

## From Scratch: Developing an Effective Mentoring Program

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*ABSTRACT: Formal mentoring programs are increasingly recognized as a means of recruitment and retention in a library setting. An effective mentoring program assists new librarians with diverse backgrounds in their professional growth and benefits organizational culture. In this paper, the authors examine different models of mentoring programs in the library profession and discuss the process of developing a university library mentoring program. This case study explores the mentor's and mentee's experiences and perspectives on mentoring relationship and shows their significance for the successful implementation of a mentoring program in an academic library.*

### I. Introduction

The library profession in the U.S. continues to face challenges of recruiting and retaining librarians with diverse backgrounds. Mentoring is an effective method of retention. It helps the development of trusting professional relationships among librarians; helps new librarians to adapt to the new environment; helps improve intergenerational cooperation; and helps in teambuilding. A productive mentoring relationship increases job satisfaction by new librarians, cultivates healthy work environments, and sustains the organizational culture of the libraries.

Mentoring is a historically established method of one-on-one learning. In ancient Chinese society, a skilled worker was often trained through apprenticeship. An individual who was new to his or her trade or occupation was assigned to a master or an experienced worker with seniority for a certain period of time, normally one to three years, in order to learn the new trade. The people with seniority took responsibility to train the younger ones until they acquired the needed skills in their occupations. Cooks, drivers, factory workers, and the like were trained through that

kind of apprenticeship. The relations ended between the master and the younger worker when he or she completed the exit tests and was able to work independently. To some extent, this is one kind of informal mentoring in acquiring a certain set of trade skills.

Informal mentoring has been in existence for a long time. However, the concept of organizational mentoring, according to Zachary (2005), first became popular in the mid-1970s. Since then, "many more organizations began to focus on mentoring as a vehicle for transferring or handing down organizational knowledge from one generation to another" (Zachary, p. 2). As a recruitment and retention tool, mentoring has been used by other industries and institutes of higher education as well. At university campuses, mentoring of junior faculty members by senior ones helps the former to successfully achieve tenure and promotion at their institutions.

## **II. Models of mentoring programs in the library profession**

Many academic libraries have established mentoring programs to assist new librarians in their professional growth and career advancement. With anticipated massive retirements of the current library workforce and with Generation X entering the library workforce (Mosley, 2005), successfully recruiting and retaining librarians in all types of libraries in the U.S. has become more important than ever before. Therefore, developing effective mentoring programs in the library profession will help cultivate the next generation of librarians with diverse backgrounds.

In the library profession, there are a variety of mentoring programs. There are similarities and differences among the goals, methods, and operations of these mentoring programs. Some examples are:

*Mentoring programs in academic library settings:* The goals of mentoring programs at academic libraries are very specific. For example, Auburn University Libraries' Research Committee, as a mentoring tool, helps untenured librarians to develop skills and research agenda to meet research requirements of a tenure track position at the Libraries (Tamera Lee, 1995). University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) Libraries' mentoring program is designed to provide untenured librarians an opportunity to explore issues regarding their development as a librarian, both at UNCG and in the profession, with a mentor who is a tenured librarian (UNCG document, 2005). A Librarian Mentoring Program at Yale University Libraries aims at assisting librarians new to Yale in becoming familiar with and involved in the library system (Yale University Libraries, 2005). The Utah State University Libraries created a Library Peer Mentor Program in 2004 to hire students to assist at the reference desk and in the classroom, extending the reach of librarians (Holliday and Nordgren, 2004). These programs are often supported by library administrations. Mentors and mentees are matched with mutual agreements. The mentor and mentee relationship ends at a mutually agreed upon time. In a survey by Kwasik, Fulda, and Ische (2006), when asked if having a mentor or mentors was a critical part of a

person's professional experience, 71 percent of the respondents answered "yes" (p. 21).

