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Tracy W. Smith

Appalachian State University, smithtw@appstate.edu

Jennifer R. Luetkemeyer

Appalachian State University

Rachel Wilson

Appalachian State University

Aftynne E. Cheek

Appalachian State University

Denise Brewer

Appalachian State University

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Cultivating capacity with a mentoring guild: Constellations continued

Tracy W. Smith, Jennifer Luetkemeyer, Rachel Wilson, Aftynne E. Cheek, and Denise Brewer

Abstract

This article describes the rationale, development process, and initial activities and outcomes of a faculty mentoring guild that engages experienced faculty volunteers in supporting their near peers in navigating their teaching, research, service, and life expectations and obligations. The purposes of this article are to (1) describe the mentoring guild model; (2) provide a research-based rationale for a craft model of faculty support; (3) detail examples of mentoring guild activities, including the benefits and challenges; (4) recount explicit and implicit personal and professional outcomes for mentoring guild members; and (5) offer activities and lessons learned that faculty developers and institutions may consider if they want to begin their own craft-based or mentoring guild model.

Keywords: mentoring, mentoring guild, community-based participatory research, developmental community

In a 2021 contribution to the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network Open Discussion Group and later published by the National Education Association in 2022, Thomas Tobin asserted that we in academia are “guarding the wrong tower.” Tobin asserted that those of us whose work involves teaching and learning in higher education “have collectively erected two towers. And we’ve been

guarding the wrong tower for a long, long time.” Tobin described the ivory tower with its “hierarchies and webs of knowledge, power, and political influence,” where all the players know their specific roles, particularly as they contribute to the most important role of gatekeeper, preserving the “norms, standards, and outcomes we prescribe” for the sake of the very structures themselves. Tobin juxtaposes the ivory tower to a different type of tower, one that “hearkens back to knowledge-ways that pre-date the university itself: the guild tower.” The guild system of knowledge construction, Tobin maintains, “was (and remains) collaborative, focused on learners’ own needs, skills, gaps, and goals.” In the guild system, there are many paths to success, and those paths provide space for “learners to identify their strengths, challenges, and areas of open possibility.” The guild system flexes, responds, and adapts to the needs of its members. In the end, Tobin proclaims that a guild approach allows us to advocate for more inclusive, assets-based approaches—and for extending voice, choice, and agency wherever we can. The ivory tower metrics of recruitment, hiring, retention, and success measures such as numbers of publications, grant dollars awarded, and tenures and promotions obtained certainly help sustain the university and are sometimes accompanied by public accolades. But within the institution, we also seek to sustain and invigorate the individuals who contribute to the university’s success.

Rationale for the Mentoring Guild

A few years ago, the Reich College of Education (RCOE) at Appalachian State University developed and implemented a developmental community model of faculty support (Smith & Spooner, 2021). The purpose of the Developmental Community program is to support faculty at all career levels in establishing and maintaining healthy, productive, and meaningful careers. The design of the model began with the appointment of a faculty fellow who received one course release per semester to research, develop, and implement a college-wide mentoring model.

One of our RCOE Developmental Community program principles asserts that a developmental community model is associated with *organizational benefits* such as retention of faculty, job satisfaction, leadership development, organizational commitment, more learning, and an overall sense of optimism (Smith & Spooner, 2021; see also Dobrow et al., 2012). Professors who understand the expectations of their various roles enjoy their jobs more than those who struggle with understanding or fulfilling their responsibilities (Robison, 2013). If we want to realize these organizational benefits, we must commit time and attention to their development.

As the effort to support faculty continued to grow, the lone faculty fellow began envisioning ways that RCOE could expand the capacity of the Developmental Community program to provide more support to faculty. With the goal of making mentoring and mutual development more a part of the culture of the college and to increase mentoring capacity and depth, the fellow proposed the creation of the RCOE Mentoring Guild. A *guild* is an association of artisans that oversee the practice of their craft in a particular area. Guilds are often associated with the idea of a respected set of skilled craftspeople (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guild>). In our college, we strive for a culture of support and collegiality—an ideal that was further supported by our dean, and other members of the college leadership team, when they endorsed the Mentoring Guild proposal. In alignment with this culture, the Mentoring Guild acknowledges that mentoring is a craft that we can cultivate together and that learning to support faculty is a worthy and critical skill, not a superfluous embellishment to the health of our collective faculty. Establishing a guild composed of representatives from academic departments across RCOE provides a way to build mentoring capacity and foster professional relationships. Guild members can provide support to faculty (especially newer faculty) as well as to one another (as a mid-career community).

