Career Self-Efficacy Mentoring for Pre-Promotion, Under-Represented Faculty at IUPUC

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Abstract

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide mentoring on career transitions for pre-promotion, under-represented faculty. Pre-promotion, under-represented faculty are tenure track assistant professors, clinical assistant professors and lecturers from under-represented groups including women, minorities, first-generation college graduates, and from working class / skilled labor backgrounds. We have chosen this cohort because they are approximately one-half of all IUPUC full time faculty.

For faculty from under-represented groups, embarking on an academic career is particularly challenging as it means entering an unfamiliar professional world. The sizable literature on this topic voices widespread recognition of the difficulties they face and speaks to the need for universities to provide assistance and mentoring as they transition into their academic careers[1]. As under-represented faculty are unusually well-represented at IUPUC, the school depends on their success and their effective mentoring.

To establish a successful and sustainable program, we propose a pilot program for a group of ten pre-promotion, under-represented faculty mentees. The pilot program will be conducted during the 2015-16 academic year. A thorough assessment of the pilot program will be used to inform the launch of a sustainable mentoring program in fall, 2016.

Career transitions of all kinds simultaneously provide individuals with opportunities for growth and potential threats to psychological health (Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012). We intend to increase mentees' career self-efficacy, that is, their confidence in their ability to direct their professional careers. Assessment of the pilot will utilize well-established measures of career self-efficacy including the Career Beliefs Inventory and the Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy Scale. Along with these metrics, the impact of the pilot program will also be gauged by changes in mentees' scholarly engagement and production.

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[1] See, for example, *Those Winter Sundays: Female Academics and their Working-Class Parents*, a 2004 collection of memoirs edited by Kathleen A. Welsch; Tuesday L. Cooper's *The Sista' Network: African-American Women Faculty Successfully Negotiating the Road to Tenure* (2006); and C. Vincent Samarco and Stephen L. Muzzatti's 2005 volume, *Reflections from the Wrong Side of the Tracks: Class, Identity, and the Working Class Experience in Academe*.

Purpose and Goals

Our goal is to better equip our early-career colleagues as they navigate their futures in the unique and perhaps unfamiliar behind-the-classroom world of the academy by providing mentoring on career transitions beginning with their initial appointment and continuing through promotion. We intend to increase participants' level of career self-efficacy (CSE), that is, their measurable perceptions of their ability to direct their career trajectories. This short term objective of increased efficacy is a predictor of increased career success based on past research. Thus, raising efficacy in the short term should lead to long-term effects of increased retention, promotion and tenure, and publication output.

Participants

Mentees will be ten pre-promotion, under-represented faculty. Pre-promotion faculty are tenure track assistant professors, clinical assistant professors and lecturers. Under-represented faculty encompasses women, minorities, first-generation college graduates, and faculty from working class / skilled labor backgrounds. Primary and peer mentors will be IUPUC faculty members. Secondary mentors may be colleagues at IUPUC, IUPUI, or other institutions.

Mentoring at IUPUC

As indicated above, the retention and advancement of under-represented faculty is a national concern that we share at IUPUC. Their success is an especially pressing issue for IUPUC because of their prevalence and their expressed dissatisfaction with the mentorship they have experienced. Under-represented faculty are a majority of IUPUC faculty. At IUPUC, 56% of faculty are women and 22% are from minority populations, suggesting successful recruitment of diverse faculty. Since 2010, the Columbus faculty has grown by 23% (49 in 2010, 64 in 2014), more than ten times the 2% growth rate of the faculty at all other IUPUI schools combined over the same period. With such a large share of recent hires, it is unsurprising that among full time teaching faculty, only 23% are tenured compared to 39% for the rest of IUPUI. Pre-promotion faculty also include lecturers and visiting faculty who collectively comprise almost twice the share of full time teaching faculty at IUPUC as at the Indianapolis schools (29% vs. 15%).

We conducted a needs-assessment by surveying all full-time IUPUC faculty regarding their satisfaction with mentorship and their mentorship needs, with approximately half the faculty responding. Survey results suggest that under-represented faculty are at once more interested in being mentored and more dissatisfied with the mentorship they have received. Twenty-nine

respondents provided demographic information. Among these faculty, under-represented faculty responded at higher rates than their counterparts. (47% of women vs. 39% of men; 57% of minorities vs. 45% of non-minorities). Of the 29 respondents, 26 (90%) belong to at least one of the three under-represented groups identified by the survey results: women, minorities, or first generation college graduates. These data suggest that mentorship is an important concern for under-represented faculty.