*Mentoring programs at the ALA (American Library Association) divisions and roundtables.* For example, in 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) New Member Mentoring Program was launched. The program enables new ACRL members to engage in a sustained, year-long mentoring relationship with a veteran member, who can provide advice, direction, and the perspective gained from experience. (Bullington and Boylston, 2000). International Relations Round Table's (IRRT's) mentoring program is short-term based, offered to international librarians who attend the ALA annual conferences. The mentors are recruited among U.S. librarians, who assist international librarians during their stay at the conferences. ALA's New Members Round Table (NMRT) has established two types of mentoring programs. One is a Conference Mentoring, designed to help first-time attendees of ALA annual conferences feel at ease by pairing them with seasoned conferences goers. The other one is a Career Mentoring, a year-long program to connect a newer librarian with a seasoned librarian for career development (<http://www.ala.org/ala/nmrt/comm/mentoringcommittee.htm>). ALA's Spectrum Initiative, established in 1997, is their national diversity and recruitment effort, designed to address the specific issue of under-representation of critically needed ethnic librarians within the profession while serving as a model for ways to bring attention to larger diversity issues in the future (<http://www.ala.org/ala/diversity/spectrum/spectrum>).

*Mentoring programs at the ALA's ethnic caucuses.* BCALA (Black Caucus of the American Library Association), REFORMA (The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking), CALA (Chinese American Librarians Association), APALA (Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association), and AILA (American Indian Library Association) all have established mentoring programs. These programs aim in helping their membership's professional development, career advancement, and networking opportunities. The mentoring programs from these ethnic caucuses address issues that are often overlooked by the libraries in which their members work. Therefore, mentoring programs from these organizations play an important role in assisting their members to achieve their career goals.

CALA's mentoring program, for instance, was originated from its Midwest Chapter. Because of its successful outcomes, CALA formally adopted the concept of the program and implemented it through a Mentoring and Professional Development Committee. The program's goals are: 1. to assist new and junior librarians to develop successful library careers; 2. to encourage and prepare library and information science students for a successful library career; and 3. to allow seasoned CALA members to exercise their leadership skills, pass on their experience, and invigorate the profession by making others successful. CALA's Mentoring and Professional Development Committee plans to evaluate the outcomes after a two-year period.

Mentoring programs developed by BCALA, REFORMA, CALA, APALA, and AILA serve specific purposes of the members in these groups. Bonnette (2004) states that a lack of career development or advancement strategies for minorities is the concern of most minority librarians today. In the Federal Glass Ceiling Report of 1995, a lack of mentoring, management training, and career development opportunities were identified as three specific structural barriers that hindered career advancement of minorities (Department of Labor, 1995). Additionally, "in the U.S., women and minorities of both genders find fewer mentoring opportunities than do their white male counterparts" (Coaching and mentoring, p. 119, 2004). Therefore, providing mentoring and creating networking opportunities for minority librarians becomes more important than ever before for ALA's ethnic caucuses. Several aspects of mentoring (Johnson and Ridley, 2004), such as providing sponsorship, encouragement and support, offering counsel in difficult times, protecting when necessary, giving protégés exposure and promoting their visibility, stimulating growth with challenging assignments, and nurturing creativity, are especially appealing to minority librarians.

To establish effective mentoring programs, Megginson and Clutterbuck (2005) offer some techniques. They are:

- Establishing and managing the coaching or mentoring relationship
- Setting goals
- Clarifying and understanding situations
- Building self-knowledge
- Understanding other people's behavior
- Dealing with roadblocks
- Stimulating creative thinking
- Building wider networks of support, influence and learning (p. 1)

These techniques should be applied when developing an effective mentoring program for librarians in general and for librarians of color in particular. The development of successful mentoring programs is a creative process. It takes a lot of time and effort to make the programs work. When a library decides to develop a mentoring program, one might predict a long road of thinking, trying, acting, discussions, decisions, errors, corrections, surprises, successes, failures, and changes. There is no guarantee that every individual mentoring relationship will succeed. But this is not supposed to be a goal. The goal for mentoring program developers is the "establishment of self-supported mechanisms of connection of the less experienced librarians to more experienced librarians where every effort is made for the best matching of mentors and mentees considering both individual and organizational goals". These mechanisms should guarantee equal access to the program for all participants, attention to individual needs and sensitivity to special issues as well as the usefulness of the program to the library organization.

### **III. A Case Study: Development of a Mentoring Program at the Wichita State University Libraries**

The mentoring program at the Wichita State University (WSU) Libraries is a relatively new program that "hit the road" two years ago with a view to finding the best solution for the library's problem of recruitment and retention of professional librarians in recent years.