The faculty fellow's vision for the Mentoring Guild was of a diverse group, ideally composed of at least one representative from each department, that would meet regularly with the RCOE Faculty

Fellow to envision practices that could expand support to faculty at all career levels in our college. Guild members could serve as mentors and non-evaluative supports as well as communication liaisons to faculty in each department. The ideologies that guide both the developmental community model and the Mentoring Guild prioritize the collective value and expertise of the members of the organization over the hierarchies that have historically served more as barriers than invitations in higher education recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty. The proposed guild is highlighted in the program activity, inputs, outputs, outcomes, and evidences sections of the developmental community model's program theory and logic model (Appendix A). Creating the guild was a Developmental Community activity in the past year; our Mentoring Guild members became resources (inputs) for our program and faculty. We worked to develop activities to meet our stated outcomes. The developmental community model and Mentoring Guild are intended to benefit not only individuals *within* the community but also the organization as a community. Rather than serving as gatekeepers, the faculty in the guild are waymakers, supporting and celebrating the success of each faculty member and the faculty collective.

Theoretical Grounding for the Mentoring Guild Approach

Our implementation of the guild model is informed by Rogers's (2003) diffusion of innovations (DOI) theory, which has been used as a framework in disciplines such as political science, public health, communications, history, economics, technology, and education (Dooley, 1999). The four elements of the diffusion of innovations model are innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system. These elements make the theory particularly applicable for developing a new approach to community development and mentoring. Diffusion, as defined by Rogers (2003), is "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time

among the members of a social system" (p. 5). Rogers explains further that diffusion is a special type of communication, typically about a new idea, and characterized as interactive rather than linear. Diffusion implies uncertainty, including a probable lack of predictability, structure, and information. Diffusion can create social change or alterations in the structure and function of a system. Building on the DOI theory, Kempe et al. (2005) studied the problem of maximizing the expected spread of an innovation within a social network and developed a general model of influence propagation. Central to their model is the identification of individuals (called *nodes* in their model) who serve as initial innovators and who make recommendations that contribute to a cascade model of diffusion.

The DOI theory has two tiers of application in the guild model described here. The scope of the first tier is at the college level and involves the development of the initial RCOE Developmental Community program and Mentoring Guild as the innovations. Essential to this tier is an effort to identify key influencers (*nodes*) within the various departments of the college (social system). The second tier engages what Kempe et al. (2005) called *contagion*, or the spreading of innovation beyond the initial adopters. Within their respective units, the mentors explore potential needs and responsive programming and communicate those to guild colleagues, the faculty fellow for mentoring, and other members of the college leadership team in ways that make sense to them given their department's particular contexts.

In keeping with Rogers's (2003) view of communication, we foster a network of interactions that invites "mutual understandings" among those within the same academic unit as well as the collective understandings of the guild members. Embedded in their departments, guild members represent and support their peers by developing programming to meet their particular needs. In addition, the guild members' interactions with unit peers and one another could inform the college leadership, university center for teaching and learning (CTL), and other service units within the institution about the needs of faculty.

Selection of Mentoring Guild Members

Kezar and Lester (2009) provided characteristics for grassroots faculty leaders, and these characteristics provide guidance as desirable characteristics of mentoring guild members: interest in organizational citizenship; skills in vision implementation, from planning to negotiation; ability to influence other colleagues and to be persuasive; political skills to help navigate resistance, if it emerges; and interest in creating a network of like-minded colleagues. McDonald et al. (2016) offer several categories for entry-level educational developers grouped into foundational characteristics, knowledge, and skills developed in the learning process.

Guild members should have a history of investment in mentoring or, lacking experience, enthusiasm for the role. The mentor should have credibility with the faculty as well as respect and support from administration. Credibility can be defined in many ways, such as recognition of excellence in teaching or interest and experience with faculty development or mentoring—or in some departments, longevity or faculty rank. In some contexts, some faculty would not have an opportunity to serve as guild members while untenured, whereas in others tenure status would not matter. In our college, we determined that members of the guild should have gone through a successful third-year review but tenure was not necessary.

