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Part II. Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Effective Mentoring Programs

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PART II

DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING, AND EVALUATING EFFECTIVE MENTORING PROGRAMS

The 11 chapters of Part II of this book address the “how” questions related to program design, implementation, evaluation, and funding. These questions include:

- How do I conduct a needs assessment? (Chapter 5)
- How do I secure institutional support and organizational alignment? (Chapter 6)
- How do I execute my many roles as the program coordinator? (Chapter 7)
- How do I develop the program’s activities, objectives, goals, and outcomes? (Chapter 8)
- How do I match mentors and mentees? (Chapter 9)
- How do I prepare effective mentors? (Chapter 10)
- How do I prepare effective mentees? (Chapter 11)
- How do I promote equity and inclusion in the program? (Chapter 12)
- How do I assess and evaluate mentoring relationships and the mentoring program? (Chapter 13)
- How do I conduct research on the mentoring program? (Chapter 14)
- How do I fund the program? (Chapter 15)

The authors’ answers to these questions are explored in the following chapters. Conducting a needs assessment is often overlooked because it may seem redundant; after all, university leaders know what their unit needs, right? However, conducting a needs assessment is an essential early step that ensures program resources go to prioritized institutional needs. In chapter 5, Legler presents a systematic process to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data to identify organizational needs. Next, Legler describes how the needs assessment committee works with stakeholders of the university unit to prioritize needs and identify possible solutions. Finally, Legler concludes chapter 5 by exploring how big data can focus on actual behaviors that allow for greater audience segmentation.

For a formal university mentoring program to succeed, it must have executive support from the university leadership. In chapter 6, Taylor and Dart outline the importance of administrative support, mission and vision alignment, incentivizing participation for both mentors and mentees, and how mentoring fits into retention efforts for students, faculty, and staff. Next, Taylor and Dart discuss the resources needed to create and sustain a formal mentoring program. Following the section on resources required, the authors discuss challenges, barriers, and pitfalls that administrators should consider before implementing a mentoring program. And finally, Taylor and Dart emphasize the importance of making explicit the programs' goals, objectives, and outcomes.

As mentioned in the book's introduction, we recommend reading chapter 7 first, as Christiansen and Busenbark give an overview not only of the roles of the program coordinator but also an overview of this book. Using Figure 7.1, the authors diagram the six phases of mentoring program design, execution, evaluation, funding, and sustainment. Christiansen and Busenbark begin by describing the characteristics of an ideal mentoring program coordinator. Next, these authors make a unique contribution to this handbook by providing a job description in the chapter's Appendix, which describes a program coordinator's duties, responsibilities, and qualifications. Following this description, Christiansen and Busenbark describe the roles of the program coordinator within the six phases of the mentoring program.

Using a case study, Fain and Crites use chapter 8 to describe how to craft goals and objectives to align with desired outcomes. Mentoring programs are not an end in themselves; instead, they are a tool to achieve a broader outcome at the institutional, departmental, or individual level. Next, the authors consider how seven design elements help frame the goals, objectives, and outcomes. Lastly, Fain and Crites use logic modeling to communicate goals, objectives, and outcomes to key stakeholders within the university system.

In chapter 9, Law first describes the processes and infrastructure that program coordinators use that lead to the successful recruitment of mentors and mentees. Secondly, Law explains how the desired characteristics of mentors and mentees factor into the selection process. Lastly, in chapter 9, Law focuses on the critical elements program coordinators should consider in matching mentors to a mentee.

If not the most critical, certainly one of the most vital responsibilities of the program coordinator is to prepare mentors to be effective. Chapter 10, written by Mickel, explores specific characteristics of effective mentors, focusing heavily on communication and communication styles. Effective communication considers personality characteristics, mentor-mentee expectations, trust, motivation, and considerations for possible career pathways. In this chapter, Mickel provides detailed tools to develop effective mentoring plans that foster mentor and mentee expectations, engagement, and goals. And finally, Mickel demonstrates a step-by-step process of designing a curriculum for academic mentoring programs.

In chapter 11, Clabaugh promotes program structures that prepare mentees to be effective by helping them become self-directed. First, Clabaugh explores mentee dispositions to be self-directed. Next, Clabaugh gives suggestions for activating mentees' disposition of readiness, willingness, and ability. Clabaugh then explores mentee motivation in the context of self-determination theory. And finally,

Clabaugh describes how program structures such as policies, procedures, expectations, cycles of activity, and relationship-building strategies can promote self-directed mentees.

Zerai and López present a new vision for promoting equity and inclusion in academic mentoring programs in Chapter 12. First, Zerai and López examine the challenges and possibilities regarding equity and inclusion that consider simultaneous and complex social identities and statuses of faculty, staff, and students. Next, they highlight common missteps that hinder equity and inclusion in academic mentoring programs. Finally, these authors close chapter 12 with recommendations for several promising practices for mentoring Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ people, first-generation college students, and other minoritized students, staff, and faculty.

Chapter 13, by Lunsford, begins by distinguishing between program assessment, program evaluation, and program research. Next, Lunsford presents three theoretical frameworks to guide assessment and evaluation: (a) Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluating training programs, (b) logic models, and (c) the mentoring ecosystem. Lastly, Lunsford concludes chapter 13 by providing formative and summative assessment guidance. A unique contribution to this handbook is Figure 13.5, found in the Appendix, in which Lunsford gives a condensed overview of formative and summative activities.

The content in chapter 14, by Law, Vouvalis, Harris, and LaMuth, is for program coordinators, university leaders, and other stakeholders who choose to include a research component in their mentoring program. Because it can be difficult to distinguish between evaluation and research, the authors explore the differences and similarities. When evaluation does include research, it will be necessary for the program coordinator to obtain approval from their respective institutional review board (IRB). Law, Vouvalis, Harris, and LaMuth describe the process of obtaining IRB approval. The authors explore how theoretical frameworks, operational definitions, and methodology factor into programs that contain research. The chapter ends with Law, Vouvalis, Harris, and LaMuth providing examples of measurements for consideration as part of the evaluation or research.

Few mentoring handbooks contain a chapter explicitly devoted to funding the mentoring program. Author Castañeda-Kessel makes this unique contribution in chapter 15. She begins by giving a brief overview of theoretical and methodological frameworks for funding. The critical section of Chapter 15 guides decision-makers through six steps for identifying mentoring program funding. Lastly, Castañeda-Kessel provides a modified rapid review of mentoring program funding opportunities.