There are 20 faculty librarians at the WSU Libraries. Most of them are in public services. Librarians have held faculty status since the 1940's. As the University Libraries entered a new century, new challenges were emerging. After the retirement of a 25-year veteran Dean, the position was vacated twice in five years. And the librarians had a high turnover rate. Retirements and life choices caused departures of long-time faculty. Additional turnover of the faculty librarians could be attributed to economic or professional advancements at other institutions. By 2004, the University Libraries was comprised of a small group of "veteran" librarians and a preponderance of newer librarians. The "new" faculty offered the University Libraries a rich mix of skills, experiences and education -- and also usually required similar forms of support as they joined the University Libraries. Many of the newest librarians had important life experience in demanding professions, but their arrival at WSU Libraries represented their first professional position in an academic library. While the "triad" (librarianship, scholarship, and service to the university and profession) expected of faculty members had been explained before their hiring, and all candidates had expressed a desire to be part of a tenure system, few had much exposure to the rigors of the tenure requirement. In that context, the University Libraries, and new librarians, it was believed, would both benefit from a mentoring program.

#### *1. First Mentoring Guidelines*

The needs for a mentoring program for the University Libraries and recently hired faculty were clear. Following a discussion at the Faculty Council (i.e., faculty meeting) in spring 2004, a small committee of three Library faculty members was formed to develop mentoring guidelines. Nancy Deyoe, Assistant Dean for Technical Services, and two other tenure track faculty were on the committee. The committee researched mentoring programs in other libraries and universities and presented the Faculty Council a set of guidelines in summer 2004. The initial guidelines included the following elements:

- A definition of the mentoring program
- General Statements with the description of the functions of a mentoring process and a mentor
- Limits of the program
- Length of the process (established as a year), with the option to extend to a second year if desired by both Mentor and Mentee, and general timeline information

- Mentoring would be mandatory for new faculty
- Mentors must be tenured WSU Libraries faculty
- Mentors must volunteer to serve in the role
- A preference that the Mentor and Mentee would work in different library departments
- Selection of the Mentor is the responsibility of Department Chairs
- Specific actions the mentor should undertake (e.g., welcoming the faculty member; advising new faculty of appropriate faculty orientations, departmental, and college meetings; meeting monthly; advising the new faculty member on the evaluation process and development of "supporting" documentation needed during evaluation; encouragement of scholarship activity; explanation as needed of service opportunities; guidance in requesting travel funding.
- Specific orientation actions the Department Chair would be expected to perform.
- A wrap up meeting involving the Mentee, their Department Chair, and the Mentor following the conclusion of the mentoring cycle.

The policy was presented to the Faculty Council for discussion. Comments and suggestions were received. Following some adjustments to the draft, the Faculty Council approved the WSU Libraries Mentoring Guidelines in their subsequent meeting 2004.

## *2. The Program Goes into Practice*

All tenured University Libraries faculty were willing to serve as mentors at the inception of the mentoring program, and the first mentoring "pairs" were formed immediately. As of the writing of this paper, in excess of six mentor/mentee relationships were created. Some have concluded, some have not. However, all persons asked to serve as mentors have done so, and all faculty hired during the two years not only have agreed to participate in the program but chose to stay with their assigned mentors. However, as with any "paper" policy which is to be tested by real life, the University Libraries have discovered the strengths and weakness of their 2004 policy.

Strengths included the genuine interest of the Mentors in the development of the Mentees, and the genuine efforts on the part of the Mentees to learn more about their Library and the distinctiveness of the University. Likewise, the Mentees gave serious and thoughtful consideration to their professional improvement, and Mentors were honest about their limits in the role (if they couldn't answer a question, they helped the Mentee find a person who could).

The limits of the policy included both anticipated quirks, and genuine surprises.

