

Virtual Mentoring

SWDE 2023

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Social Work Distance Education Conference, Session 2432203

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Abstract

In this session, the facilitators will share their experiences administering faculty mentoring programs at three schools of social work, including mentoring for online MSW and DSW faculty located around the world.

Current and equitable virtual mentoring models will be discussed and participants will have an opportunity to brainstorm about how they can either add a virtual mentoring component to their program, or expand upon any existing models.

Today's Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Analyze and evaluate different models of virtual mentoring through a global lens.
 - Examine virtual mentoring techniques specific to the unique needs of online faculty, with a deliberate focus on nurturing adjunct and junior faculty members.
 - Engage in the exchange of strategies and best practices related to globally oriented virtual faculty mentoring programs.
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Agenda

- ❑ Welcome and introductions
 - ❑ Models of virtual mentoring
 - ❑ Examples of virtual mentoring from Adelphi, University of Iowa, and Columbia
 - ❑ Discussion of virtual mentoring techniques specific to the unique needs of online faculty
 - ❑ Wrap up
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Your Presenters



Beth Counselman Carpenter, PhD, LCSW; Twitter @ElisabethAnneCC
Associate Professor of Social Work, Adelphi University School of Social Work
(presenting from the land of the Merrick & Munsee Lenape peoples)



Stephen Cummings, MSW, ACSW, LISW; Twitter @spcummings
Clinical Associate Professor, MSW Program & Distance Education Director, University
of Iowa School of Social Work ([Land acknowledgement](#))



Matthea Marquart, MSSW; Twitter @MattheaMarquart
Assistant Dean, Online Education; Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Columbia University School
of Social Work (presenting from the land of the Lenape people)



Introductions and warm-up

Please share:

- Your institution and where you're joining from
- What's something you're looking forward to about the summer?

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One definition of mentoring:

Mentoring is “an interpersonal exchange between an experienced senior colleague (mentor) and a less experienced junior colleague (protégé) in which the mentor provides the protégé with career functions related to career advancement and psychosocial functions related to personal development” (Kram, 1988, as cited by Hu, Thomas, and Lance, 2008)

Professional Mentoring

Professional mentoring within academic settings often focuses on professional success related to promotion and tenure (for those in full-time faculty positions) and less so on teaching success and skills to navigate challenging structural and institutional climates.

Faculty development, particularly virtual faculty development and related mentoring programs, is a rapidly growing field, and is now recognized as important to life-long adult learning with the academy (McGaghie 2009; Otero Ribeiro & Mennin 2010).

Sharing about our mentoring experiences

Please share:

- Have you experienced effective mentoring, either as a mentee or a mentor? What made it effective?
- Have you experienced ineffective mentoring? What made it ineffective?
- Does the availability of virtual mentoring make a difference?

Breakout group

In your group, come up with at least 5 characteristics of a good virtual mentoring program

Current gaps in mentoring models

The COVID-19 pandemic also had a significant influence on mentoring with an increased need for mentoring overall, and a call for traditional programs to be adapted for virtual settings (Zibold et al., 2021).

Challenges within traditional programs include:

- * models that have been identified as impersonal and ineffective for female-identified professionals, especially for professionals of color and models that perpetuate structural inequality.

Many dominant mentoring models do not address the specific challenges of BIPOC faculty at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) and do not adequately address the sociopolitical realities of BIPOC faculty (Endo, 2020), only focusing on Eurocentric and androcentric value systems and deficit-based in which the mentee is thought to know 'less than', and wisdom is imparted.

Three foundational areas of virtual mentoring

Virtual mentoring may focus on one of these three areas:

- 1) instructional knowledge - related to how to design and implement effective courses,
- 2) pedagogical knowledge - related to theories of how people learn and
- 3) curricular knowledge (Carter et al., 2012).

There are opportunities to apply decolonizing theories, such as critical race theory to the mentor-mentee relationship, particularly between White faculty and mentees of color.

