ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Faculty Mentorship in Higher Education: The Value of Institutional and Professional Mentors

Stephanie M. Mazerolle, PhD, ATC, FNATA*; Sara L. Nottingham, EdD, ATC†; Kelly A. Coleman, MS, ATC*
*Department of Kinesiology, Athletic Training Program, University of Connecticut, Storrs; †Department of Health, Exercise, & Sports Sciences, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

Context: Mentorship has been identified as a key aspect to the transition into higher education for the junior faculty member, as it is an effective organizational socializing agent. The literature, however, often examines mentorship as a derivative of the socialization process, rather than as the primary focus of investigation.

Objective: Explore the perceptions of mentorship for the athletic training faculty member on professional development and transition into a new faculty role, specifically looking at mentorship through a role transition and inductance lens for the junior faculty member.

Design: Phenomenology.

Setting: Higher education institutions.

Patients or Other Participants: Twenty junior athletic training faculty members (14 women, 6 men) who met our inclusion criteria. All participants were in positions leading to promotion or tenure. Saturation was met with our 20 participants.

Main Outcome Measure(s): Semistructured phone interviews were conducted and transcribed verbatim afterward. Using a phenomenological approach, we analyzed the data. Credibility of the data was confirmed with peer review and researcher triangulation.

Results: Mentoring relationships were determined to be internal and external to the athletic training faculty member's institutions. Relationships were classified as informal, regardless of the location of the mentor. Internal mentoring relationships were informal and navigated by the faculty member with individuals the faculty member believed to have valued experiences and knowledge regarding the institution's culture and expectations for role performance and promotion. External mentors, mostly doctoral advisors, were individuals who could continue to support professional development and the specific tenets of higher education independently of institutional expectations.

Conclusions: Our findings suggest that mentoring is done by a constellation of individuals, as each mentoring relationship fulfills a particular need of the junior faculty member and one mentor may not provide or possess all the necessary experiences to support the transition.

Key Words: Role learning, socialization, role transition

Dr Mazerolle is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Kinesiology, Athletic Training Program at University of Connecticut, Storrs. Address correspondence to Stephanie M. Mazerolle, PhD, ATC, FNATA, Department of Kinesiology, Athletic Training Program, University of Connecticut, 2095 Hillside Road, U-1110, Storrs, CT 06269-1110. stephanie.mazerolle@uconn.edu.

Faculty Mentorship in Higher Education: The Value of Institutional and Professional Mentors

Stephanie M. Mazerolle, PhD, ATC, FNATA; Sara L. Nottingham, EdD, ATC; Kelly A. Coleman, MS, ATC

KEY POINTS

- Athletic training faculty who are transitioning for the first time into higher education receive mentorship from multiple individuals.
- Doctoral advisors continue to provide mentorship after graduation for the new faculty member, while colleagues at their new institutions provide mentorship internally.
- Institutional mentors provide knowledge for success in earning tenure and promotion, while external mentors continue to support scholarly work and productivity.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational socialization is a formal process whereby newcomers become familiar with the role they will assume, the values and beliefs of the organization they are entering, and the culture that exists within the organization.[1,2] Many mechanisms exist as a means to socialize the new faculty member into higher education, and are founded on the importance of reducing the anxiety, stress, and "reality shock" that can occur with entrance into a new organization.[1] Faculty development, orientation, and mentorship are the most common socialization tactics, with the latter being the least transitory and often a socializing agent that can extend beyond initial entry into the organization.[3,4]

Initial entry into the organization is often termed *role inductance*, and for the faculty member, it is a process that typically lasts until reappointment or tenure,[5] as the faculty member is still learning about the role. Continuance is established once the faculty member is comfortable and settled into his or her role in the organization and serves as the completion of the socialization process. Role inductance is supported by faculty orientation and professional development workshops,[6,7] and mentoring is a process that occurs early in the organizational socialization process but can often extend beyond into the role continuance phase.

Mentoring is a relationship that focuses on support, particularly as described by Kram[8] in the areas of career and personal development. Mentors can help ease the newcomer into his or her role, as they provide not only career counseling and advice but also support and coaching during the stressful period of role inductance.[9] Mentorship, without question, is the primary organizational socialization mechanism identified within the literature,[2,6] and for the athletic trainer preparing to enter the faculty role, it has become a valued aspect of the professional and organizational socialization process.[6,10–12] New faculty in athletic training describe the positive impact mentorship had on their professional socialization before entry into the organization and the support it can provide when initially transitioning into the organization.[6]

The growing literature in athletic training continually demonstrates the importance of mentorship, especially during role transition.[6,12] The literature when depicting this as a finding is often organically emerging, as it is a founding aspect of the socialization process, and not a focal point of the investigation.[6,12] Furthermore, mentorship is viewed as a facilitator of knowledge and skills, where initially there is exchange of guidance and advice, which shifts to collaboration and growth.[13,14] The mentoring relationship is grounded by transfer of knowledge as well as the development of community among individuals with shared passion and areas of interest, a description that implies the underpinnings of social relationships and growth among like-minded individuals. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of mentorship for the athletic training faculty member on professional development and transition into a new faculty role. The impetus for this study is to better understand the process of mentoring and how it guides socialization of the new faculty member, particularly as the new faculty member gains role inductance. Guiding our research were the following questions: (1) Do athletic training faculty perceive mentors to have a role in their transition to higher education and if so, in what capacity? and (2) In what capacity do these mentors serve in the transition period?