- Although the policy had formally passed the Faculty Council in summer 2004, only a year later, the minutes of a Reference Department retreat reflected confusion as to whether the policy was official or not.
- Concerns had been voiced early in the writing of the first draft and in the Faculty Council about the preference that Mentors and Mentees be from different departments; this proved completely unrealistic as almost all new hires were in Public Services and only one tenured faculty member was eligible as a mentor in Technical Services.
- Lack of eligible mentors became even more of an issue when the Head of the Reference Department began assigning mentors to librarians hired on a one year temporary contract, the "unwritten understanding" had been that mentoring would only be offered to tenure track faculty.
- Questions regarding international visa issues arose on a regular basis, and mentors generally lacked expertise in the area.
- Unanticipated delays in the University faculty evaluation process resulted in the cancellation of an important training workshop for new faculty (how to fill out the primary record of faculty activity for evaluation 'C which should have been offered in an organized workshop 'C had to be covered one-on-one with new faculty) which turned first year faculty to their mentors for help in what was supposed to be a Tenure and Promotion Committee assignment.
- Finally, very real confusion developed between what would be asked of Mentors, and what should be completed as routine orientation and training by a hiring department.

### *3. The 2006 Rewrite*

In the spring of 2006, the Mentoring Policy was revised by the committee comprised of Nancy Deyoe and two new committee members. The committee sought to preserve the strengths of the original guidelines, while responding to the experiences of the previous two years. In order to obtain feedback from the faculty of the University Libraries, a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the Mentoring Guidelines was held in May 2006. Comments and concerns included:

- The need for more mentors. Tenured faculty were being stretched very thin, and some untenured (but having been on the faculty for several years) librarians offered to serve as mentors as they were able.
- Real confusion about mentoring versus functional training. For example, one first-year librarian recalled that a senior faculty member had spent a great deal of time teaching her how to conduct Dialog searching, and commented that she could now take over Dialog instruction. This revealed a lack of distinction between the role of a mentor and a trainer.
- The policy was considered to be too restrictive.
- The time period devoted to the official process was considered to be too long.
- Some language (especially position titles) in the document needed updating.
- Greater understanding of the time required of Mentors was requested.

- Mentoring should only be offered to tenure track faculty.

Following the meeting, the 2006 committee exhaustively rewrote the policy. Improvements included:

- The new definition of mentoring as "a formal process within the WSU Libraries wherein the mentor serves as a role model, trustful counselor or guide who provides opportunities for professional development, growth and support to less experienced members of the library faculty" ("Probationary Faculty Mentoring Program Guidelines", WSU, August 2006).
- The new part on the goals of the Mentoring Program defined two main goals: (a) to support the development of new library faculty at the University Libraries, and (b) to open channels of communications between new librarians and their colleagues.
- Expanded definitions of mentoring versus training.
- Language to reflect the important contributions of non-Mentor faculty to the development of new librarians.
- The eligible mentor pool was expanded to include librarians with more than three years at the University Libraries (although preference was still given to tenured faculty).
- Appointment of Mentors was clarified.
- The length of the mentoring process was shortened to six months, with the understanding that the process could continue beyond this point and must include an annual evaluation cycle.
- A formal calendar was introduced.
- Increased confidentiality language was added.
- Assessment of the process was introduced. Both Mentors and Mentees will fill out evaluation forms, and the results of the forms will be used for continuous improvement of the process.

#### *4. Two Years Later: Experience and Perceptions of the Program Participants*

The revised mentoring policy reflected the growing understanding of the goals and functions of the Mentoring Program. A continuing concern, however, was how to increase program satisfaction for both mentors and mentees.

Dr. Susan Matveyeva, tenure track faculty, came to the conclusion that some challenges of the 1st (2004) mentoring program were connected to the organizational aspect of the program. She suggested that between a carefully designed mentoring policy and real life mentoring practices should be an intermediate step: a *procedure* that would direct and organize mentoring practice, and clarify and interpret it if needed. The policy itself should not be too detailed and prescriptive; it should provide major definitions, goals, and structure of the Program. The policy should be complemented by an implementation procedure. This procedure will lead the program through the mentorship calendar and will keep the involved parties (Mentor, Mentee,



supervisor, and the Office of the Dean) on schedule, and organize and clarify the program details as needed.