Dissatisfaction with mentorship among under-represented faculty is indicated by results from three survey questions about the adequacy and amount of mentorship. We used the three questions to create a satisfaction variable scored from 3 (strong dissatisfaction) to 15 (strong satisfaction) with a midpoint value of 9 (neutral). Under-represented faculty averaged 7.8. A further indication of their active dissatisfaction is the finding that scaled scores for 63% of the under-represented faculty fell below 9. In contrast, none of the white male faculty with college graduate parents scored below 9 and their group mean was 11.3. Clearly, under-represented faculty at IUPUC are craving mentorship. Our next question then is, "Mentorship in what way(s)?"

In the survey, we also asked about 13 mentoring needs (Bland et al. 2009) ranging from those specific to an academic career - research, teaching, service, and tenure/promotion - to general concerns including work-life balance and time management. Respondents rated mentoring on the three career specific issues of research, teaching, and tenure and promotion as much more important than any of the other ten items. Thus, faculty at IUPUC, particularly our target population, seek guidance in key areas directly related to career success, rather than the less direct areas like work-life balance. Their strong preference for help with the criteria for academic career success, along with their expressed dissatisfaction with existing guidance through mentorship, suggests their current levels of career self-efficacy in key areas of their position are low. This reinforces the importance and desire for mentoring on career self-efficacy for our target population of under-represented, pre-promotion faculty.

Methodology

To approach our goal of providing effective mentoring on career transitions for pre-promotion, under-represented faculty, we will propose a pilot program for a group of ten pre-promotion, under-represented faculty mentees. As described by Anderson, Schlossberg's "Four S System" provides a framework for successfully navigating life transitions such as beginning a new faculty appointment. The four "S's" also offer a useful scaffold for mentoring activities:

1) Situational variables include external factors (e.g., concurrent stressors) that influence the individual's acquisition of a new role, the "behavioral enacting of the patterned expectations

attributed to a position" (Merton, 1957, p. 368). When role models are absent, individuals underperform in their new role for a longer period of time, (Anderson, et al, 2012). Thus, faculty mentors will provide both explicit and implicit modeling of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate for a pre-promotion faculty member.

2) Social supports are typically disrupted by the transitioning to a new faculty position process from one role to the next. Positive social supports can provide emotional comfort, rational coaching, and sometimes direct aid via material resources. Social supports are important to stress management and physical health (Kulik & Mahler, 1989). Thus, it is expected that faculty mentors will help mentees assess, acquire, and leverage social supports in their development as faculty.

3) Strategies for coping with stress are also vital in making successful transitions. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) identified three methods of coping: 1) modifying the situation; 2) controlling the meaning of the problem; and 3) managing stress after it has occurred. Effective coping requires the use of a variety of methods which fit the specific, stressful situation. Faculty mentors will support mentees in identifying stressors (and other impedances to performance) and implementing appropriate coping methods.

4) Self variables include one's outlook on the transition into the new role which will vary, in-part, upon individual self-efficacy. (Anderson, et al., 2012). Based in Bandura's social cognitive theory, "Self-efficacy depends on the individual's belief that he or she can cause an intended event to occur and can organize and carry out the course of behavior necessary to deal with various situations." (Rodin, 1990, 2).

The program will be implemented upon award notification in April, 2015. As described in the timeline, mentees and mentors will be recruited in the late spring and preliminary mentor assignments will be made. At the same time, all pre-promotion, under-represented faculty will be asked to take a CSE assessment to establish a baseline level of CSE among the pilot's target population.

Timeline

Over the summer of 2015, mentors will receive training. When faculty return for the fall semester in August, mentees, mentors, and program organizers will join for a one-day retreat to cover program objectives and build relationships in an informal setting. Mentor assignments will be finalized following the retreat.

During the 2015-16 academic year, mentees will meet with mentors each month (or more often if they choose). The entire group will attend bi-monthly status update meetings to provide feedback for participants and organizers. Assessment instruments will be administered at midyear and at year's end to provide formative and summative assessment data. The program will conclude in May, 2016 with a debriefing on pilot program outcomes and a recognition celebration for mentees and mentors. Program organizers will then review participant feedback and assessment results to inform the anticipated launch of an expanded CSE mentoring program for 2016-17.