METHODS

Research Design

With a constructive lens,[15] we used a phenomenological approach to focus on the experiences of the athletic training faculty member as he or she transitions into higher education for the first time and the meaning the faculty member places on mentoring. The foundation of constructivist research is the discourse between the researcher and participant, and therefore in-depth semistructured interviews were conducted with our participants to understand the importance and value of mentoring in role transition. Merriam[16] and Creswell[17] recommend a qualitative lens when attempting to discover the meaning behind experiences of individuals undergoing a particular experience.

Participants

We used a purposive sampling, as advocated by Creswell,[17] to learn more about role transition. Specifically, we recruited athletic training faculty members who were eligible for reappointment, were within the first 6 years of their hire date in higher education and had earned an academic terminal degree (ie, PhD or EdD). Our rationale was grounded by the perception that those who had yet to gain reappointment or tenure would be still undergoing role inductance and transition, and therefore would be the most knowledgeable[15] on mentoring during their transition. Our goal was to capture the lived experiences of the junior faculty member as he or she experiences role transition, and the mentorship a faculty member receives during the process.

Table. Individual Faculty Member Demographic Data

Participant Name	Age	Sex	Time as ATC, y	Time as Faculty	Current Title	Carnegie Classification	National Athletic Trainers' Association District
Amanda	30	F	8	2 y	Assistant professor	R1	2
Blakely	32	F	10	2 y	Assistant professor and CEC	R2	4
Nicole	30	F	8	2 y	Assistant professor	R2	8
Samuel	28	M	6	1.5 y	Assistant professor and CEC	M1	7
Sarah	36	F	14	4 y	Assistant professor and CEC	R1	9
Crosby	32	M	8	3 y	Assistant professor and graduate program director	R1	4
Catie	31	F	8	1.5 y	Assistant professor	R1	1
Chris	32	M	9	1 y	Assistant professor	R2	4
David	33	M	7	1.5 y	Assistant professor	R3	10
Lynn	37	F	15	6 y	Assistant professor	Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus	3
Maggie	34	F	12	2 y	Assistant professor and CEC	M1	1
Jenn	30	F	8	2 y	Assistant professor	Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields	1
Megan	32	F	10	9 y	Assistant professor, Director AT Program	M1	3
Payton	34	F	12	1 y	Assistant professor	M1	2
McKenna	29	F	7	1 y	Assistant professor	M1	3
Morgan	32	F	9	3 y	Assistant professor and CEC	M1	9
Carrie	33	F	11	4 y	Assistant professor and CEC	M1	3
Martha	40	F	18	11 mo	Assistant professor	M1	8
Tyler	32	M	9	7 mo	Assistant professor	R2	4
Jake	27	M	6	9 mo	Assistant professor	R3	4

Abbreviations: CEC, clinical education coordinator; F, female; M, male; M1, master's colleges and universities – larger programs; R1, doctoral universities – highest research activity; R2, doctoral universities – higher research activity; R3, doctoral universities – moderate research activity.
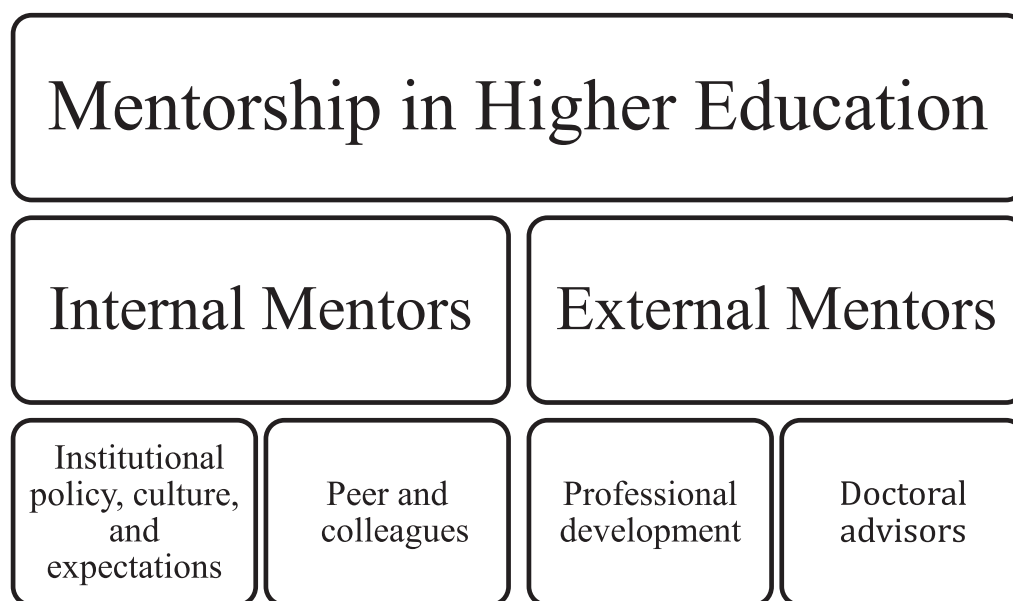
We were able to recruit a total of 20 junior athletic training faculty members (14 women, 6 men) who met our inclusion criteria. Saturation was met with our 20 participants, as this was confirmed through our constant comparative approach to data collection and analysis. Average age for the athletic training faculty members was 32 ± 3 years, and they had an average of 10 ± 3 years' experience as a certified athletic trainer. They were employed at various higher education institutions representing a variety of Carnegie classifications (Table) with an average of 2 ± 2 years as a faculty member.

