according to Janasz and Sullivan (2001), been based on "traditional, hierarchical mentor–protégé relationships in non-academic settings" (p. 263), there is still limited literature promoting the benefits of early career mentoring in higher education. Grbich (1998) conducted

research in health science departments in two Australian universities and found that mentoring combined with a positive and motivating environment encouraged research progression. More recently, Keller et al. (2014) in the United States investigated early career biomedical researchers involved in formal mentoring programs. They concluded that while generally positive experiences were generated, "mentoring relationships created for academic training and career development contend with tasks common to many other relationships, namely, recognizing compatibility, finding time, establishing patterns, agreeing to goals and achieving aims" (p. 211). Mann et al. (2007) listed multiple benefits that resulted from a cross-institutional funded mentoring program including leadership opportunities, peer-to-peer mentoring and joint publications. Evidence of successful mentoring processes could be beneficial to universities wishing to extend the advantages and reduce the disadvantages of previous mentoring programs.

Research on mentoring seems to suggest that to improve the benefits of mentoring in Higher Education, there is a need to examine multiple mentoring relationships, specific mentoring strategies, and programs for mentoring across career stages (Janasz and Sullivan 2001). Collaborative mentoring, that involves more than a one to one relationship in the form of "mentoring constellations" (Sorcinelli and Yun 2007) has been found to be most effective. Such collaborative mentoring, where mentors may vary as an academic's career develops, is particularly advantageous when mentors adopt a problem-solving approach (Keller et al. 2014) with "opportunities to exchange advice and solutions derived through experience" (p. 215). The opportunity to be mentored in writing for publication, for instance, is crucial for early career academics and explicit university initiatives are needed to promote refereed publications, "specifically, they should target the building of writing confidence, using the expertise of experienced academics in mentor programs" (Hemmings et al. 2004, p. 164); furthermore, Hemmings et al. (2004) concur with (Keller et al. 2014) that more systematic research is needed to reveal mentoring "best practices for fostering positive relationships" (p. 215). In particular, case study research could allow the detailed articulation of mentoring processes necessary to reveal and explain best practice outcomes.

Collaborative Research Networks. Previous studies provide understandings about the role mentoring within collaborative research networks and are important precedents to the case study. Informal collaborative research networks within institutions are not a new phenomenon but the number and type of formal and strategically funded cross-institutional research networks (such as the site for this research) differ significantly by discipline and region. Shimizu and Hirao (2009) for example, explain that in field of information technology in the two decades between 1975 and 1994 "research networks were more developed in scale and scope in North America than in Europe and Asia" (p. 233). In the area of pediatric research in the United States, Clancy et al. (2013) argue that established decades of collaborative research networks have allowed for larger scale research, and quality

improvement in both research methods and reliability. In Brazil, a *virtual* collaborative research network was established in the field of biomedical research (Carmargo and Simpson 2003). The network was able to collaboratively "complete the first genome sequence of a plant pathogen" (p. 468). Carmargo and Simpson (2003) argued that *Collaborative Research Networks Work* because they are able to bring together "dispersed and diverse" (p. 468) expertise (from developed and developing countries) and can achieve high outcomes in areas "too complex" to be tackled by individual programs. The significant government funding for fellowships and use of technology were key factors for enhancing sustainable research and mentoring the development of early career researchers within the Brazilian network (Carmargo and Simpson 2003). Dimitrova and Koku (2010) presented a case study of a Canadian collaborative research network (involving practitioners and academics) that used both face-to-face and online management strategies. They concluded that there must be a "shared understanding of research goals" (p. 1) for research consortia (and mentoring within it) to be successful. Dimitrova and Koku (2010) argued that networks are an ideal environment for all participants to seek advice (regardless of role or career stage) and participants preferred face-to-face meetings to "build trust and shared understanding" (p. 20). However, they also urged not to underestimate the value of the non-intrusive virtual medium of email to facilitate seeking advice, which was especially effective for academics in the study.

Enhancing research quality and outcomes has been a reported benefit of collaborative research networks (Liao 2011; Rigby and Edler 2005). It can be argued that networks can benefit members by providing a more structured framework than with individual research, as there are joint outcomes and quality assurance checks (Clancy et al. 2013). Frost and Crockett (2007) warn that to achieve the best outcomes, collaborative networks must, however, put much effort into foundational relationship building. Care must also be taken to not only assess the outcomes for the collaborative research network as a whole but for the individual researchers within it. Hewitt et al. (2012), for instance, explored the "explosion" (p. 310) of ophthalmic collaborative research networks in Australia. They warned that while these undoubtedly contributed to the advancement of knowledge and resulted in increased *joint* publications, it should be noted that, "the common metrics for academic career advancement are still largely based on individual achievements" (Hewitt et al. 2012, p. 310). The case study site is situated in Australia, within a suite of Collaborative Research Networks that were proposed in the Federal Government budget of 2009–2010 and funded $81.1 million AUD for fifteen network projects from July 2012. The aim of the Collaborative Research Network programs was to develop "the research capacity of smaller, less research-intensive and regional higher education institutions" by partnering them with larger universities with "established research strengths" around common research goals (Commonwealth of Australia 2013, Objectives). The CRN programs in Australia incorporate a range of Higher Education disciplines and designated "important areas of research" such as mental health, environmental management, Indigenous health, and early childhood education.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research Aims and Theoretical Framework

The subject of the research is a study of a mentoring partnership within a collaborative research network. It is hoped that while this case study is set within an education discipline in higher education, the findings may enhance understanding of mentoring across a wide range of disciplines and be applicable to a variety of contexts in higher education. With these aims in mind, a qualitative, case study research methodology was applied with reference to the theoretical notion of "collective impact" (Kania and Kramer 2013, p. 1); a process for positive social change comprising five necessary conditions: "a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication and a backbone support [organization]" (p. 1). The case study method was chosen as best to articulate and to examine insights that emerged from a specific mentoring initiative. The theoretical framework guided the examination of the 'collective impact' of this partnership.

