

Expanding the SoTL Landscape:

Using a study on mentoring for teaching to mobilize new research and practices



INQUIRY FOCUS

What role can Knowledge Mobilization (KMb) strategies, used by a teaching centre, play in providing a framework for faculty development focused on advancing the practice and impact of mentoring for teaching?

CONTEXT

The Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation's (CTSI's) 2016 peer mentoring for teaching study findings found that peer mentoring practices occur inconsistently across the university, that faculty benefit from mentoring relationships, and that CTSI could aid in deliberate mentoring matches and provide support and structure.

<http://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/fmt/fmt-report/>






DEFINITION of KmB

"... Canada's universities and Tri-Council Agencies are placing more emphasis on knowledge mobilization (KMb) in order to generate research with a high social utility and to get research into the hands of decision-makers, policy-makers, and practitioners" (McKean, 2016, p.2)

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION PLAN

- 2016 **Peer Mentoring Report** released to U of T stakeholders
- Developed **evidence-based practical resources**
- Evidence-based mentoring for teaching program piloted 2017: **Peer-2-Peer (P2P) Mentoring for Teaching at U of T**

KMB APPROACHES

	U of T Examples
 1. Research Products	<i>Mentoring for Teaching Report</i> (CTSI, 2016)
 2. Capacity-Building & Support	2 Webinars; Peer Mentor; New Resources (3 guides, 2 tip sheets, and a book); CTSI staff support; 2 external facilitators for Workshop #1 and " <i>When Mentoring meets Coaching</i> " published resource text
 3. Events	3 Workshops facilitated by CTSI staff
 4. Networks*	P2P Cohort; other U of T networks that participants could connect to
 5. Non-researched based products & surveys	Promotional Materials

(Cooper, 2014, p. 46)

P2P STUDY METHODS

Post-pilot Survey

- 23 out 32 participants (72%)
- 12 mentor; 11 mentees

Focus Groups:

- Mentee groups (5 & 4 individuals) & 2 mentor groups (5 & 6 individuals)
- Facilitated by CTSI staff not involved in pilot

5 KEY FINDINGS:

1) Value of Relationships

*“One of the most eye-opening things for me and these conversations was with **how much we have in common** even though we are in different departments and different faculties altogether”*

2) Community-building (space & place to talk about teaching)

61.9% have met since the program’s end and **81.82%** plan to meet in the future.

“In one of our Second Cup conversations we we asked each other: “So, what’s the most brutal teaching evaluation you’ve received?”

3) Resources to support teaching development

“The most valuable thing for me was the instruction around peer observation. This definitely caused me to look at my teaching style from a different perspective and I gained a lot from it...”

Most highly rated resources: CTSI Peer Observation of Teaching Guide, CTSI Mid-Course Evaluation Guide, reflection on course evaluation data and coffee card!

4) Program Structure (formalized)

“I think there was a real advantage to the fact that we were in a formal mentorship project that gave it some credence”

5) Capacity-building and Influencing Broader Culture

81.82% would want to be involved in future iterations of the program and **100%** would recommend P2P to others.

“Programs like this are vital to developing a teaching community at U of T.”

CONCLUSIONS

1. **REDUCE ISOLATION:** Formative opportunities for experimentation and dialogue with peers/cohort
2. **ENABLING POSITIVE TEACHING CLIMATES & CULTURES:** CTSI as a mediator of research and practice

IMPLICATIONS

- Consideration of the **role of KMb strategies** that can be used to not only distribute knowledge, but to also help ensure such knowledge is accessible, relevant, and used
- The potential for a **greater mediation role** that **Teaching Centres** could play in KMb

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