Potential participants will be approached by IUPUC division heads and offered the opportunity to join the program. Participation in the pilot will be voluntary.

Budget

Our proposal has received stakeholder support from IUPUC's Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Dean down to the divisional level. As our proposal has been developed, we have reported on our progress at IUPUC Division Heads and Directors Meetings and at division meetings. IUPUC's Divisions of Business, Education, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Science have indicated that their faculty will be encouraged to participate both as mentees and mentors. Our school representatives (see above) represent five academic ranks and are drawn from three of IUPUC academic divisions (Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Science). School representatives also hold administrative roles including the leadership of two academic divisions, and three academic programs.

At IUPUI's Mentoring Symposium, keynote speaker Dr. Lillian Eby stressed that a mentoring program needs the following resources to be successful:
1.   involvement with other university initiatives and resources, and,
2.   institutional support.

We will involve other university initiatives and resources in our program. For example, we have consulted with Kathy Grove, Director of IUPUI's Office for Women, regarding opportunities for collaboration. She has suggested we make use of the resources available through the Enhanced Mentoring Program with Opportunities for Ways to Excel in Research (EMPOWER), an IUPUI initiative supporting under-represented faculty. EMPOWER awards are available in the amount of $5,000 for mentees as they develop external grant proposals to support their scholarship and $1,000 for mentors to further their research. As described in the stakeholders support section above, this proposal has been developed with institutional representation, involvement, and support.

Item	Additional information	Amount
Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale*	60 administrations http://www.mindgarden.com/products/cdse.htm	$132
Career Beliefs Inventory*	60 administrations http://www.mindgarden.com/products/cbi.htm	$660
Resources	Approximately $100 of books and other resources for each of the 26 participants and organizers.	$2,600
Opening retreat	One-day off-campus retreat.	$2,000
Mid-program informal event	This event may be a group dinner at a local restaurant.	$1,000
Recognition event	This may include awarding of recognition certificates and awards and a group dinner.	$2,000
Total		**$8,392**

* These or similar instruments will be used for assessment purposes.

Assessment plan

Success will be measured by participants' gains in CSE using instruments such as the Career Beliefs Inventory and the Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy Scale. Other indicators of success will be captured including comparisons from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 on: publication output (submissions, acceptances); collaborations; funded work in teaching, research, or service; and conference applications and submissions.

The pilot will be carefully assessed to determine the utility of launching the mentoring model on a larger scale. Using established measures of CSE including the Career Beliefs Inventory and the Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy Scale, programmatic assessment will begin with a baseline provided by a pre-pilot survey of CSE among IUPUC's pre-promotion, under-represented faculty. Formative and summative assessments of participants' gains in CSE will be measured to gauge program effectiveness and identify areas for program improvement.

Sustainability

Informed by findings gleaned from the pilot program's feasibility assessment, we are confident that IUPUC can establish a sustainable mentoring program in fall, 2016. To ensure sustainability, the program will be modest in size and cost, scalable and will provide mentees

and mentors with an attractive balance of expectations and rewards. Additionally, the program is designed to be relevant to the demographic realities of the unit.

Of IUPUC's total full time faculty of 64, a survey of demographic information indicates that at least 31 are pre-promotion, under-represented faculty (not including first-generation college graduates). Assuming that the ten participants in the pilot program persist and that half of the remaining 21 pre-promotion, under-represented faculty enlist, the established program is not expected to enroll more than 20 mentees.

Similarly, expected future costs are affordable. Assessments like the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale and the Career Beliefs Inventory are fixed ongoing expenses of less than $800 annually. Mentoring resources such as books may be housed in a program library to minimize ongoing costs. Similarly, recognition events and retreats are adjustable to budgetary circumstances. Ongoing funding sources will include IUPUC, IUPUC faculty development awards, and, as described above, IUPUI resources.

Finally, sustainability is predicated upon participation. Faculty mentees and mentors will invest their time in the program only if they believe it to be effective and efficient. The data gathering and analysis efforts will ensure that the proposed, and all future programs, will be relevant to the realities of IUPUC faculty. The pilot program will identify those mentoring practices which maximize results while respecting faculty time commitments, which will undoubtedly ensure the sustainability of IUPUC's mentoring program.

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