The aim of the research was not for the case study to be replicated en masse or be proposed as the only 'true' way of engaging with a mentorship partnership. The qualitative case study is presented to add to the body of literature on mentoring and to give a perspective on the actualization of mentoring. Burns (2000) explains that, "qualitative research places stress on the validity of multiple meaning structures and holistic analysis, as opposed to the criteria of reliability and statistical compartmentalization of quantitative research" (p. 11). The authors explore a single example of mentoring in order to gain deep meaning and determine new possibilities for the mentoring of early career researchers by referring to Yin's (2009) case study method (further explained below in *Method*).

Participants. The participants in the case study were Authors 1, 2 and 3. Author 1 was the mentee, an academic with a full-time ongoing position as an early childhood lecturer at Charles Sturt University a regional university that was the focus of the CRN. Author 1 was initially a Ph.D. scholar who, upon completion, transitioned to a role as an early career researcher early in the life of the CRN. This case study is written from her "standpoint" (Rolin 2009). Author 2 was the mentor, an Associate Professor at Queensland University of Technology, home to the largest school of early childhood in Australia. Author 2 was a CRN Co-Director: one was appointed for each of the three participating universities.

As with Author 1, Author 3 is an early career researcher and academic with a full-time ongoing position as Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at Charles Sturt University. Author 3 was the Early Career Researcher Representative on the CRN Planning Committee throughout the duration of the CRN. Her role consisted largely of liaising between early career members and the senior members of the CRN, and providing input from an early career perspective into CRN planning matters.

Each author was a participant-observer in the case. An advantage of participant observation is the opportunity to gain unique insights into complex situations.

A disadvantage, however, is the risk of bias due to participant-observers' idiosyncratic perceptions of circumstances and events (Yin 2009, p. 102). The authors' retrospective recall and critical reflection on their work serves as the source of case study data, along with the CRN archival records and reports (CSU 2015). The authors viewed the opportunity for critical reflection on mentoring practice as "a prelude to changing or improving it" (Mac Naughton and Hughes 2008, p. 99).

2.2 Case Method

Yin (2009) explains case study as useful when the research aim is "the desire to derive a (n) (up-) close or otherwise in-depth understanding of a single or small number of "cases," set in their real-world contexts" (p. 4). In case study research, providing detailed contextual information is integral to gaining understandings and so this case study will provide both contextual information and description of mentoring experiences and perspectives. Case studies are particularly useful for "either a *descriptive* question—'What is happening or has happened?'—or an *explanatory* question—'How or why did something happen?'" (Yin 2009, p. 5). Rather than using a questionnaire or survey, the case study is presented as an opportunity to view the mentoring partnership in depth, via an explanatory lens, to explore the factors influencing the outcomes of the partnership.

An inherent difficulty in any case study research is the impossibility to fully negate bias in the description and analysis of the case. This is arguably difficult in any form of research and the authors note that this is particularly difficult in a case study driven by "insider" (Coghlan 2001, p. 49), participant observation. Iterative cycles of critical reflection and writing were undertaken in developing the case study to ensure that the researchers' subjectivity did not overwhelm or disproportionately influence the research process. To this extent we also acknowledge that with our intention to reconstruct and reinterpret the case retrospectively we did not begin with a priori "propositions" (Yin 2009, p. x); rather, it is in looking back at the mentoring partnership. We followed traditional steps used in case study research to reconstruct the case. Initially, the case study was drafted by the mentee following a chronological "compositional structure" (Yin 2009, p. 175) to elucidate how the mentoring partnership was initiated, developed and to describe the outcomes that resulted.

2.3 Analysis

The analysis technique was a collective iterative process undertaken with the mentee, mentor and CRN early career representative. Common and unique themes identified by the mentee were confirmed and challenged within the case, before themes were agreed, discussed, cross-referenced to the literature reviewed, and

further analyzed for theoretical notions of "collective impact" (Kania and Kramer 2013).

The analysis used two categories to the case study data, namely thematic analysis (Aronson 1994) and contextual analysis (Ross and Nisbett 1991). While recognizing and examining different stakeholder perspectives is a constituent part of most qualitative analysis methods (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Patton 2002), equally beneficial, was contextual analysis that revealed particular influences on, and evaluations of, the mentee's experience. This enabled the analysis to examine how these influences might promote or impede the mentoring partnership (Kumar 2005). The combination of analytic methods recognized both perspectives of individual researchers and contextual features of the CRN.

3 Case Study

3.1 Background

The case study discusses an intentional mentoring initiative aimed at building the capacity of a group early career early childhood researchers. The study was based within the Australian-based Excellence in Research in Early Years Education Collaborative Research Network (CRN) which received Commonwealth funding of $AUD 5.3 million from 2011 to 2014 (CSU 2015, 1). The Early Years CRN partnered a regional university (Charles Sturt University) with two established, research-intensive metropolitan universities (Queensland University of Technology and Monash University) to "form Australia's largest network of researchers in early years education" (CSU 2015, 1). Overall, there were approximately 70 researchers in total involved with the collaborative research network.

