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# Supporting Faculty at all Levels through the GROWTH Mentoring Program

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**1) Description of the session (300-500 words):**

There are many benefits to faculty at all levels when they are involved in mentoring programs including developing a support network, honing professional competencies, and building a better perception of their own scholarly identity (Beane-Katner, 2014; Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennant, 2004). In this session presenters will discuss the process of implementing, methods of data collection, specific activities, and overall outcomes of the GROWTH Mentoring Program (GMP), a program developed and implemented in the Department of Special Education at Illinois State University.

The goal of the GMP is to establish a system of support for faculty at all levels by enhancing faculty talents and skills and promoting professional development, specifically in the areas of teaching and research. GMP is intended to be a reciprocal and flexible mentoring program with multiple levels of support (e.g., peer-mentoring, group mentoring, reverse mentoring; Beane-Katner, 2014; Bell & Treleaven, 2011), that promotes a culture of collaboration and accountability within the Department. As part of the program, faculty participate in four workshops per semester and support each other in teaching by engaging in peer-observation procedures using the video analysis software *Vosaic Connect* (Carter, 2008; Vidmar, 2005). The goal is to encourage self-reflection about teaching, learn from observing their peers teach, give and receive constructive and formative feedback about observed teaching, and provide direct support to one another. The use of video reflection can enhance existing mentorship programs and potentially be used as evidence for faculty evaluations.

Faculty at the Assistant, Associate, and Professor rank, as well as non-tenure track faculty who are also enrolled in the doctoral program participate in GMP. During the first year of the

program 10-14 faculty participated across the semesters. In the second year, 19 faculty committed to participate. Various administrative supports and incentives are used to encourage participation. Faculty reported self-awareness of teaching behaviors, idea generation for effective teaching, collegiality, and an increased competency in critically examining video teaching examples, as well as giving and receiving feedback based on video and live observations. These results were encouraging since it showed not just effectiveness of the program, but a willingness to continue working on these areas.

### **References**

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