Guild members may be selected by the departmental faculty or the department chair, in consultation with the dean. When possible, guild members should self-identify and be selected based on their interest and previous involvement in mentoring or faculty development. Our process through two cycles has been to honor the spirit of inclusivity and waymaking by sending a call for letters of interest and asking individuals who are interested to submit letters to the faculty fellow, routed through their department chairs. We do not limit membership in our guild to one representative per department. Rather, at this time, we have been happy to welcome those who have expressed sincere interest. In response to the first call, applicants defined their interest

in ways that indicated multiple perspectives on mentoring and diverse reasons for their desire to participate. These included (1) having felt isolated as part of a helpful but geographically distant department faculty, most of whom taught 100% online and did not need to be in the building; (2) having felt supported as a junior faculty and wanting to make sure other new faculty had the same opportunity for that experience; and (3) having *not* felt supported as a junior faculty member and wanting others to feel supported. In our first year, we had six Mentoring Guild members representing all five of our academic departments, though one retired after the first semester. All members identified as women; one member identified as a woman of color.

In the second invitation cycle, we added a specific and frequent meeting time and calendar to the call so that those applying would know the expectation and so that finding a mutual time would not prohibit the group from moving forward together. The second round of applicants, who joined the Mentoring Guild in Fall 2022, added to the diversity of the group not only demographically but also in the unique perspectives they bring to discussions and activities, which they cited in their letters of interest. Three faculty joined the Mentoring Guild in the second year, representing two different departments. This brings our guild membership to seven plus our faculty fellow at the time of writing. All guild members identify as women; four (50%) identify as White, and three (37.5%) are faculty of color. Guild membership includes assistant, associate, and full professors with a range of experience in higher education from five to 22 years. According to our institutional research data, the tenure-track faculty in RCOE are 70.5% women, and 15.1% identify as underrepresented (defined as non-White races/ethnicities).

During the development of the Mentoring Guild and the call for interest in participating, the faculty fellow drafted sample tasks that guild members might do. We include our most recent call for interest as Appendix B to help readers who may want to create their own call for interest.

Year 1: Sample Activities and Initiatives

Moving from a program theory and logic model to establishing a mentoring guild marks the beginning of what we hope will be a cultural change within our institution to relinquish our guard on the wrong tower and shift our efforts toward building a developmental community of support. Though large-scale changes in higher education structures and systems may take years to realize, we acknowledge the importance of documenting our early efforts as a portion of a staged evaluation of the evolution of our work. Furthermore, we lean into the four-part lens recommended for evaluating developmental work that was developed to reflect dimensions of the purposes of higher education institutions (POD Network, 2018). This four-part lens categorizes the functions of higher education using the metaphors *hub*, *incubator*, *temple*, and *sieve*. Specifically, we see the work of the Mentoring Guild within RCOE acting as a hub, incubator, and temple. As a *hub*, or similar to what Johnson (2016) characterized as the exosphere level of constellation mentoring, the Mentoring Guild is a central group that works in the college collaboratively. Guild members bring programming information to their departments and also relay faculty issues to the Mentoring Guild to inform programming and practices. As *incubator*, the Mentoring Guild is focused on implementing programs and events that support the development of faculty toward their goals, build connections across faculty in support of their work, and create a sense of belonging in the college. The Mentoring Guild in the role of *temple* serves as an institutionalized group providing legitimacy and importance to the work of mentoring and as a place where faculty can seek support. The remaining role of the *sieve*, as a group that vets or distills knowledge, is shared with our campus CTL, Office of Research, Library, and other units at the university.

These lenses of hub, incubator, and temple are all roles with which the Mentoring Guild approached our work. As we look at short-term (one year) indicators to evaluate our progress, we focus in the following

section on descriptions of the activities and initiatives we implemented or started in our first year (POD Network, 2018). In addition, we offer our early insights on the strengths, challenges, and outcomes of each initiative in Appendix C. We hope these details might help other organizations or institutions that are considering a similar model of faculty support.