The CRN was charged with increasing research that "informs current and future policy and practice in early years' education throughout Australia and internationally" (CSU 2015, 1). Inherent in the program was a mandate to build the capacity of researchers from the regional university. These researchers were a various career stages, including the case study mentee, who was an Early Career Researcher (ECR) at Charles Sturt University. The number of ECRs in the network was approximately 17 at the beginning of the network, although there was movement in and out of the ECR group over the course of the three-year term. Experienced researchers in the CRN included senior academics and researchers "The 12 professors and six associate professors in the CRN make significant contributions to mentoring early and mid-career researchers and higher degree by research (HDR) students" (CSU 2015, 3). In total approximately 30 researchers transitioned into and/or through the ECR category during the life of the network and most experienced either informal mentoring from the experienced researchers in the CRN or participated in a more structured mentoring partnership. This case study articulates one such partnership.

3.2 The Formation of a Mentoring Partnership

In 2011 the mentee received an email in 2011 from CRN Directors to announce the funding of the Early Years CRN and to outline the overall aims of the network. Of particular interest to the mentee who was near completing her Ph.D., was the objective:

> To build a critical mass of early and mid-career research productive academics in EYE [Early Years Education] at CSU with high level research performance based on increased capacity in research skills, research supervision, research leadership and research administration (CSU 2015)

During that time, some doctoral students (like the mentee) became early career researchers, some early career researchers already progressed to being mid-career researchers, and new doctoral students also joined the group:

> The timing of the CRN was really good for me in one sense as I could see there would be lots of opportunities after I finished my PhD but I was also anxious and in the middle of the examination of my thesis so it was also all a bit overwhelming to try and focus on anything else. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015)

While the ratio of novice to experienced researchers fluctuated over the years of the network operation, novice researchers in the network were always a significant subset. The potential for mentoring from a significant number of experienced researchers was high, with numbers in line with the typical ratio of one third to a half of the CRN group being experienced researchers (Nile 2006). Regular newsletters (online) and the CRN website, outlined the work of researchers (and potential mentors) involved in the network. Members were encouraged to contact each other by email ahead of the first face-to-face meeting. Mentors were supported with specific budget lines dedicated to support for mentees, both individually, in programs, and working on projects and papers.

As with all the CRN participants, the mentor and mentee were formally introduced at the beginning of the project. In particular, the CRN Director sent an email welcoming the mentor to the CRN network and introduced the mentee (and 2 other CSU early career researchers with similar research interests). The mentor contacted the mentee ahead of the first meeting (known as a "whole-of-network" meeting) and raised the idea of a possible collaborative writing project based on mutual interests. This contact, thus immediately focused the mentee and other early career researchers on one of the key CRN objectives: to increase collaborative publication rates and quality.

Three whole-of-network meetings were conducted in the course of the CRN. These face-to-face meetings were an explicit strategy by CRN leaders to broker research relationships within the network and to aid the planning and development of research projects in areas of mutual interest and strength. Early career researchers were involved with the planning of the whole of network meetings via the ECR Representative. Face-to-face network meetings involved significant funding of air travel, transportation and accommodation costs. Technology was employed prior

and post meeting to maximize support and ongoing communication. The early career researchers within the CRN worked in three different universities, located in three geographically diverse Australian states (New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria) separated by vast distances. The mentee noted "to be able to meet face to face with Xxx at the meeting was so beneficial, we talked about the possibility of her guiding us to write a journal article together" (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015).

The mentoring partnership was formed at the first whole-of-network meeting. The mentor met with the mentee and others at the meeting and discussed a potential collaborative publication. In an email immediately after the meeting, the mentor began her mentoring role by sending a collaborative journal article that she had previously written as a suggested model for the format and process that the group might use and proposed a case study methodology. The mentor also advised and guided the writing of the publication:

> We could do something a bit more creative with the discussion with perhaps me adding a voice as a "discussant" of your three case studies… I will send you a copy of the initial email I sent to my co-writers where I set down milestone dates/deadlines for different stages of the paper development. This might help you to see how long it took, but also how achievable it was. Hope this helps. I'm looking forward to working with you over the next year! Please feel free to contact me if I can be of help with anything else you are doing too. (K. Walsh personal communication August 17 2011)

Participants from each university joined the CRN from their own unique university research context with varying degrees of existing internal research support and mentoring. Each researcher came with their own research focus, previous experiences, and all juggled competing academic workloads. Common to all, by virtue of the CRN's mandate, was a focus on research in early years education: "the recognition that the early years of life (from birth to age eight) is a critical period in human development. Young children's early experiences and interactions have life-long impacts on their wellbeing and socioeconomic outcomes" (CSU 2015, Background).

3.3 Developing a Mentoring Partnership

Following the initial whole-of-network meeting three distinct and interrelated programs of research were formed within the CRN:

1. Children's development, learning and wellbeing in the early years;
2. Early years' curriculum, pedagogy and professional practice; and
3. Access, inclusion and policy (including provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities; integrated services; and in rural and remote communities). (CSU 2015, Background)

CRN members, including the mentee were asked to self-nominate for a program. Both the mentor and mentee in this case chose to be members of Program 3 with convergent areas of interest in child protection, interdisciplinary research and social

justice. Each program was overseen by two program leaders from two CRN member universities, whose role was to facilitate mentoring opportunities tailored to the research interests of the program members. The mentee reflected:

> I chose Program 3 because I had worked in interdisciplinary contexts and my research areas of child protection and strengths approaches seemed to fit well in that program. Also the program leader (Professor) had mentioned a social justice event possibly on our campus, which I was interested in. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015)

The initial whole of network meetings allowed time for sharing of research interests, through discussion of current projects, publications, and plans. Individual resumes were circulated to help researchers determine the program areas to best meet their particular needs. This also allowed CRN members a non-intrusive view of the research profiles of other members and helped to identify potential connections and mutual areas of interest.