Training must be specifically grounded and equity-centric mentoring-partnership initiatives take a radically different approach that focuses on a larger social responsibility of PWIs to be proactive in challenging institution-wide equity gaps (Endo, 2020), and in which mentoring is considered a partnership, rather than a hierarchical relationship.

These constructs are not often applied to virtual mentoring models, particularly around pedagogical knowledge.

Three foundational models of virtual mentoring: Online Adjunct Faculty Mentoring Model (OAFMM)

Brannagan & Oriol (2014):

- Comes from nursing literature.
- developed to support adjunct faculty who are SMEs.
- grounded in Bandura's social cognition theory.
- Provides linear steps to follow.

Assign an online adjunct faculty coordinator.

- a) Run the three week orientation
- b) Works with and coordinates the assigned mentors

Key points:

- Role definition must be clear! What are faculty responsibilities?
- Recruit talented adjunct faculty: Subject matter expertise and technical expertise screening.
- Orientation period with embedded exercises to strengthen faculty self-efficacy.
 - Orientation should model the learning management system of the delivered courses and focus on strengthening faculty communication.
- Mentor training is imperative!
- Mentoring process:
 - Mentor introduces mentee to course content, provided insight and feedback throughout course progression and throughout course grading.

Highly Relevant Mentoring Model (HRM)

- Developed at the University of Northern British Columbia.
- Also developed for nursing faculty.
- Considered a form of :Just in Time Teaching Technology (JiTT)
- Learning: defined as accomplishing the tasks that hold the greatest relevance for faculty.
 - Faculty learn as they work (as opposed to formal training)
 - Faculty do not learn in learning communities that do not provide practical opportunities to build skills,

The HRM model relies on the skill of the mentor to provide support in order to maximize the benefit for each instructor.

A key assumption of the model is that the faculty member (mentee) has subject-specific knowledge while the mentor (an ID) has technical knowledge.

Distance Education Mentoring Program (DEMP)

*Developed at Purdue University Calumet campus.

The Distance Education Mentoring Program (DEMP) is designed to educate and certify faculty members in the principles of instructional design for the purpose of enhancing the quality of their online courses.

Mentoring is seen as a learning technique in this model.

Specifically, the goals of the Distance Education Mentoring Program are

- (1) to ensure the academic integrity of distance education courses and
- (2) to align the conditions for learning with the technology used to deliver courses.

The program uses a rubric developed by Quality Matters (QM). Faculty members who have been through the QM certification process and have online teaching experience serve as mentors.