To assess the assumption, Susan interviewed the WSU mentoring program's participants, including eight faculty members (four mentors and four mentees). At the time of the study, three mentoring teams had completed the program based on the initial 2004 policy. Two and a half pairs of these three mentoring teams were interviewed (one Mentee could not be reached at the time of the study). Two new faculty members, who recently started their program in its 2nd version, were also interviewed. The interviewer expected that the new mentees, following the 2006 revised policy, would be better informed about the program than the mentees who completed the 2004 version, partially because they were present on Faculty Council during the recent discussions about the mentoring program, and partially because of the improvements of the second version in comparison to the first one.

The study of the participants' perceptions of mentorship and their expectations toward the program included the experience of the program participants in mentoring relationship, their understanding about the role and responsibilities of a mentor and a mentee, their expectations, their satisfactory levels with their matches, their equal access to participate in the program, and what needs to be done differently.

#### *Study Design and Methodology*

Four mentors participated in the study. All four are women, tenured faculty in the rank of Associate Professor. The majority of mentees are in their first professional position after library school. Their background and previous experience are varied, as are their countries of origin. Three mentees are from different parts of the United States; one from Russia, and two from China (only one Chinese librarian was interviewed.) Three of the six did not work in an academic library before. Two mentees had a teaching faculty experience in the past, and one has previously worked in a smaller academic library in a professional position for two years.

All interviews were conducted in the period of one week in September 2006 at the WSU Library. Each interview took one hour of time and included a series of questions and answers. The questions are open ended; the interviewer asked additional questions not listed in the questionnaire as needed. The interviews were conducted one on one with only the interviewee and the interviewer in the room. The interviewer asked questions and took the notes.

The interviewer has been working in this library for four years and was a mentee herself when she came to this library after her graduation from a library school in 2002.

#### *Findings*

The interviewer's notes revealed some interesting findings from the interview:

*Previous experience in mentoring relationship:* Majority of senior and new faculty had informal mentors at the beginning steps of their career or when they were college students. Nobody had the experience of participation in the formal mentoring program before. Some mentors had numerous informal Mentees in the past and have formal Mentees now. As stated in the literature, previous experience of successful mentorship heavily influences the decision of senior faculty to enter into a mentorship relationship again (Allen, Russell, 1997). Obviously, senior faculty with extensive successful experience in informal mentoring enjoy this activity and might want to have more mentees than faculty who have not been involved as much in informal mentorship.

*Perceptions on the role and responsibilities of a mentor and mentee:* Senior faculty are aware of the role, functions, and responsibilities of a mentor. They see a mentor as a "cheerleader", active supporter, "friendly face in a confusing situation" who guides new librarians in their professional growth, but not as a trainer on everyday tasks. The responsibilities of a mentor have formal and informal components. Formal components may include useful information and advice about research and service, professional organizations, journals, reference to a proper person or resource, the library and University, etc. Informal components typically include information on departmental culture, the explanation "what is going on" and "how we do things here", help or advice in a problem situation, etc. Mentors think that their mentees do not know about the mentor's responsibilities. Three of the four responded negatively to a question "Does your mentee know about your responsibility as a mentor?"

The mentors are correct in their assumptions. Four of the five mentees said that nobody explained the goals of a mentoring program and they did not know about their mentor's responsibilities toward them. Three of the five new mentees did not think about their role and responsibilities as a Mentee. The typical answers are: "I did not think much of it"; "I am not sure. Nobody asked me to read about a Mentoring Program." Only two mentees responded that a mentee should "try to learn what she or he can. If you have questions, ask;" "Be collaborative. Take initiatives. Mentorship is a partnership that works in both directions."

New faculty members, entering the program this fall, are more familiar with the program. This conclusion follows from the comparison of the answers of mentees 2004 and mentees 2006 to the question about their expectations toward the program. Mentees of 2004 did not have specific expectations, or goals (the answers: "I did not think about it", or "Expected to become friendly, go to lunches together"), while mentees of 2006 expected to get "assistance with more complex things, such as research and service; develop professional relationship with a mentor; address questions of general concern; receive information about the library and the University environment from a trustful colleague."

