Promising Practice paper:
Mentoring in the teaching of intercultural communication

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Kolb’s experiential learning cycle

Concrete Experience
(doing / having an experience)

Active Experimentation
(planning / trying out what you have learned)

Reflective Observation
(reviewing / reflecting on the experience)

Abstract Conceptualisation
(concluding / learning from the experience)

McLeod, S. 2013
Mentoring context

- Total 10 mentees since fall 2011
- 6/10 responded to my questionnaire
- Mentees are either intercultural grads, trainers, or teachers of other subjects
- Mentoring for grads: in the classroom – once a week, one semester
- Mentoring for trainers/teachers – weekly discussions – both teaching the same course
- Course: CMNS 1104 Foundations of Intercultural Communication
- Informal mentoring model
- Voluntary and willing
Mentoring context

• Mentoring focused on:
  • Profile of the students and student issues
  • Working with individual students/groups
  • Expectations in the classroom
  • Teaching strategies
  • Intercultural resources
  • Theory to practice to theory
  • Assessment and student development
  • Curriculum development
  • Teaching and learning
Mentee Feedback

- how your mentorship has influenced you (pedagogically, as an interculturalist, personally, etc)

Professional development
- engaged dialogue – sharing, learning
- deepened understanding – own practice
- developed understandings – other perspectives – teaching & learning
- benefits of mentoring
- strengthened confidence
Mentee Feedback

- how your mentorship has influenced you (pedagogically, as an interculturalist, personally, etc)

Intercultural development
- new learning – intercultural theorists
- teaching intercultural communication in an academic setting
- considered – own assumptions
- renewed passion
- resources
Mentee Feedback

- how your mentorship has influenced you (pedagogically, as an interculturalist, personally, etc)

- **Pedagogical development**
  - Classroom environment
  - New tools, materials, resources
  - Develop lesson plans/select effective teaching methods
  - Connect abstract theories to real life experiences
  - Learning centered instruction
  - Articulation of intentions/objectives
  - Reflect on own practice
Mentee Feedback

- changed your way of thinking, if it has, about teaching or intercultural communication itself

• Training → teaching – trained professionals vs young adults
• Teaching: satisfying – a lot of work
• Stronger foundation and more confidence
• Diversify teaching – more flexible and inclusive
Student Feedback

- **Mentees:**
  - helped clarify concepts – give real life examples
  - participated in the student discussions
  - allowed students access to more than one ‘instructor’
  - were helping students learn and students were helping mentees learn
Literature review: peer coaching and mentoring in higher education

**Characteristics of the definitions**

- “a relationship with a defined purpose” Bland, 2009
- “a collaborative relationship” Bland 2009
- “a power-free partnership between two individuals who desire mutual growth” Penner 2001
- “in which learning and experimentation can occur” Kippelmeyer, 2007
- “focused on developing self...through dialogue and reflection” Kippelmeyer, 2007
- “Mutual mentoring” – “mentoring partners” Sorcinelli, nd.
Literature review: peer coaching and mentoring in higher education

**Benefits:**

- Institution – cost savings, retention, creates community
- Mentee – empowerment, career development, relationships
- Mentor – enrichment, satisfaction, new relationships
Literature review: peer coaching and mentoring in higher education

- Characteristics of successful mentoring
  - Meet regularly
  - Voluntary
  - Developmental – set challenges/goals
  - Nature of the relationship determined by the mentee and mentor
Personal Reflections

- Mentees need to start where they feel comfortable – for both teaching and intercultural understanding
- Create a focus – for observations
- Preconference and debrief – self discovery
- Move forward – experiment / engage
- Kolb’s learning cycle
- Supports my professional growth
- Invigorates my connection with the curriculum
- Reduces the isolation
“Teachers who have a safe, organized structure to talk about instructional improvements are more likely to improve their practice.” Barbara Gottesman p.14
KEEP CALM AND FIND A MENTOR
Resources

- Sorcinelli, M., J. Yun and B. Baldi. Mutual Mentoring Guide. Institute for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development. UMASS Amherst. nd.