Data Collection Methods

After securing institutional review board approval, we began recruiting potential participants by convenience and snowball sampling procedures,[17] whereby we used our professional networks as educators and scholars to contact programs with potential new faculty hires. Once we were able to secure participants meeting our inclusion criteria, we used those participants to gain access to others meeting the same criteria. We conducted semistructured interviews with all participants over the phone. The interview protocols were scripted, yet natural dialogue occurred as a means to follow up and clarify the responses of our participants. The interview protocol included verbal consent before collection of the data, and then a series of demographic questions followed by queries related to the participant's role transition and mentoring experiences. The interview protocol was derived by the researchers to reflect the purpose of the study, the literature that exists on mentoring in higher education, and the socialization framework.[18] We had the interview protocol reviewed by a peer scholar, who verified its content, accuracy, and importance. Then, as a final step in the validation of the interview protocol (Appendix), we had 2 athletic training faculty members meeting our inclusion criteria pilot the study. This served as a final check in reviewing the length of the interview protocol and the interpretability of the questions in the interview protocol. Simple modifications were made as result of the pilot study, including order of questions for improved flow. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

Figure.   **Sources of mentorship with higher education for athletic training faculty.**

Mentorship in Higher Education

Internal Mentors

External Mentors

Institutional policy, culture, and expectations

Peer and colleagues

Professional development

Doctoral advisors

Data Analysis

Analysis was done using a phenomenological approach.[17] First, transcripts were reviewed for reoccurring regularities by highlighting text that emerged as significant. Then, as the analysis continued, all the transcripts were compared to find commonalities in the highlighted text, which allowed for categories to emerge and be labeled accordingly. The labels were purposeful, and reflected the primary meaning behind the text. The comparative process throughout the analysis allowed for only the most reoccurring ideas to remain, and these are reflected in the final presentation of the findings. Each theme was operationalized and then supported with raw data to provide credence to the analysis.

Establishing Trustworthiness

To determine the validity and reliability of the data, we used several methods. First, we were purposeful in our sampling and made sure our protocol was credible and accurate.[16] Merriam[16] urges qualitative researchers to provide rich details on their methods and transparency when sharing those methods. Second, we used a peer review to provide rigor in the methods and analysis of the data. The peer validated the interview protocol and then ensured our analysis process was accurate. Using the peer review process is an important step in protecting against researcher bias during the analysis process.[17] Third and finally, we used researcher triangulation during the analysis process to ensure reliability of the findings. Each researcher followed the same analysis steps as previously outlined, and then compared the outcome. The process led to the confirmation of the coding process and the themes presented subsequently. The researchers involved in the coding process are experienced in the stepwise approach previously described and have a successful publication record within the areas of socialization, mentorship, and professional development.

RESULTS

Our analyses revealed that mentorship was not isolated to a single person; rather, athletic training faculty members identified several mentors who could serve in various capacities for role transition (Figure). The mentors were distinctly defined as (1) *institutional mentors* and (2) *external mentors*. Institutional mentors were individuals who could provide knowledge on institutional nuances and policies, whereas external mentors provided guidance and support in a holistic approach but mostly focused on professional development and the research expectations related to the tenure and promotion expectations of higher education. We discuss each theme next with quotes from our participants, who are identified by pseudonyms.

