

“EVERYONE WANTS A PIECE OF ME”
RE-ENVISIONING THE ACADEMIC IN
MID-LIFE

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DEFINITIONS

- Associate professors
- X years of service at institution or as faculty member
- Faculty in middle age

Why is this topic important?

- Most faculty development efforts focus on early career faculty and neglect this population.
- Midcareer faculty act as role models and define culture for junior faculty.
- For all ranks, mean hours of work increasing; this affects those with the work-life commitments of mid-career faculty disproportionately.

Grappa et al (2007)

Percentage of faculty reporting 55+ hrs./week

1972--13%

2003--47%

Average number of hours worked

1988--51 hours

2003--56 hours

TIAA-CREF SURVEY

2000

- Faculty between 40-49 rank lowest in satisfaction with current position (<40 close)
- Faculty between 40-59 highest on whether they considered changing careers
- Faculty between 40-49 lowest on whether they would “definitely” pursue an academic career again

FACTORS THAT AFFECT SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

PERSONAL FACTORS

- Family pressures
- Increasingly diffuse boundaries between work and personal life
- Health concerns
- Financial worries
- Psychosocial development

Personal-Professional factors

- Overwhelming service load
- Keeping research active and current
- Maintaining teaching quality
- Career development
- Control/autonomy issues

Institutional Factors

- Sense of isolation, lack of community
- Lack of institutional support
- Mismatches in models for faculty life, institutional missions, and reality
- Culture of accountability
- Poor student preparation

Best Practices

- Data collection to identify needs and gaps
- Teaching-learning communities
- Targeted grants, awards or research fellowships
- Seminars or institutes
- Faculty exchanges
- Faculty development plans; post-tenure reviews
- Co-mentoring

Co-Mentoring

- Both parties set explicit goals
- Reciprocal relationship; individuals learn from each other
- Process is non-hierarchical
- Arrangement may be horizontal or vertical

TRADITIONAL MENTORING

MENTOR



PROTEGE

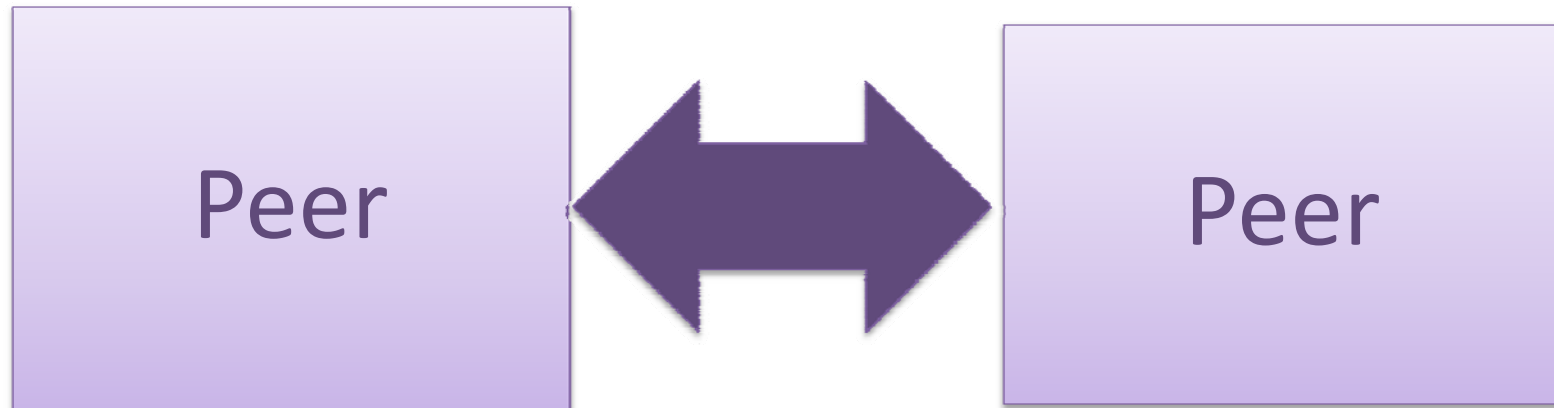
Co-Mentoring I

Mentor



Protégé

Co-mentoring II



Best practices (concluded)

- Seed Money
- Institutional Change
- Grant Development opportunities
- Strategic assignments, pairings
- Flexible career paths
- Professional organizations' initiatives
- Smaller goals, more diverse workloads--Mills (2000)

Questions

- **What should we do for people in adjunct, contingent, and part-time positions?**
- **What are the concerns of those who enter the profession late?**
- **Should we lower workloads or provide benefits so faculty can work more? (Grappa et al, 2007)**
- **How can we change life plots, narratives, scripts? Avoid language of crisis, problem, or failure?**