Participants could choose to join more than one program (as sometimes research foci overlapped) but all were encouraged to choose a main program with which to engage.

From the mentee's perspective:

> The division of the larger CRN group into three programs allowed smaller groups of like-minded researchers to develop and encouraged novice researchers to be involved as they were less overwhelmed and more inclined to discuss ideas and find appropriate mentors. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015)

Program leaders developed tailored research projects and support strategies including proposed publications based around their areas of focus. Planning was completed in consultation with members. Program leaders reported back to the CRN Planning Committee on a monthly basis in participatory teleconference meetings. Although the mentee received information about all three-program activities, she reported:

> Membership of Program 3 made it easier to decide which opportunities were more relevant to me and my research, and I could always discuss this with the program leaders if needed. There was so much happening at once that I could have been overwhelmed but I just concentrated on Program 3 events. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015)

The mentor and mentee attended a Social Justice Forum and commenced writing an article with two other early career researchers for a peer-reviewed journal.

By choosing a specific program within the CRN, early career researchers were able to meet and have increased access to the experienced and peer researchers who had the same, similar or connected early years focus as their own. Mentoring partnerships, founded on joint research interests were formed within programs in the CRN. "Talking to other early career researchers we were in awe at times, of all the renowned scholars in the room at one time—people we had 'quoted' in our Ph. D.'s and papers—that now may be our mentors!" (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015). Once programs were established, CRN leaders encouraged potential mentors to foster and initiate partnerships with potential mentees—though this often occurred through informal discussion about potential papers, grant

applications or CRN projects. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the mentoring of early career researchers in the CRN was part of an intentional initiative:

> Through their mentoring of the groups of researchers within and across Programs, senior CRN researchers are working to ensure that early- and mid-career researchers, and higher degree research (HDR) students, are developing and refining the skills, capacities, and track records required for successful collaboration on joint publication programs and externally funded research projects. Each group is working towards specific research outputs (e.g., a refereed publication or a grant proposal) that will further their individual track records, strengthen their connections, and begin to establish/strengthen a track record of collaboration. (CSU 2015)

While mentoring partnerships were not forced or mandatory within the CRN there was an expectation of involvement and strategic imperative that all members of the CRN acknowledged and committed to in joining the network.

> The projects on which they are working require a sustained commitment to collaboration. Moreover, all researchers in the CRN understand that the development of a cumulative national evidence base and a landmark study will require sustained collaboration, long after CRN funding ceases. These structures and expectations provide a very favorable context for intergenerational mentoring that is also conducive to building the long-term sustainability of the CRN. (CSU 2015)

There were explicit strategies to encourage mentoring partnerships for early career researchers. For example, to attend a whole of network meeting and program event, participants completed a written expression of interest, which included requirement to outline participant aims and contributions would be made and to identify people they wished to work with. Expressions of interest were approved in the monthly teleconferences. This enabled early career researchers to identify potential mentors, prior to events, and gave CRN leaders advanced preparation time to negotiate possible partnerships. It also normalized the process of mentoring formation. Given the power dynamics inherent in mentoring partnerships, the strategy also allowed a safe way for the mentee to indicate interest in collaboration, rather than having the pressure of requesting a partnership directly with a more senior researcher. In this way, the CRN leaders acted as mentoring partnership brokers which appeared a successful approach.

The mentee already had a good knowledge of the mentor's established research profile and publications in the area of child protection before joining the CRN. She had referred to the mentor's work in her own doctoral studies that focused on better preparing teachers for child protection. The mentor's research profile stated she was "a pre-eminent Australian scholar in the interdisciplinary field of child maltreatment prevention" (Queensland University of Technology [QUT] 2015). Of all the scholars in the CRN, the mentor's research work was most aligned with the mentee's developing research profile. Even with this joint area of interest, however, it is unlikely that the mentee would have had any significant opportunities to collaborate with the mentor outside of the CRN environment. While prior to the CRN both attended similar research conferences, were involved in similar professional organizations, and had similar publication avenues; the likelihood of establishing a sustained self-initiated mentoring partnership was minimal. The

geographical distance between the two campuses of the mentee and mentor (over 1300 km or 15 driving hours) was alone a significant barrier.

3.4 Sustaining Mentoring Partnerships

Within the CRN, in addition to the overall and program leaders an Early Career Researcher Representative (ECR Rep) was appointed. This person was a peer early career researcher and was involved with CRN decision making by attending Planning Committee meetings and giving feedback from and to the group of early career researchers within the CRN. "The ECR Rep was the 'go to' person for asking questions or seeking advice from CRN leaders" (A. Fenton personal communication April 26 2015). The ECR Rep was also involved in meetings of the senior researchers within the CRN, and had input into a range of CRN projects and events. To ensure that the early career researchers' (ECR's) interests and needs were met during the CRN, the ECR Rep collated a CRN 'wish list' from the early career researchers. She asked: "What do you think are the ECR's needs and what type of support and tips do you need from experienced researchers?" (A. MacDonald personal communication 2011). The list of replies was documented:

- Career development—people from the different universities to tell about their career development/aspirations, what they would do differently if they were ECR again
- Dealing with the media—when media contact about your research and when you want to promote your research through the media.
- Interdisciplinary research—how to get started, what to watch for, what others have experienced.
- Forming international teams for research—experienced researchers views, the way attending conferences might facilitate this
- Developing a research profile—Tips and tricks for applying for promotion, Professional planning
- Balancing competing agendas in an academic career—Being strategic as an academic—when to say "yes", and when to say "no"!
- Work/life balance—Time management (A. MacDonald personal communication 2011).