Theme 1: Mentorship in Higher Education Emanates From Different People

Discussions centered on multiple mentors as part of the socialization process for our participants. Martha said about mentoring, "So again, it's not one person just telling me this is what you should or this is what you shouldn't do, but it's a group effort depending on what information I need." Maggie said, "I have multiple mentors." Jake responded by saying, "I would say I have 2 or 3 different people that I see as mentors and see as people that I can go to, to get information, to show me the ropes, to answer questions." We asked participants directly about professional mentors, and if they had someone who filled the role of a mentor. Responses were directed at having several mentors, many participants referred back to their doctoral advisors as individuals who could help with big-picture items such as research, grants, and publications. Institutional mentors were also recognized as important, and those mentors were valuable for successful navigation of faculty life in the organization itself. Catie's comments reflect the combination of mentors when she responded to our question about mentors: "So I regularly communicate with my doctoral advisor and my postdoc advisor. And then on campus, I have other more senior faculty that I would consider to be mentors as well." Tyler talked about his mentors, and that he really was able to reach out to different people, based upon what he needed. He said,

I think I turn to different people for different questions. For day-to-day operation or just things as a university as a whole, I tend to go to our program director because she's been here for a couple of years and knows the "ins and the outs" and the right way to do things and the people to contact for certain inquiries that I might have. From a research standpoint, I tended to go to the previous staff member here just because he was in a tenure position also. So, there were some things that he could speak to, either that or through research a little bit more than a program director did.

Theme 2: Institutional Mentors Provide Support Toward Tenure and Navigating Institutional Policy

Our participants also described having institutional mentors, current faculty at their universities who supported them and were viewed as mentors. Sarah identified 2 faculty members at her current institution as mentors, "I have 2 internal mentors, here. They help with the day-to-day stuff." Crosby, like Sarah, identified "2 mentors," sharing, "I have one who's an associate professor in the same area as I am. And then I've got another associate professor in the department that I work in who is also a mentor for me." Chris said,

So, there's a very senior faculty in athletic training who's a full professor who helps us with some of the athletic training–specific things and then I have a more scientific mentor with uh, med school, who helps with grants, yeah.

Maggie said,

My in-house mentor is my program director. No one ever really assigned him to me. However, that is definitely the person I am learning the most from [about my role]. So, he's definitely been helpful in the mentorship role.

Jenn, much like Maggie, described a senior faculty member as an informal mentor, someone who was willing to teach her the ropes. She said,

So informally, for my role as a faculty member here, there's no formal mentorship program that's been set up or anything like that, but I do have a mentor in my department chair. She's been great at really just being available and helpful to me, and anything that comes along in which my inexperience could potentially be aided by her experience.

Coworkers with more experience provided mentorship during the transition process, as our participants described soliciting their advice, guidance, and knowledge to assimilate into their new faculty role. Lynn, too, shared, "I think I'm in much better shape than I would have been without access to mentorship from senior faculty that's in the department." Lynn was also able to articulate the need for mentorship from multiple individuals, as they each bring valuable knowledge and experiences that can support the various roles a faculty member may have in their position. She continued her thoughts,

And so, having a formalized relationship here [at her current school], having a person that has gone through the tenure process [helps], my mentor has recently gone through the tenure process and has been giving me consistent advice about how to maximize the likelihood of getting reappointed and getting tenure, I think has been pretty valuable.

Our participants shared that they had multiple mentors, but it was clear that institutional mentors were purposeful and assisted in successfully navigating the institution's expectations for promotion and tenure. The relationships were all described as having developed organically, and were an informal means to become aware of their faculty role in their own institutions. Chris described his experiences with his mentors as being "informal," and felt they were best described as casual through "passing conversations between colleagues, could take turns or trade, if a situation needs mentoring." Nicole described the impact her institutional mentor had on her transition and the opportunities her mentor facilitated to help her success as a faculty member. Crosby believed his success, so far, was directly related to his mentors at his institution. He said, "It would be really hard to be successful without [my mentors]." He said they "help focus" him. Crosby talked about his internal mentors as individuals who give feedback and provide good examples:

I also find that they [my mentors] provide, even outside of formal meetings, just observing their career trajectory and what they're currently doing just from a modeling perspective, I find they give me some good examples of how to go about things. And be successful and navigate the waters in academia and all that good stuff. So especially having them in my department is really helpful.

Nicole said,

My institutional mentor has given me the opportunity to be involved in some really amazing service opportunities. They've protected me from doing too much service at the institution, but in the same regard the service opportunities that I am doing I'm representing our school to plan our institution's Research Week. Which is like a huge honor that myself as junior faculty as the person that is representing us to the entire university. So, things like that. Getting involved with the graduate college, my institutional mentor has put me in places that have really gotten me involved with the graduate college.

Sarah believed that in order for a new faculty member to transition successfully, internal mentors must be available. She believed they were important because "any new faculty member doesn't really know the 'ins and the outs' of the individual institution. So, I think we kind of, need someone to fall into those roles to, mentor." She identified her institutional mentor as

...my direct supervisor... the program director. The program director helps me meet my professional program related goals and helps me through those administrative hoops that I may or may not know about yet.