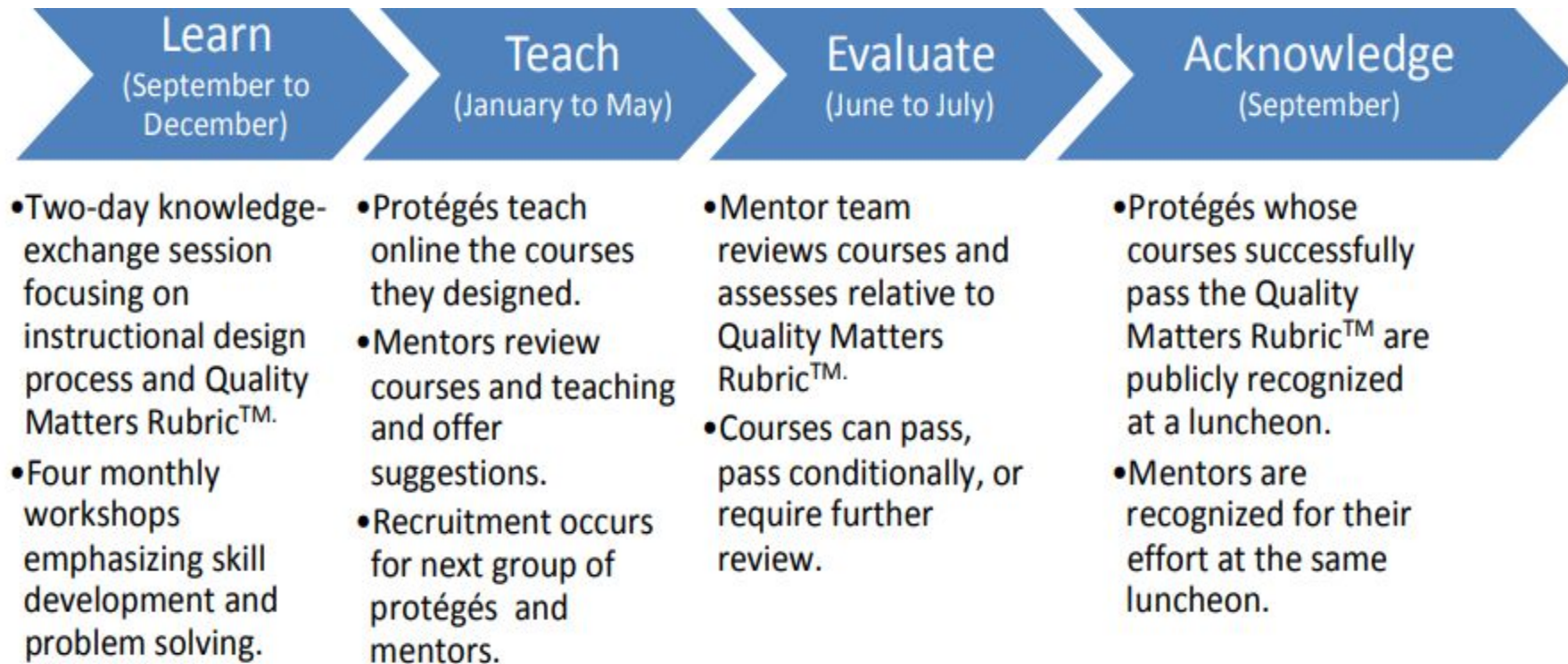


Figure 1: Four-Stage Model of the Distance Education Mentoring Program

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Faculty virtual mentoring program example: Adelphi

***Junior Faculty Interdisciplinary Mentoring Program**

*Junior Faculty (untenured faculty at the Assistant or Associate level) are paired with a mentor outside of their school, who is tenured/Full to meet a minimum of two times a year.

*Virtual format was only offered during the active COVID-19 pandemic campus restrictions. All events are planned in person, and mentor/mentee can choose to meet virtually and/or in person.

***Course Convenor Model for OMSW program**

- *Course shells

- *Communication & Modeling

- *Re-affirmation process.

Faculty virtual mentoring program example: Adelphi

- *Building a mentoring program into an emerging DSW program.

 - *Focus group data

 - *Improving retention of students with marginalized identity.

 - *Improving retention of adult learners

 - *Building relationships for Capstone mentorship

 - *Semester-long co-taught professional development course

 - *Assignments that interrogate professional identity & assess prior mentorships relationships.

Faculty virtual mentoring program example: Iowa

Adjunct Faculty Mentoring

Each new adjunct faculty member is connected with a lead faculty

- Review curriculum redesign plan
- Development of CMS
- Classroom management
- Fall/Spring group meetings with all center faculty

This model was developed for distance and online centers, where resources and support were not perceived as readily available

Virtual mentoring program example: CSSW Online Campus - Mentoring New Faculty

- Created/launched in fall 2019 by Johanna Creswell Báez, Manager of Course Development, Online Campus, and led/facilitated by her during AY2019-20 and AY2020-21. Since fall 2021, led/facilitated by Lia W. Marshall, Manager of Course Development, Online Campus, who has expanded the program.
- Mentees:
 - Instructors teaching their first course with the Online Campus
 - Instructors returning to teaching with the Online Campus after 2 or more years
- Format: Mentees meet with the Manager of Course Development around the start, middle, and end of the semester, either one-on-one or in groups, depending on scheduling. They can also email her for mentoring support throughout the semester.
- Example feedback: “Lia was a phenomenal resource. During the mentee sessions she listened, validated, and provided support on whatever arose. As a first time CSSW professor it's not uncommon to feel imposter syndrome - and Lia really helped normalize and ease the feelings! Outside of scheduled mentee sessions, Lia was always readily available to answer or assist with any questions or concerns. I really appreciate her dedication to this program!”

