

ABSTRACT: 2017 ELAM Institutional Action Project Symposium

Project Title: Developing a Faculty Mentoring Program at Rutgers – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
Name and Institution: M. Maral Mouradian, MD, Rutgers – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Collaborators and Mentors: Celine Gelinas, PhD

Background, Significance of project: Mentoring is a critical component of career development in academic medicine. Evidence from several studies indicates that effective faculty mentorship is linked to improved self efficacy, increased research productivity, greater career satisfaction, enhanced recruitment of individuals from underrepresented groups, and enriched organizational culture. Despite the established positive impact of faculty mentoring, Rutgers - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) lacked a formal mentoring program. This was a particularly critical period for the faculty to have the guidance of mentors since the institution had recently undergone a major re-organization, merging two large universities and creating new academic tracks and promotion guidelines. Added pressures were felt from the new partnership of two large health systems, and general tectonic changes in academic medicine demanding increased productivity. Recognizing this unmet need, the Provost charged me with the task of developing a comprehensive faculty mentoring program.

Purpose/Objectives: The goal of this Institutional Action Project is to design, develop, disseminate and implement a mentoring program for all faculty in different academic tracks.

Methods/Approach: Following review of the literature and mentoring programs in other academic institutions, the Project began with analyzing the RWJMS data from a Faculty Mentoring Needs Assessment Survey that we at the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS)-wide Mentoring Committee administrated. Additional approaches taken included identifying found pilots of nascent mentoring programs at various levels of the University, recruiting a committee of supporters, designing a multipronged mentoring program, garnering executive support from the Dean, Provosts and Chancellor, and launching a campaign to disseminate the program across the School.

Outcomes and Evaluation Strategy: Among domains that survey respondents felt would benefit their careers were mentoring on research ideas, writing grant proposals and publications, as well as the promotion and tenure process. Not surprisingly, having a mentor was an important predictor of job satisfaction. Although 80% of respondents agreed that mentoring is important, only 23% reported having a mentor. Among the reasons given for not having a mentor were: lack of a mentoring program; not being encouraged or persuaded to have a mentor; and not enough senior faculty members to serve as mentors. The findings of the survey informed the design of RWJMS' mentoring program that includes specific policies and procedures, a structured curriculum for research training, grant writing, and advising faculty through the new promotion process. The program also defines mentors' and mentees' responsibilities. The multi-tier program encompasses resources and workshops to train mentors at the level of the School, RBHS, University wide, and in partnership with national programs.

Conclusion with Statement of impact/potential impact: Short-term and long-term indicators are specified to determine participation, change in knowledge, behavior, organization and culture. Specifically, outcomes will be tracked in engagement, academic and clinical productivity, mentor and mentee satisfaction with the program, faculty retention, and job satisfaction. Faculty have already participated in mentor training workshops and in a course on the conduct of clinical research. The institutional support is an encouraging sign that the program will thrive and have its intended lasting impact.



Developing a Faculty Mentoring Program at Rutgers - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

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Background and Significance: Despite the established positive impact of faculty mentoring, Rutgers - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) lacked a formal mentoring program. This was a particularly critical period for the faculty to have the guidance of mentors since the institution had recently undergone a major re-organization, merging two large universities and creating new academic tracks and promotion guidelines. Added pressures were felt from the new partnership of two large health systems, and general tectonic changes in academic medicine demanding increased productivity. Recognizing this unmet need, the Provosts charged me with the task of developing a comprehensive faculty mentoring program.

Objectives: The goal of this Institutional Action Project is to design, develop, disseminate and implement a mentoring program for all faculty in different academic tracks.

Program Goals:

- Improve faculty productivity
- Assist faculty with career advancement
- Increase career satisfaction for all faculty
- Improve faculty recruitment and retention
- Promote professionalism
- Increase faculty diversity
- Effect a culture change using mentoring to advance the School's missions

Approach:

- Literature review
- Review of mentoring programs in other academic institutions
- Administration and analysis of Faculty Mentoring Needs Assessment Survey
- Identifying found pilots of nascent mentoring programs at various levels of the University
- Recruiting a committee of champions and supporters
- Designing a multi-pronged and multi-tiered mentoring program
- Garnering executive support from the Dean, Provosts and Chancellor
- Launching a campaign to disseminate the program across the School and the Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences

Outcomes:

Domains that survey respondents felt would benefit careers:

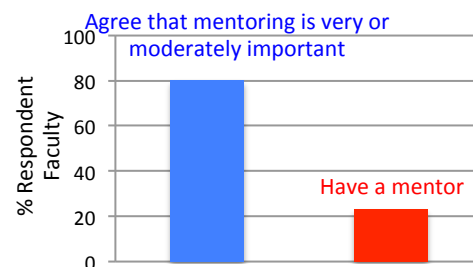
- Mentoring on research ideas
- Writing grant proposals and publications
- Promotion and tenure process
- ➔ **Having a mentor is an important predictor of job satisfaction.**

Program Principles:

- Multi-tiered
- Culture change
- Accountability
- Mentor recognition
- Executive Support

Elements of the Program:

- Specific policies and procedures
- A structured curriculum for research training, grant writing
- Advising faculty through the new promotion process
- Individual Development Plan
- Defined mentor and mentee responsibilities
- A multi-tier program encompassing resources and workshops to train mentors at the level of the School, RBHS, University wide, and in partnership with national programs
- Short-term, mid-term, and long-term impact assessments



Reasons for not having a Mentor:

- Lack of a mentoring program
- Not being encouraged or persuaded to have a mentor
- Not enough senior faculty members to serve as mentors

Discussion: Survey results are consistent with general impressions about the needs and challenges of mentoring at RWJMS and informed the design of the new program. Mentors are identified and enrolled in mentor training workshops, and junior faculty are engaged in research training curriculum. Short-term and long-term indicators are specified to determine participation, change in knowledge, behavior, organization and culture.

Conclusions:

The Provosts have asked that this program be adopted by the entire Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, which encompasses 8 schools and 7 centers and institutes at Rutgers University. Thus, the program will have far reaching impact beyond one medical school.