Sharing and Building Knowledge

Meetings. The Mentoring Guild began meeting once a month in August 2021 for approximately 90 minutes. It quickly became apparent that the volume of business at each meeting was going to be overwhelming and that more frequent meetings would be necessary. Though not possible during the 2021–2022 academic year, the Mentoring Guild planned to meet every other week during 2022–2023 and to alternate modalities (i.e., alternating between face-to-face and virtual meetings) to accommodate members’ schedules, teaching, and supervision responsibilities. This shift requires members, both existing and new, to commit in advance to the work of the Mentoring Guild and agree to meet more frequently.

Reading. In Fall 2021, the RCOE purchased two books for the members of the Mentoring Guild: *The Elements of Mentoring* by W. Brad Johnson and Charles R. Ridley (2018) and *The Mentor’s Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships* by Lois J. Zachary (2016). Additionally, each member of the Mentoring Guild also has a copy of *The Peak Performing Professor* by Susan Robison (2013). We are, in essence, carefully curating a small library of resources for each guild member, the purpose being to enable us to delve deeply into the kind of literature that will best inform our practice of mentorship and allow us to best serve our peers in RCOE. We have used concepts and tools from *The Peak Performing Professor* in our mentoring work with early and mid-career faculty. In the spring, once our new faculty have had a semester of teaching, we will lead some book discussions with them.

In late Spring 2022, the Mentoring Guild began reading and discussing *The Elements of Mentoring* (Johnson & Ridley, 2018), pulling from its pages advice and wisdom pertinent to our unique situation as a *group* of mentors rather than as *individual* mentors. Specifically, we chose to focus on reading the sections “What Excellent Mentors Do: Matters of Skill,” “Traits of Excellent Mentors: Matters of Style and Presence,” and “Celebrating Diversity: Matters of Human Differences” and the chapter “Foster Mentoring Constellations.” Reading through this material sparked conversations that reinforced our commitments to making processes more transparent for faculty (such as annual review expectations), seeking out more opportunities for affirmations and celebrations of faculty work, acknowledging faculty as whole people, and mentoring mutually. Finally, we also used our reading of these sections when drafting our call for guild members for the 2022–2023 academic year.

Writing Retreats

Our faculty have previously been involved in institutional writing retreats, and the faculty fellow facilitated a college-level retreat that had a lot of traction in the year before the establishment of the Mentoring Guild. Our guild members recognized an opportunity to create a space for faculty and doctoral students to write in the presence of others. A college-wide retreat invites participants to establish research connections among their near peers. In addition, doctoral students benefit from learning about the research interests among our faculty. In a survey sent to faculty about writing-specific needs, many asked for *accountability*, *designated times and places*, and *camaraderie*. The resulting idea is a weeklong writing retreat that occurs at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Since writing groups can help scholars reinforce their writing schedules, make writing less solitary, and encourage them to move away from binge writing (Silvia, 2019), writing retreats meet an important need in our community.

To meet the needs of the RCOE community, these writing retreats have been held in various formats (i.e., face-to-face, virtual, and hybrid) and follow a similar structure. On the morning of the first day, we introduce everyone in the group, set group expectations, and vocalize our goals for the week. Each afternoon, everyone regroups and states their accomplishments for the day.

Throughout the day, attendees are encouraged to complete writing-specific activities such as meeting with co-authors, visiting the library, or speaking with other university personnel that can help them with their writing process. For the remainder of the week, the format remains consistent, with a guild member leading the opening and closing. For example, during the morning check-in, members of the guild lead warm-up activities that have included tips for developing good writing habits, strategies for organizing research and resources, and arts-based activities such as mind mapping or visual reflections.

These writing retreats have been well received by all attendees. Specifically, one participant wrote in their end-of-retreat survey, "Could we do this in the middle of a semester? I know it would be difficult to juggle everything plus teaching responsibilities, but I would love to not have to wait until we have a break (end of the semester) to be part of something so beneficial." This, and spoken comments like it, prompted the Mentoring Guild to pilot a more consistent writing opportunity we coined Work/Write/Read (WWR). The idea that the accountability afforded by participation in a writing group, workshop, or retreat is beneficial is well documented (Bodenberg & Nichols, 2019; Harvey et al., 2020; Kensington-Miller & Carter, 2019; Kulage & Larson, 2016; Ratković et al., 2019; Scott et al., 2019; Voegele & Stevens, 2017). Participants also mentioned that they would be interested in continuing to meet for shorter stints of time throughout the semester. The Mentoring Guild wanted to provide that space and accountability but did not want to limit the type of productivity just to writing, and so WWR was born. Every week on Wednesday or Thursday, one member of the Mentoring Guild provided a