The mentee commented *"*While I can't speak for the other ECR's in the CRN, I can say that my situation was mirrored in all the comments made by them at the beginning of the CRN to the ECR Rep" (A. Fenton personal communication April 26 2015).

The ECR Rep was able to elaborate on the ECR's feedback to the leadership team and in collaboration strategies were developed for ECR capacity building around a refined aim; "increasing publication, involvement in research grants and projects, facilitating future research collaborations and encouraging sustainability for early career academics" (CSU 2015). Strategies included furthering the

mentoring partnerships and the opportunity to apply for a funded fellowship (approximately 6 months—over one university session). Fellowships included relief from teaching and an approved publication development plan. The mentee was awarded a CRN fellowship in July 2012. The ECR Rep promoted the fellowship opportunities to the early career researchers and could provide advice about the process of applications and what to include.

The mentors and ECR Rep advised the CRN Program Leaders about common issues, training requests and questions that arose as they worked with early career researchers. Additional events were planned and implemented to address the needs. CRN programs and 'whole of network' events included:

- Writing and skills development workshops,
- Focused reading groups,
- Visiting scholars,
- Cross-institutional visits,
- Assistance with conference presentations,
- Specific qualitative and quantitative methodology focused seminars and training,
- Sessions on using media to promote research, and
- Presentations from experienced scholars charting their research journeys, outlining their successes and challenges and giving career development tips.

For example, a CRN leader received questions from ECR's within one program including how they could build a 'track record' of publications, which Field of Research (FoR) code(s) to use with their work and how to become a Chief Investigator on a grant application. The CRN leader spoke to other program leaders and arranged a videoconference with a detailed agenda—specifically addressing each question asked by the ECR's. The mentee along with all the other ECR's received the agenda and a documented response to each question:

There have been requests to discuss:

1. The 'ins and outs' of CRN publishing expectations and Field of Research (FoR) codes

> – see attached overview. If you get a chance, please read this before the meeting … If in doubt, please don't hesitate to talk with your research mentor or a senior CRN researcher. They help you identify a pathway that it is consistent with your publishing goals and longer-term research aspirations. (CRN leader, from A. Fenton personal communication March 12 2012)

Throughout the running of the CRN, the mentor and mentee continued their mentoring partnership activities in parallel with contributing and participating in whole of network and program events. Following the videoconference, for instance, the mentee checks with the mentor that the FoR code is correct for the collaborative paper they are writing. Along with other experienced researchers, the mentor outlined her academic career at a session during a whole of network meeting, giving indications of the challenges she had faced with writing and publishing. She also gave ideas for managing teaching, research and work/life balance. Afterwards the mentor sent the mentee copies of the template document she had used to help organize and

time-manage her research, teaching, administration and community objectives as an academic. She suggested that the mentee focus on trying to align her teaching and research areas as closely as possible and to carefully consider any additional requests to join committees or be involved with projects outside of her key area of research.

The mentor gave priority to supporting the development of the mentee's writing and offered personalized guidance throughout the process of developing the collaborative paper. For the mentee, "my main need was help with writing and publication really—post Ph.D.—how to write from my thesis and manage the process and keep momentum, particularly with a jointly authored paper" (A. Fenton personal communication April 26 2015). Over three years, in a gradual step-by-step process that coincided with the life of the network (2011–2014), the mentor helped the mentee to manage the role of lead author of the paper. The mentor role modeled and demonstrated research-writing skills from the conceptual beginnings until the final publication of the article. Advice was given, such as how to develop time frames for drafts and how to give constructive guidance with the paper structure. As well as finely reviewing the writing of the mentee (using track change functions in-text), the mentor gave suggestions for improving paragraph and sentence structure. Drafts were returned with thoughtful comments and suggestions to improve the content and ensure the argument of the paper was well evidenced and articulated. The mentor suggested new literature to inform the paper, gave ideas about the methodology and theoretical framework and suggested problem solving strategies when things did not go to plan.

The mentoring occurred face-to-face when the paper authors were together for CRN events and at other times by telephone calls and extensively by email. Excerpts from separate emails from the mentor show the sustained support and variety of advice and topics covered in the mentoring strategy:

> As mentioned, this is an example of deadline setting for a collaborative paper… (K. Walsh personal communication August 17 2011)
>
> Below is info about a [methodological] strengths-based tool… (K. Walsh personal communication October 14 2011)
>
> I've made a lot of suggestions for places where things might be tightened up or the wording made clearer, but please feel free to accept or reject my suggestions at your discretion. It will take you a good 4-6 hours I would think (K. Walsh personal communication December 13 2012)
>
> I really like the intro now and the lit review. I think these sections are quite polished now, especially with the addition of the international tweaks. Xxx [Mentee], you've done a good job on this and your deep knowledge of SBAs has really come to the fore. (K. Walsh personal communication December 13 2012)
>
> I am still a bit uneasy about the discussion. Truly, this is the hardest part of this paper to write. I think we need to get clearer on the main points and the take home messages (K. Walsh personal communication December 13 2012)
>
> Worked on the methodology section… Thanks for finding the references and making the links to other bodies of literature. You did a great job! I simply took what you had and condensed the wording, made it clearer or simpler in parts (K. Walsh personal communication November 19 2013)
>
> Wonderful… step-by step. You've done a great job with tying up the final stages (K. Walsh personal communication April 28 2014)
>
> I bring good tidings!!!!!!! Our paper has been accepted (with minor corrections—see below). (A. Fenton personal communication February 10 2014)

In addition to mentoring the specific development of the mentee's writing the mentor gave generic informal advice and support to the mentee throughout the CRN project. The mentor gave guidance on decisions such as appropriate journals to submit articles, networking possibilities at particular conferences and relevant new publications in their research area. For example, the mentor suggested the mentee as a reviewer to a journal editor, alerted the mentee to an upcoming child protection research project and supported fellowship applications. The mentee attended Program 3's social justice symposium and reading group but not the quantitative methodology events or activities that focused on longitudinal research or particular theoretical frameworks with which she was not currently involved.