Mentor (and past mentee) perspective - Mentoring new faculty



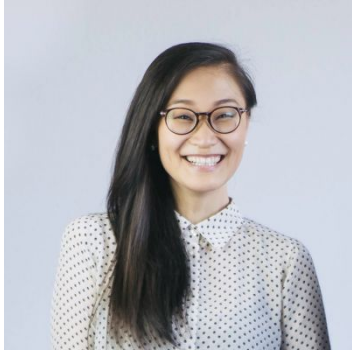
Lia W. Marshall,
PhD, MSW,
Manager of Course
Development,
Online Campus,
Columbia
University School
of Social Work

"Mentorship provides **many benefits including supporting new online instructors through the transition into the role, and negating new instructor "jitters,"** as well as **practical support** such as answering questions on school policy, addressing student concerns, and guidance with online technology and pedagogy. In addition to building one-on-one relationships, **group mentorship additionally supports community building among the instructors--particularly beneficial due to the geographic diversity of online instructors.** I am motivated to continue this valuable work not only by my own experience as a mentee, but from the positive formal feedback I have received from 28 instructors I have mentored. **Over the last 2 years, I continue to see its lasting effects in both teaching efficacy and in the sense of community** between the online campus administrative team and its instructors."

Virtual mentoring program example: CSSW Online Campus - Mentoring Live Support Specialists

- Created in AY2017-18, launched in spring 2018, and led by Rebecca Y. Chung, Program Manager, Online Campus
- Recognized with a 2021 Faculty and Staff Development Award from UPCEA Mid-Atlantic
- Mentors: Experienced Live Support Specialists (LSSs)
- Mentees are assigned a mentor for the first month of the semester:
 - First-time LSSs supporting a course (3 hours)
 - First-time LSSs not supporting a course (1 hour)
 - LSS's returning after one or more semesters off from supporting a course (1 hour)
 - Also: All LSS's can receive mentoring specific to timesheets or weekly assignments from dedicated mentors
- Format: Mentees can ask their mentor any questions they may have about anything related to their new role and responsibilities. Examples include meeting with a mentor to practice with the tools or check their virtual classroom setup, debriefing with a mentor after supporting their first class session, asking a mentor to shadow their first class session, etc.

Manager perspective - Mentoring new online course staff



Rebecca Y. Chung, Program Manager, Online Campus, Columbia University School of Social Work

"This program started with the hope that it would provide our remote staff, titled Live Support Specialists (LSS), with integrative onboarding, immediate peer support, open communication lines, continued professional development, and opportunities to share feedback and grow together as a team.

With the needs of new and returning LSS and the nature of the fully remote Online Campus work environment, the mission and vision of the LSS Mentorship Program commits to four key objectives:

1. Help the speed-to-productivity process and ease the transition into the role and work culture for all incoming team members
2. Champion the high quality of our LSS team and CSSW Online Campus by offering a continuous support system throughout every semester of each academic year for existing team members
3. Provide experienced staff with the opportunity to grow in their leadership skills by becoming a mentor
4. Create spaces that allow for innovation, accountability, and improvement as the CSSW Online Campus grows as a program and a community"

Virtual mentoring program example: CSSW Online Campus - Mentoring members interested in future teaching

- Created/launched in fall 2022 and facilitated by Matthea Marquart, Assistant Dean, Online Campus
- Mentees: LSS's and Teaching Associates who are interested becoming instructors in the future
- Format: An optional drop-in mentoring group session following each session of the Annual Online Faculty Development Series, about 1-2 weeks after the session so that interested folks who missed the session can make it up. The group debriefs the session, discusses questions about developing into an instructor, and discusses a different special topic during each session.
- Example feedback: "I think these meetings are great. I always greatly appreciate the opportunity to talk about career growth and opportunities." "I love all of the resources that were shared. Definitely looking forward to more of that!"