Blakely, too, felt that being a new faculty member required an internal mentor, as it helped create "a lifeline." Blakely shared,

So, I know, and this is probably very common but new faculty members feel that like they're on an island and I think, for me, it's really helped me reach out or at least have an idea of who to reach out to [in my department].

She felt her go-to person for success and growth was an internal person whom she viewed as an informal mentor:

It [having him] definitely takes away that fear of rejection and asking some[one] who's more senior than you for help [removes the fear] because they know where you're coming [from]. So, definitely it's meant a lot for my growth and easing into a new environment.

Sarah's reflections best represent this concept of internal mentoring. She shared,

I personally feel that coming out in your first official faculty role I was looking for an institution that would be able to provide me mentorship and support. That was something that was really critical to me because I knew that just because I had [a] PhD, just because, I had really good doctoral training but I knew that that wasn't going to be the end of it, that there was going to be a lot of growing pains making this transition and I specifically looked to find an institution that I would be able to have that support structure, so really for me mentorship is really important to be able to provide me with a support structure that allows me to succeed. I think in order to get the most out of myself I have to have people who are sounding boards. I have to have people that are smarter than I am to be able to teach me and to help me develop.

Jenn, too, was fortunate to have an internal faculty member, her department chair, who served as a mentor and was instrumental in her role transition:

She has been great in just providing general advice about the people that, you know, the administrative people that I would be communicating with on a regular basis, about just people's personalities, tendencies of certain administrators. She's also been very helpful in answering any questions I have regarding my faculty responsibilities so it's, such as advising. She was instrumental in helping teach me the system that we use here to advise students. We had some professional development programs internally that were used but there were kind of a lot of gaps that were still open and information that was still missing that I was able to then go and get from my department chair, which was great. I think, in general, it just really helps build collegiality amongst our departments, you know, just socially having somebody that you feel comfortable communicating with, and I think it works both ways for us.

Mentors from the new faculty member's institution are necessary to provide institutional support and navigation of the nuances within the new work environment.

External Mentors Support General Professional Growth

In addition to institutional mentors, our participants identified external mentors who supported their role transition into higher education. Most often these external mentors were our participants' former doctoral advisors, and their relationships remained informal and informative. Sarah shared, "One of my mentors is my doctoral mentor, advisor. I can always go back to her for help or things." Crosby said, "I still work pretty regularly with and seek advice and mentorship from my doctoral advisor." Jenn said,

I'd say informally the faculty members at [my doctoral institution] are [my mentors], I would still consider them mentors, but again, far less formal. I know I can reach out to them if I need advice [or] something but it's not a regular communication with them.

Amanda shared that her "doctoral advisor has been a great resource" during her transition from a doctoral student to a faculty member, and she believed her advisor was someone she "reached out to." She shared that her doctoral advisor was helpful "when I don't understand or just need someone to listen to my uncertainties." Reaching out to their doctoral mentors surfaced as an informal mechanism to transition for our participants, as they felt comfortable asking them for advice or guidance.

Although most external mentors were former doctoral advisors, in some other instances they were also individuals in the field of athletic training who provided guidance, support, and feedback that was directed at participants' success as a researcher or teacher. Amanda described her experiences with mentoring as a "support system." Her external mentors

...give me a basis to bounce ideas off of. So, they basically just bring that experience and give you that check of making me realize kind of what I don't know that way, so it's a friendship. It's a bouncing ideas that keeps me grounded type of relationship.

Payton gave credit to her external mentor, her doctoral advisor, in helping her succeed in her professional role, which was directly facilitating success as a faculty member currently. She said,

As far as my professional life, I think that I owe a lot to my mentors, especially my graduate program coordinator. I think, [she] really played a vital role in helping me to achieve those professional goals. Through my relationship with her, I feel like a lot of the things that I do now as a professional, I do that because of her.

Payton was thankful for the support, continuing to share,

My mentor has helped me to reach those goals that I have for myself professionally. So, I think very highly of her and also I value and appreciate the opportunities they have provided to me because of working with her and building [a] relationship with her.

Although mentors primarily provided support on research productivity, they also helped with other aspects of faculty life such as accreditation paperwork or service-related activities. Morgan shared,

My mentoring relationships are invaluable and they're just great resources and great help in making career decisions and stuff like that. I always run things by them if I have questions. That way, you know, and that relationship is still there and I think that's really invaluable and really beneficial to me in my career.

Morgan's statement reflects her interactions with her doctoral mentor, who still continues to provide feedback, opportunity, and collaboration for success as a researcher. Several other participants, like Morgan, used their external mentors, mostly doctoral mentors, as continued support for research productivity. This included Chris, who shared,

I have 2 research-focused mentors, who help a great deal in terms of being competitive for funding or grants because

they've been very successful. So I would say from a writing perspective and a scientific-thinking perspective, they have been helpful and focusing on development of my research in that way they are helpful, but also in terms of being more competitive for things, having them involved helps on paper as well.