*Matching factors:* The interviews show that psychological compatibility is the major factor of satisfaction/dissatisfaction in a mentoring relationship. During interviews,

the members of one mentoring team both expressed mixed feelings of sympathy, guilt, and regret that they did not contact much and did not meet much because of communication difficulties. Both members of this team said that they felt uncomfortable with each other. "It was as walking on egg shell." (Mentor); "We did not meet much. I did not feel comfortable" (Mentee). Another mentoring pair developed an emotionally asymmetric relationship where a Mentee became attached to a mentor while a mentor tried to distance herself from a Mentee. This mentor said that she would be much more satisfied by mentoring another Mentee because of psychological compatibility with this new librarian, but this mentor had not been asked about her preferences.

The interviews show that for some individuals it is better to have a mentor in her/his own department while for other individuals the best choice would be to have a mentor from another department. A choice of "the same vs. other" department should be made on an individual basis with consideration of personalities and mentee needs. Additionally, some mentees are more comfortable to have a mentor of the same gender while others prefer to work with the opposite gender.

*Organization of the program:* Practically, mentors as well as mentees did not have a choice of their "pair." Some mentors were asked if they agree to mentor a new librarian, but some were assigned a mentee without being asked. Some mentors developed a plan and regularly met with their mentees while others did not. Some became involved in training their mentees even if they felt that this is beyond their responsibilities. Some contacted their mentees and asked if they have questions while some others were waiting for mentees to contact them.

*Minority Mentees:* Minority Mentees have the same access to a mentoring program as any other faculty member. However, this is not enough. Minorities need more information, more guidance, and more samples to make informed choices and to recognize the opportunities.

New minority librarians, especially from foreign countries, do not have some common knowledge typically shared by those who were born in the United States. One of the interviewees, a librarian of color, who has already completed the mentoring program, answered "I do not know" or "I do not have a clue" to all questions about the roles and responsibilities, and rules and limitations of a mentor-mentee relationship. This does not mean that the program this librarian completed was not successful. But the program could have been more successful if the information about the mentoring program were provided to this librarian before entering the program.

*Suggestions for improvement of the program:* Interviewees were asked about improvements for new librarians as well as their mentors. Mentors think that a "short guideline or checklist of things" will be important for the success of this program. Another suggestion was to get mentors together for sharing their experiences and coordinating their goals. The suggestion for administration is to talk to a mentor and

mentee about their responsibilities and time commitment. At the same time, mentors as well as mentees have concerns about the privacy of their relationship. Some do not like the idea of sending a short evaluation form at the end of a formal mentorship program to library administration.

Mentees' suggestions are: to create a short guide; to clarify mutual responsibilities; to provide samples of schedule; to develop a handbook for mentees and include useful information on places, restaurants, cultural events, etc. They understand the differences between formal and informal mentorship, as well as required involvement of supervisors and administration in a program. The suggestion for supervisors is to consider psychological compatibility when matching mentors and mentees. "They need to look at this relationship on a bigger scale and to project why and how to put these people together. At their arrival, new faculty are especially open to a new relationship. Sometimes, mentorship can start a very fruitful professional relationship."

### Discussions

Formal mentoring programs can be successful or not as well. The success of a program is based on the clear definition of the program's goals and limitations, the presence of standard elements, a procedure that is easy to follow and review through mentoring calendar, training of mentors, clear reporting line and the library expectations toward mentors and mentees.

Standard elements of formal mentorship in organizations include: (1) targeted group of mentees or learners (e.g., new library faculty); (2) specifically defined mentor competencies (e.g., tenured faculty); (3) selecting members according to defined competencies (e.g., a group of eligible library faculty); (4) matching mentors and mentees (defined as a responsibility of supervisor in the 2006 policy); (5) developing guidelines for meetings, or plan of mentorship (e.g., suggested Mentoring Calendar ); (6) training of mentors (Gibb, p. 1058). The assessment of the Libraries' 2006 program shows that five standards elements are present there.

The policy directs supervisors to match mentoring teams. Matching is based on an unspoken assumption that supervisors can make the best decision without consultations with a mentee and sometimes even a mentor. In reality, supervisors need additional information to make an informed match. The question to eligible faculty if she or he would agree to mentor this particular individual should be preceded by other questions, such as (1) how many mentees she or he agrees to have in one year; (2) mentor's preferences in specialization, department, gender of prospective mentee; (3) preferable areas of help offering (career counseling, conference participation, research orientation, etc.).