Mentee perspective - Mentoring future faculty



**Trina Nurse,
MSW**

Columbia
University
School of Social
Work
Alumni

"This mentorship opportunity brings so much valuable support and guidance on not only a professional level but a personal level as well. I came to this space wanting to grow professionally and look for networking opportunities yet there is a positive challenge that encourages me to be a better advocate and educator. One of the most important aspects of this mentorship program is that there is not just one person providing feedback, there are opportunities to develop ideas within the community. We all have a growth mindset that benefits not only the mentors but the mentees as well. Being able to share perspectives and challenge assumptions has developed several of my skill sets. The wisdom that has been provided to me during this mentorship has allowed me to understand some of the realities of academia and empowered me to ensure I tailor this experience to my needs and goals. And the best part of it all is that as a current doctoral student, professional, and mother of four I am able to engage in these conversations because they are remote!"

Mentee perspective - Mentoring future faculty



Mary Downs,
MSSW, MA
Columbia
University School
of Social Work
Alumni and Live
Support Specialist

"I always look forward to attending our virtual mentoring group sessions. There, I receive guidance and support from an expert who understands the process of transitioning from the role of Live Support Specialist into an Instructor. I love that this space was created so we can ask questions and share experiences with colleagues who have similar interests and goals. I always come away feeling motivated and inspired.

My participation in this group has encouraged me to contribute in other areas of academia, such as writing and presenting at our larger online faculty meetings and other educational venues. Matthea graciously shares her knowledge, experience, and resources with us and offers support and encouragement as we prepare to move into instructional roles."

Examples of virtual peer mentoring opportunities as part of faculty development: CSSW Online Campus

- During the Annual Online Faculty Development Series
 - Breakout conversations
 - Ongoing chat conversation
 - Lightning presentations
- During the [Institute on Pedagogy and Technology for Online Courses](#)
 - Guest speakers
 - Breakout groups
 - Discussion forums
 - Peer review activity
- As part of our [ebook: Designing Engaging and Interactive Synchronous Online Class Sessions](#)
 - And the [advanced workshop](#) related to this book

Questions?

Any questions about these examples?

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Best practices

- 1) Not all faculty possess the skills or interest required for mentorship (Ziegler & Reiff, 2006).
- 2) Skills to be a strong mentor:
 - Commitment and responsibility to service as mentor.
 - When possible, previous experience as a mentor and knowledge of mentorship theory and role expectations.
- 3) Clarity about the purpose of mentorship.

Your experiences?

- What unique needs do online faculty have compared to residential faculty?
- What are virtual mentoring techniques specific to meeting the unique needs of online faculty?
- What are your best practices for virtual mentoring?
- What are helpful topics for virtual mentor/mentee discussions?
- Other experiences & ideas are welcome!

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Wrap-up and thank you

Please share your key takeaway from this session

Q&A

If you would like to connect with us:

Beth Counselman Carpenter:

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Matthea Marquart:

Twitter @MattheaMarquart, [LinkedIn](#), <https://www.mattheamarquart.com/>, or Email msm2002@columbia.edu

Shameless self-promotion (please share yours in the chat, too!)

From Matthea: Please check out this free ebook: [Designing Engaging and Interactive Synchronous Online Class Sessions](#). Also: application for CSSW's summer 2023 Institute on Pedagogy and Technology for Online Courses (deadline April 24): <https://forms.gle/z94YsiyTDAn2XsQL7>

From Stephen: Download this article while supplies last: [Teaching Strategies to Reduce Test Anxiety among MSW Students Preparing for Licensure](#)

From Beth: Please check out these two textbooks: [Working with Grief and Traumatic Loss](#)

And [Multidimensional Human Behavior in the Complex Social Environment: Decolonizing Theories for Social Work Practice \(First Edition\)](#)

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