Soliciting advice and feedback regarding accreditation expectations was also a reason for needing external mentors, as shared by Megan:

I would say on a regular basis I call 2 people, especially right now related to the self-study. So, they're athletic training educators, they are engaged in research, they have very similar roles to myself. So, there are 2 people on a regular basis, but I would say in general.

McKenna relied on external mentors because "essentially they give me guidance and direction in what I'm doing, and that they're an extra set of eyes." McKenna described that reaching out to external mentors helped her with the bigger-ticket items that were not necessarily related to her institution, but to her overall role a faculty member. She continued,

A lot of times when I go to prepare something. whether it be a manuscript or a letter to request something or even just a syllabus or presentation, I'm able to, or even what projects to get involved with, I'm able to go to them for advice. And to get feedback on whether or not that decision is going to be beneficial to me in the long run. And really, it just provides a peace of mind in my choices.

External mentor relationships were described as informal, yet meaningful in shaping successful transition, as they allowed for feedback and assimilation into the faculty role by validating and supporting our participants' performance.

DISCUSSION

Mentorship is the founding part of the acclimation process for a person entering a new work environment.[1,2] In fact, it has been viewed as an important part of the role-inductance process, and when the relationship is effective can positively impact the success of the new professional.[19,20] The mentorship relationship is often viewed as developmental, with one mentee (ie, new professional) and one mentor (ie, seasoned professional), a relationship in which the mentor is able to provide advice, support, and guidance that can focus on successful acculturation into the workplace.[21] Our findings, however, can shift the idea that mentorship comes from one mentor who can provide the necessary guidance and support in all areas of faculty development and transition into higher education. We found that a junior faculty member who is undergoing role inductance identifies multiple mentors to support this transition process. The constellation of mentorship as described by our participants allows for valuable, specific institutional knowledge and job-related expectations to be communicated, while support for research initiatives and grant success continues to be gained. Stanley and Clinton[22] proposed a model of mentoring that parallels our findings, as they suggest that mentoring relationships should involve multiple individuals with differentiated experiences and knowledge as a means to promote growth and development. Although the model was proposed directly to support leader

growth, the model is applicable to the new faculty member navigating entry into the higher education world.

Simply speaking, individuals transitioning into a new role may require support and guidance from several mentors, as each can bring different areas of expertise, knowledge, or past experiences. Our relationships were shared as more informal and organic in nature, which may explain why multiple mentors emerged as part of the role inductance process. Formal mentor programs often involve one pair and are done based upon specific needs of the mentee and the expertise of the mentor.[13,23] Thus, our findings may expand the idea that informal mentoring does not follow the same parameters as formal mentoring.

Institutional Mentors Provide Support Toward Tenure and Navigating Institutional Policy

Finding that our participants recognized institutional mentors as an important part of their role inductance is not unexpected, as part of the acclimation process to the new environment is learning the culture of the new organization, understanding the expectations of the position, and adjusting to day-to-day responsibilities that will accompany the role. Having a support system within this setting can facilitate the transition process smoothly and effectively.[24] New faculty members are encouraged to take responsibility for their own transition process and development as faculty members, and therefore using institutional mentors to assist in this process is common sense. Mentoring relationships are described as either formal or informal, and despite the benefits of each, the informal nature of the institutional mentors appeared to be a valued part of the role transition process for our participants.

Organizational socialization is the period when the new hire becomes familiar with the workplace culture, expectations, and demands that will accompany the new position.[1] So, in order for the new faculty member to become versed in these policies, expectations, and responsibilities, a person who has successfully navigated this process previously provides the best platform for knowledge and experience transfer. Our results support previous research examining the overall socialization process for the doctoral student[10,12] and new faculty member,[18,25] which illustrates the need for knowledgeable mentors; individuals with desirable experiences that relate to the needs of the faculty member are what facilitate and support the relationship.

Williams[26] advocates for new faculty and supervisors of new faculty members to network and to reach out to professionals who can help support the transition into higher education. Her recommendations are founded in an informal platform, allowing for social interactions to organically emerge and allow potential pairings to emerge. The context in which our participants developed these mentoring relationships was simply based on social contexts, whereby day-to-day interactions with peers, colleagues, and supervisors led to knowledge and advice gained. Many institutions provide formal mentoring programs to support role inductance, specifically with the ideology of imparting knowledge of promotion, tenure, and culture, yet our participants found more value in the informal exchanges within their institutions. Fundamentally, this speaks to the ideology of internal mentoring relationships, which are cultivated when cultural norms are being ex-

plored,[27] and knowledge from an individual who has previously experienced it is critical. Internal mentoring is more informal, as the exchange of advice, knowledge, or support is causal and viewed as peer or collegially based.[28] Peers or "academic friends" offer psychological support, as they often share their experiences to demonstrate success is viable and to promote successful entry into the culture.