Matching is the most important element of a mentoring program. As is shown from the findings, two mentoring pairs out of the three were not of the best matching choice. Personalities, communication problems, and different expectations brought

unnecessary difficulties into mentoring practices of these faculty members and impeded efficiency and enjoyment of the mentorship program for one mentee and contributed to the stress of one mentor. Another issue is that the current mentoring policy leaves mentees passively waiting for his or her supervisor's decision. It puts the supervisor in a difficult position because she or he does not have information about psychological needs and professional interests of a mentee as well as of eligible mentors' interest in mentorship.

A short enrollment form to the Mentoring Program filled out by a new faculty can help the supervisor to make a better match. A new faculty should have the opportunity to express his or her needs and preferences. The form might include the definition of a mentor and the mentor's role and responsibilities, which should help a mentee to form the realistic expectations toward a mentoring program and his or her future mentor. This form might include information about advantages and disadvantages of having a mentor from his or her own or other department. This explanation can help a newcomer to make an informed decision.

"Despite continued practitioner interest in formalizing the mentoring process, the research literature indicates that such programs have limitations." (Scandura, 1998) The library's policy and procedure for a successful mentoring program must recognize and address these limits. The revised 2006 program provides a mechanism to dissolve a mentoring relationship if it does not work. In their answers to questions about what they would do if the mentoring relationship would not work, the interviewed mentees indicated that they would not hesitate to ask their supervisor for a new mentor. However, this is easier to say than to do in a medium-sized academic library with 20 librarian faculty. It is unlikely that untenured faculty will initiate the process of changing a tenured faculty mentor who annually evaluates the mentee's performance as a member of a Tenure and Promotion Committee. It is especially challenging for minority faculty to show their dissatisfaction, particularly those who depend on a work visa.

### Recommendations

The study conducted by the authors shows that there is still room for improvement of the Mentoring Program. Some suggestions are made to:

1. create an implementation procedure in a form of a *Mentoring Program Guide or Manual* for mentors, mentees, and supervisors;
2. develop a checklist for mentees, mentors, and supervisors to clarify major goals, mutual expectations and responsibilities, and major steps of the Program (information for a checklist must be taken from the current version of the Mentoring Program);
3. involve new faculty in the choice of their mentors by asking them to fill in the Mentee Application Form where new faculty will provide information about their interests in research and service, expectations toward mentoring

- relationship, characteristics they seek in a mentor and any additional information that can help a supervisor to find the best match for him or her;
4. let both new faculty and their colleagues know each other better by postponing the matching process for one month after new faculty's arrival;
  5. help supervisors in matching mentoring pairs by asking prospective mentors to fill in the Mentor's Application Form where tenured faculty provide information about his or her research and service interests, previous experience in both formal and informal mentorship, expectations toward mentoring relationship, the number of mentees she or he agrees to have in one year, preferences toward characteristics of prospective mentees, and some additional provisions if needed;
  6. organize a workshop on formal mentoring programs for University faculty and administration, or training workshop for mentors; and
  7. find the appropriate form for exchange of mentoring experience between mentors (e.g., committee, business lunch, meeting, wiki, and blog.)

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The Mentoring Program at the WSU Libraries is still very much a work in progress. The last revision of the Guidelines was formally adopted by the faculty in August 2006. And even now new mentor/mentee pairings are still forming. The Guidelines will be reconsidered on a continuing basis.

While we need to look at continuous improvement, the process itself has been positive. Mentoring is expected to help new faculty members achieve professional excellence and to offer our new librarians a positive, supportive and available fellow faculty member as they learn about their university, the role of a faculty member, and their profession. It will contribute to a conducive library environment and affect the interdepartmental relationship in a positive way. As one interviewed senior faculty said, "Mentorship is an investment. You contribute to the professional growth of a newcomer, and the result is a good colleague and a better work environment."

Medium-sized libraries may not hire new faculty each year. We expect that a formal Mentoring Program will contribute to new faculty retention and help their integration into the University Libraries community. We have a plan to interview each new faculty after the completion of the program and to use that information for the program improvement.

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