As the CRN progressed, other mentoring assistance contributed to the mentees research development. The CRN Director and the Program 3 leader (both CSU Professors) developed mentoring roles with the mentee:

> Professor X has provided valuable guidance to me this year, as an early career researcher, encouraging me to be involved with… CRN events… enabled me to apply for funding… fostered collaborations with other researchers who have similar interests. (A. Fenton personal communication August 26 2013)
>
> Professor Y has kindly been available, on a regular basis, to discuss my research progression [with] timely advice to maximize opportunities arising from the CRN. Prof. X involved me in the preparation of a CRN Program 3 event, a Social Justice Forum (November 21-23, 2011), where I presented a summary of my research in relation to social justice approaches. (A. Fenton personal communication August 26 2013)

Professor X invited the mentee to take part in a CRN external grant project; the first research grant the mentee had experienced. Professor Y read drafts of papers and gave suggestions for improving the submissions. In addition, after they had discussed connections in their research at a whole of network meeting, the mentee self-initiated a writing partnership with an experienced CRN researcher from Monash University. The partnership led to a peer-reviewed publication in 2015. At regular intervals in the lifespan of the network, the ECR Rep also emailed to provide peer mentoring and advice to the group of early career researchers and to gather information to assist CRN planning:

> Hope you are all doing well… several of you got in touch with me asking if the CRN leadership would be able to provide career development support for the ECRs… the committee have asked me to generate a list of topics/questions we, as a group, would like addressed. Here are a few ideas, which folk have already suggested to me:
>
> - Tips and tricks for applying for promotion,
> - Balancing competing agendas in an academic career,
> - Developing a research profile, and
> - Being strategic as an academic – when to say "yes", and when to say "no"! (A. MacDonald personal communication November 15 2013)

The additional mentoring received by the mentee through membership of the CRN is an important factor to consider when evaluating the outcomes of the primary mentoring partnership outlined in this case study. The partnership did not exist in isolation and should be considered within the broader context of the CRN.

4 Findings

The success of the CRN as a whole was measured by the funding body in a number of ways; including being able to demonstrate that there had been a quantitative increase in "critical mass" (CSU 2015) of CRN research-productive researchers in early years education. Outcomes for the CRN included increasing peer-reviewed publications, Ph.D. completions and supervision, grant applications and success, and raising the research profile of CSU early career researchers. For the mentee, individual progress was similarly measured and improvements were demonstrated by research outcome categories. See Table 1.

In 2011, as the CRN began, the mentee was at risk of being classified as "not research active" a confirmed risk for post Ph.D. students as they try to move from dependent to independent research and try to navigate teaching responsibilities (Bazeley 2003).

> My existing two publications had been written in 2008 as I embarked on my PhD journey – and they were with my previous supervisor's guidance - after all my energy had gone into writing my thesis – I felt exhausted, drained after the PhD, with not much motivation to launch into any journal articles. (A. Fenton personal communication April 26 2015)

In 2015, post CRN, the mentee expressed a significant increase in research confidence and particularly in writing momentum following the mentorship partnership *"*My writing improved because of the time and effort Xxx [Mentor] put into specific feedback and supporting me—it gave me the confidence to just 'keep going' with papers. The mentoring gave me the push I needed to publish and helped me keep that momentum" (Mentee 2015). The focus on writing in the mentoring partnership (Hemmings et al. 2004) was reported as benefiting the momentum and confidence of the mentee and consequently led to publication. Although the mentor provided scaffolds, the mentee was able to manage the lead author role of the collaborative paper, which was published in an international peer-reviewed journal. The mentee additionally initiated and published several other papers, both single authored and with colleagues.

> From the process of writing that first CRN paper, I just learnt so much, I used the process and strategies I learnt from Xxx [Mentor] again and again – like how to structure a paper, learn about the journal requirements, analyze and discuss findings, set my own deadlines and timeframes, navigate the reviewer feedback and respond positively. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015)

In 2011, the mentee had no track record in research projects and had presented early Ph.D. findings in presentations at four conferences in Australia. The CRN presented the opportunity and encouragement to 'piggyback' (Bazeley 2003) on the expertise of experienced researchers (particularly the mentor and CRN leaders). The mentee presented new work (based on new writing) at multiple conferences alongside CRN leaders and the mentor. Additionally, the mentee was able to use funds from working on the CRN research grant to attend and present at an international Higher Education conference. The mentor introduced the mentee to