External Mentors Support General Professional Growth

Doctoral education is the foundation by which the future faculty member becomes trained to enter the professoriate.[28–31] This is often viewed as the professional socialization phase, whereby future faculty members are guided through experiences that will prepare them to teach, conduct research, and serve the academy as well as the profession they are affiliated with as professionals. A doctoral advisor and mentor is often the person who guides, counsels, and oversees this professional socialization phase. So, when our participants shared that they continued to seek out their mentors from their doctoral education experience, it is not uncanny.[31] Doctoral advisors and mentors are often charged with support, what Kram[8] refers to as the career development aspect of mentorship.[32] That is, they must facilitate their student's transformation into a faculty member through supporting teaching, research, and service activities to allow the student to understand the professional identity he or she will eventually assume. Our participants recognized when they needed feedback, advice, or someone to listen to their ideas, reaching out to the doctoral advisors was viewed as the most logical course, indicating a link to the idea that doctoral advisors can support professional development and career growth.[10,29,31]

External mentoring[27,33] has been identified as a form of mentoring whereby the relationship is focused on supporting research agendas, teaching initiatives, and the more global aspects of the professoriate, whereby institutional type is underscored. Our findings support this ideology— that external mentoring relationships are focused on the development of grant applications, research initiatives, and other aspects of the faculty role independent of the culture of their respective institutions. This contrasts with the internal mentoring[27,33] relationships previously discussed, as those are necessary to traverse the institution's programmatic contexts and expectations linked to mission, vision, and type of institution (ie, Carnegie classification). As highlighted by Vicki Rosser[34] in an editorial piece, despite a common core of expectations for a faculty member, different institutional types will expect and reward faculty very differently, and therefore having someone who has navigated this process internally is crucial; without mentors who support overall development, success may not occur.

Recommendations

1. Junior faculty members are encouraged to reach out to their mentors when they need support and guidance. Recognizing the strengths of each of these mentors can help them grow professionally, especially in areas they evaluate to be important to their success as a faculty member.
2. Supervisors and administrators should be encouraging of junior faculty members; this can be accomplished by helping them network with individuals within the institution who can support their efforts within the department and university structure.
3. Doctoral advisors can facilitate the connections and support the growth of their former students as new faculty by maintaining connections through shared interests and projects.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We explored mentorship from the mentee's perspective; thus, the results speak only to mentees' experiences of their role transition. Including the mentor's perspective may assist us in fully understanding the complexity of role transition and acclimation to higher education. Most of our participants were in the first few years of their faculty position, but experiences with faculty mentoring may change over time. Thus, future studies should attempt to capture the perspectives of faculty members with a broader range of experience in their role. The qualitative nature of our study provided us with rich descriptors of the perceptions of our participants, but future studies should incorporate metrics to measure the impact of mentoring on both the mentor and mentee.

Our inclusion criteria were not focused on the Carnegie classification of our participants; therefore, we did not make comparisons or conclusions on the mentorship influence on transitioning to different institutional types. Expectations can vary institutionally, and therefore future studies should include this as part of the investigation.

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings promote the concept that constellation of mentoring relationship, per receiving mentorship from a congregation of sources (ie, internal and external mentors), can support role inductance and acclimation into higher education. Internal mentorship is needed to help impart institution-based knowledge that can help junior faculty members understand the uniqueness of the workplace culture they are transitioning to, which may contrast with that of their doctoral institution. External mentoring is necessary to support continued success as a faculty member independent of the individual institution, taking a more global approach to faculty roles and responsibilities pertaining to research, teaching, and serving the academy. Finally, our results speak to the importance of the mentoring relationship holistically, that is, junior faculty need individuals who can support the transition process and guide individuals based upon their needs and information that is lacking.

REFERENCES

1. Tierney WG, Rhoads RA, eds. *Faculty Socialization as a Cultural Process*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report; 1994. Enhancing Promotion, Tenure and Beyond 93.
2. Van Maanen J, Schein EH. Toward a theory of organizational socialization. *Research in Organizational Behavior*. 1979;1:209–264.
3. Lichty M. *The Socialization Process of New College Faculty in Family and Consumer Science Teacher Education* [dissertation]. Blacksburg: Virginia Tech; 1999.
4. Mullen CA, Forbes SA. Untenured faculty: issues of transition, adjustment and mentorship. *Mentor Tutoring Partnersh Learn*. 2000;8(1):31–46.

5. Corcoran M, Clark SM. Professional socialization and contemporary career attitudes of three faculty generations. *Res High Educ*. 1984;20(2):131–153.

6. Mazerolle SM, Barrett JL, Nottingham S. Examining the factors that facilitate athletic training faculty socialization into higher education. *Athl Train Educ J*. 2016;11(4):208–218.