Table 1 Comparison of mentee outcomes

Research outcome	Pre CRN/mentorship—2011	Post CRN/mentorship—2015
Increase in publications	2 peer reviewed publications (2008) 4 years previous—Ph.D. not finalized—not yet considered "research inactive" (Bazeley 2003)	Ph.D. awarded, 8 peer reviewed publications, 3 accepted, 1 under review, 4 under development—"research active" (Bazeley 2003)
Conference attendance/dissemination of research	4 state and national education conference presentations given	12 conference presentations given including state/national/cross-disciplinary focus/symposiums with CRH leaders, 1 international and 1 regional keynote
Grant funding	0 grant involvement $0 funding 0 project management experience ECR success measured not just writing but in interdisciplinary project management skills (Smith 2004) 0 opportunities to 'piggyback' from experienced researchers (Bazeley 2003)	Involved in CRN external research project ($7000), Successful 6 month CRN Fellowship (in kind $40,000), Citation ($1000) Community Partnership Grant ($1000), CSU Innovation Grant ($11,000), Community Health grant ($12,000) + applications for further external grants completed
Collaborations/collaborative publications	0 joint publications, 0 research collaborations with other researchers	Collaborative writing with colleagues (incl. ECR Rep)—6 CSU, 1 Monash and 1 QUT
Overall research profile	Limited research profile No reviewer roles No higher research degree Supervision Table 1	Growing profile: Google Scholar profile (international citations). Research gate (downloaded publications) Reviewing multiple journals and supervising Honors and Masters research students. Connecting teaching to research/faculty citation for outstanding contribution to student learning/growing portfolio for future promotion

professional networks and other experienced researchers and CRN leaders role-modeled project interdisciplinary research skills (Smith 2004). The mentee was able to take part without major responsibilities and pressure. "There was a positive domino effect—I had the opportunity to really feel a part of a professional network—and I was more confident because of the mentoring in my research writing and then I was more confident in how to talk about it" (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015).

In 2015, the mentee had a significantly more developed research profile compared to 4 years previously. As a result of the CRN career-progression session and informal guidance from the mentor, the mentee established Google Scholar and Research Gate profiles to aid the dissemination and citation rate of her research publications. Citations from international researchers in the field of child protection resulted, as well as requests to review papers. The mentee was asked to be a keynote speaker at a regional conference and supervise higher degree students with similar research interests.

> Because Xxx [mentor] was from another institution, I think it helped me - because I knew after working with her I could articulate my work to anyone - a broader audience, that she was more objective (not my supervisor or colleague working with me every day). She was critical in a constructive, supportive way. (A. Fenton personal communication May 8 2015).

In 2014, the mentee was able to demonstrate to university leaders that her research specialization is in the area of child protection and this resulted in requests to write and teach subjects in this area (a good alignment of teaching/research workload). The mentee was awarded an education faculty citation for her teaching/research in child protection with accompanying funds to further progress her research.

5 Discussion

5.1 Terms and Context

The first step in evaluating the success of the mentoring partnership was to check that the partnership aligned well with definitions of key mentoring terms. The mentee met the definition of an early career researcher being in the first five years following her doctoral qualification (Bazeley 2003) and the mentor fulfilled the role as a "knowledgeable and experienced role model" (Howell 2014, p. 565). As a mentoring partnership, a "professional relationship" (Howell 2014, p. 565) was formed, established and sustained throughout the life of the CRN. The ratio of experienced to non-experienced researchers within the CRN was fairly typical to that of higher education in general (Nile 2006) and the education discipline was also an ideal context to investigate factors that may contribute to the (much-needed) sustainable success of novice researchers (2010). The qualitative responses from the mentee and mentor demonstrate that, not only they were embedded, but also that reflective practice was a defining factor of the mentoring partnership (Eraut 2006), crucial for the mentee's writing development.

The CRN context proved ideal for the mentoring partnership, aligning with all key conditions for "collective impact" (Kania and Kramer 2013) to occur; "a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication and a backbone support [organization]" (p. 1). The established aim

of developing early years research was a defining common bond and agenda for all members of the CRN. It is unlikely that the mentoring partnership would have formed without the intentional initiative of the CRN. The further formation and commitment to the separate programs within the CRN also helped to connect the mentor/mentee due to their similar research interests within the field of early childhood research and created a more tailored mentoring partnership. CRN leaders, who recognized the mentor's and mentee's shared research areas (Dimitrova and Koku 2010), facilitated their partnership. Additionally, each had an individual and joint understanding commitment to social justice and child protection alongside the shared measurement goal of increasing publications. The CRN events and activities such as whole of network meetings, fellowships, skills development as well as the ECR Representative all contributed to mutual reinforcement of their mentoring partnership. Communication occurred at whole of CRN level, program level and partnership level in a combination of face-to-face and online modes.

5.2 Evaluating Mentoring Success

Evaluating the overall success of the CRN, or assessing results for all early career members or mentoring partnerships formed within it, is outside of the scope of this chapter but achievements for the mentee in this case study were certainly exemplary. The case study results shows promise that the CRN as a whole will replicate the enhanced research quality, larger scale research and outcomes reported benefit of other collaborative research networks (Clancy et al. 2013; Liao 2011; Rigby and Edler 2005). It was found that the mentee reported increased confidence, motivation and momentum in her research compared to prior to the CRN mentoring partnership being initiated. The mentorship confirmed ideas that mentoring can help career promotion and job satisfaction (Wallace 2001). Additionally the mentee achieved increased tangible outcomes such as award and grant funding, publications, citations and promotion milestones. For example, it can be evaluated that the mentee was assisted in the partnership to contribute to the CRN (and ultimately funding body) goals of the advancement of knowledge in early years research. In agreement with the point made by Hewitt et al. (2012, p. 310), the mentee's success was largely assessed on individual achievements. Interestingly, the case study does not, however, indicate that writing a collaborative publication was a disadvantage to her career advancement; indeed it appears to have been an advantage when heavily mentored.

The ECR Rep was able to be a conduit of communication about relevant opportunities and assisted the mentoring partnership by peer mentoring with an additional focus on the needs of early career researchers. The mentee's experiences before and during the CRN mentoring partnership mirrored those expressed to the ECR Rep and confirmed the multiple hurdles and barriers confronting novice academics (Bazeley et al. 1996; Bazeley 2003; Remmik et al. 2011). Similarly, the mentee experienced opportunities in the CRN that ECR's are likely to encounter in

their careers around key research activities such as potential publication writing, grant proposal funding, forming collaborations, leadership activities and participating in networking and professional groups (Cox et al. 2006; Cox 2013; Mann et al. 2007). The mentee confirmed that balancing barriers with opportunities was at times overwhelming and expressed this tension (Laudel and Gläser 2007) as she transitioned from dependant to independent research.

The experience of mentoring within the CRN found significant benefits were generated from multiple mentoring relationships (Janasz and Sullivan 2001) including peer-to-peer mentoring as well as single partnership mentoring. While the mentoring partnership was primary and foundational for the mentee's success she also benefited from targeted mentoring support for grant applications, advocacy from the ECR Rep and program specific support from CRN leaders. The mentoring partnership prioritized sustained writing and publication support for the mentee in a problem solving format, confirming the advantages of "opportunities to exchange advice and solutions derived through experience" (Keller et al. 2014, p. 215). A key factor here, however, was not only that there were opportunities available but that these were carefully tailored and prioritized to the mentees needs and capacities. This whole of network design resulted in a beneficial collaborative format similar to that described by Sorcinelli and Yen's (2007) as "mentoring constellations."

The CRN proved an ideal mentoring environment for participants to seek advice (Dimitrova and Koku 2010), although the case study suggests that in the CRN this was greatly facilitated by the peer mentoring (Kran and Isabella 1985) role of the ECR Rep. For example, as the relationship evolved, the peer mentor was able to provide social and emotional encouragement as she had direct knowledge of ECR issues and recent similar experiences to the mentee. Initial responses from ECR's suggested that along with feeling privileged to have access to experienced early years researchers this was also rather overwhelming and daunting. The ECR Rep, therefore, became an important conduit for supporting and liaising with and between both important stakeholder groups—the CRN leaders and ECR's. The peer mentor added to the traditional mentor/protégé model (Ensher et al. 2001) by providing the mentee with a neutral (or safety net position), from which to discuss barriers and opportunities in the CRN.

The case study confirmed that face-to-face meetings helped "build trust and shared understanding" (Dimitrova and Koku 2010, p. 20) and responses support Frost and Crockett's (2007) notion that collaborative networks must put much effort into foundational relationship building. The whole of network meetings greatly assisted in initiating the primary mentoring partnership for the mentee as well as another self-initiated subsequent writing partnership. The role of the non-intrusive virtual medium of email is also highlighted as a mentoring tool in this case study. The mentor and mentee used email extensively for all aspects of mentoring such as giving and receiving support, advice, feedback, role modeling direction, guidance, resources and facilitating contacts and network connections to facilitate seeking advice. The online mentoring was especially effective given the geographical distance between the mentor and mentee.

6 Limitations and Conclusions

The case study format (Yin 2009) enabled deep meaning to be drawn from the mentoring experience reported. It is recognized, however, that the mentee "standpoint" (Rolin 2009) reflected a particular situational knowledge and was inherently subjective and as such the case cannot be replicated or any statically relevant claims be made for universal recommendations. The analysis is therefore presented as one example of a mentoring partnership with the acknowledgement that "understandings and interpretations reflect more general cultural patterns of meaning, are not fixed, but continually changing and transforming under the influence of the power of vested interests" (Mac Naughton and Hughes 2008, p. 27). Nevertheless, it is hoped that the case study may add knowledge to the less researched area of academic mentoring (Janasz and Sullivan 2001) and meet a need for more systematic research to reveal mentoring "best practices for fostering positive relationships" (Keller et al. 2014, p. 215).

The mentoring partnership assisted the mentee to move from a "research inactive" to a "research active" status (Bazeley 2003) and to transition from dependent to independent research in the duration of the cross-institutional CRN. Significant increases were recorded for the mentee in all research activity outcomes studied. There were increases in peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, collaborations with experienced cross-institutional researchers and an overall rise in the research profile and reported confidence of the mentee. The authors concur with Remmik et al. (2011) that a strong academic community assisted the mentee and are needed to foster novice academics. The CRN scaffolded the formation of effective networks for the mentee that were vital for her early career research success, momentum and progression. Asmann et al. (2014), however, cautions that networks are difficult to initiate and maintain for some early career academics. Further evaluation, therefore, of the long-term benefits of ECR mentoring would be advantageous, especially comparison within funded and unfunded programs. The successful mentoring partnership was individualized, founded on joint research interests and developed within a supportive professional organization that fostered strong collegial networks (Grbich 1998) and as such was unique and not able to be replicated for universal findings. The authors found that by targeting mentoring around writing confidence (Hemmings et al. 2004) and specifically, engaging in an extended process of publishing a collaborative paper assisted with all research outcomes for the mentee.

There was significant funding to the CRN and this undoubtedly positively influenced the mentoring partnership with opportunities to travel to meet together and skill development to complement and enhance mentoring strategies. The authors argue that funding is needed to support the development of early career researchers and agree with Bazeley (2003) and Mann et al. (2007), that mentoring for early career researchers is vital for the continued development and sustainability of educational research not only in Australia, but internationally. The implications of the case study findings are that explicit support and guidance tailored to the

needs of the early career researcher can generate sustainable benefits for the mentee and the organization. This model could potentially be highly beneficial in and outside institutions.

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