7. Cawyer CS, Simonds C, Davis S. Mentoring to facilitate socialization: the case of the new faculty member. *Int J Qual Stud Educ*. 2002;15(2):225–242.

8. Kram KE. Phases of the mentor relationship. *Acad Manage J*. 1983;26(4):608–625.

9. Menges RJ. *Faculty in New Jobs: A Guide to Settling In, Becoming Established, and Building Institutional Support*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; 1999.

10. Mazerolle SM, Bowman TG, Klossner JC. An analysis of doctoral students' perceptions of mentorship during their doctoral studies. *Athl Train Educ J*. 2015;10(3):227–235.

11. Barrett JL, Mazerolle SM, Nottingham SL. Attributes of effective mentoring relationships for novice faculty members: perspectives of mentors and mentees. *Athl Train Educ J*. 2017;12(2):152–162. doi:10.4085/1202152.

12. Bowman TG, Klossner JC, Mazerolle SM. The athletic training doctoral experience: facilitators and barriers to anticipatory faculty socialization. *J Athl Train*. 2017;52(10):925–936.

13. Noonan MJ, Ballinger R, Black R. Peer and faculty mentoring in doctoral education: definitions, experiences, and expectations. *Int J Teach Learn High Educ*. 2007;19(3):251–262.

14. Wenger EC, Snyder WM. Communities of practice: the organizational frontier. *Harv Bus Rev*. 2000;78(1):139–145.

15. Lincoln YS, Guba EG. *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications Inc; 1985.

16. Merriam SB. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers; 1998.

17. Creswell JW. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc; 2003.

18. Nottingham SL, Mazerolle SM, Barrett JL. Roles of mentoring for novice athletic training faculty members. *Athl Train Educ J*. 2017;12(4):234–243.

19. Chao GT. Formal mentoring: lessons learned from past practice. *Prof Psychol Res Pract*. 2009;40(3):314–320.

20. Eby LT, Lockwood A. Protégés' and mentors' reactions to participating in formal mentoring programs: a qualitative investigation. *J Vocat Behav*. 2005;67(3):441–458.

21. Williams AL. *Mentoring in Student Affairs: An Interpretive Study of Experiences and Relationships* [dissertation]. Raleigh: North Carolina State University; 2013.

22. Stanley PD, Clinton JR. *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress; 1992.

23. Rose GL. Group differences in graduate students' concepts of the ideal mentor. *Res High Educ*. 2005;46(1):53–80.

24. Ellingson K, Snyder B. Voices of experiences. In: Amey MJ, Reesor LM, eds. *Beginning Your Journey: A Guide for New Professionals in Student Affairs*. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: NAPSA; 2009:1–14.

25. Nottingham SL, Mazerolle SM, Barrett JL. Mentoring processes in higher education: perspectives of junior athletic training faculty members. *Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*. In press.

26. Williams A. Mentoring and socialization for new career development professionals. 5 steps for success. https://www.associationdatabase.com/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/92302/_PARENT/layout_details_cc/true. Published August 1, 2014. Accessed July 26, 2018.

27. Ensher EA, Thomas C, Murphy SE. Comparison of traditional, step-ahead, and peer mentoring on proteges' support, satisfaction, and perceptions of career success: a social exchange perspective. *J Bus Psychol*. 2001;15(3):419–438.

28. Jairam D, Kahl DH. Navigating the doctoral experience: the role of social support in successful degree completion. *Int J Doctoral Stud*. 2012;7:311–329.

29. Tierney WG, Bensimon EM. *Promotion and Tenure: Community and Socialization in Academe*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press; 1996.

30. Sorcinelli MD, Austin AE. *Developing New and Junior Faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; 1992. New Directions for Teaching and Learning 50.

31. Austin AE. Preparing the next generation of faculty: graduate school as socialization to the academic career. *J High Educ*. 2002;73(1):94–122.

32. Inzer LD, Crawford CB. A review of formal and informal mentoring: process, problems, and design. *J Leadersh Educ*. 2005;4(1):31–50.

33. Mullen CA. *From Student to Professor: Translating a Graduate Degree Into a Career in Academia*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education; 2012.

34. Rosser VJ. Preparing and socializing new faculty members. *Rev High Educ*. 2003;26(3):387–395.

Appendix.   Interview Questions

How would you define mentorship?

What does mentorship mean to you?

Do you currently have any mentors?

Can you tell me about them or describe them?

How would you classify your mentor relationship(s)?

Can you discuss your relationship(s) with your mentor(s)? Talk about how it developed, how often you communicate, and anything else that stands out about your relationship.

What role has your mentor(s) played in your development as a faculty member?

What role has your mentor(s) played in your transition into your current faculty role?

Have your mentoring relationships influenced your progress through the promotion and tenure process at your institution?

Would you describe your mentor relationships as formal or informal? Please explain.

Does your institution offer any formal mentor program?