virtual space for faculty to meet for two hours to engage in one or more of those activities. Two hours were set aside for each meeting, and participants checked in at both the beginning and end of that time. Additionally, participants tracked their work on a spreadsheet designed with a simple drop-down menu for them to choose work, write, or read as well as space for their name and a brief description of their activity for the session. Those who participated were appreciative of the shared space and opportunity to focus on important tasks with accountability.

Recognitions

People who feel supported and valued in their jobs are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and satisfied in their work (American Psychological Association, 2012). While awards and monetary rewards are an appreciated gesture, these types of recognitions reward only a select few and are dependent on the availability of funds (Akafo & Boateng, 2015). Research on the role of recognition and job satisfaction in academia shows that acknowledging faculty achievement for smaller accomplishments is often more appreciated (Benito & Scott-Milligan, 2018). Faculty report that their colleagues' perceptions of their achievements are meaningful (Ssesanga & Garrett, 2005) and feel that peer-level recognition is more important to their job satisfaction than being recognized by their department chair (Bozeman & Gaughan, 2011; Sahl, 2017). However, the type and amount of recognition needed for job satisfaction is highly dependent on the gender, race/ethnicity, and career level of the faculty member (Sahl, 2017). Our Mentoring Guild, therefore, has contemplated how we can celebrate the achievements of our faculty members in a variety of ways while fostering a culture that values honoring and congratulating others. We have implemented some initiatives in our first year and have begun planning for others, both of which we will discuss below.

Scholars Gallery

In our RCOE college community, we have an end-of-year luncheon and awards ceremony where faculty and staff are recognized for areas such as Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching or Outstanding Scholarly/Creative Activity. People are nominated for these awards and create portfolios to demonstrate their achievements relative to these awards. As a way to show peer appreciation and recognition, the Mentoring Guild distributed handwritten notes of congratulations to each award recipient. To recognize scholarly achievements, our guild submitted a special call in our weekly college newsletter requesting that faculty in the college self-identify if they had published an authored or edited book or received an external grant in the current academic year. Furthermore, we asked them to add a slide to a slide deck with their name, a headshot, and achievement(s). We used this information to create a Scholars Gallery slide deck that played during our annual awards luncheon meeting while people were eating so that our community could be informed about our community members' achievements. We also provided special seating and invited the faculty who contributed to the Scholars Gallery to join a table that we set up near the front of the room so that others might come visit, congratulate them, and engage them in conversations about their work. Having the option to self-identify achievements for the gallery slideshow and to choose to sit and be publicly recognized for those achievements allows faculty to choose the amount and type of publicity related to their recognition, which research has shown varies based on the individual (Hollinger-Smith et al., 2021).

Career Milestones

Our Mentoring Guild has also been planning for career milestone recognitions from the college. The identified milestones for which we are planning are arrival/first day, first year, reappointment, tenure and promotion to associate professor, and promotion to full professor. We

began by first mapping out what is currently being done to recognize these milestones in our college and then generated ideas about what we might be able to implement.

Our local geographic area has quite a few artisan potters, and we discussed as a guild and with our dean having pieces of pottery designed and/or commissioned for each milestone (i.e., reappointment, tenure/promotion to associate professor, and promotion to full professor). We envisioned pieces that connected to our region, that could be kept and displayed in faculty offices, and that were designed to reflect a theme of growth over time. We also wanted these pieces to be useful or have practical functions. We have identified a local artisan to make these milestone pieces, but we are currently figuring out logistics of production timelines and financial support. In the meantime, we held our first college-wide meeting of the 2022–2023 academic year, during which we recognized career milestones and presented those who achieved promotion and/or tenure with a small bamboo plant (representing growth) and a resin paper weight depicting the RCOE insignia.

RCOE Welcoming Day

In their book, *The Power of Moments*, Chip Heath and Dan Heath (2017) describe a typical first day at a new place of employment, one in which an employee arrives without any welcoming fanfare, guided by a helpful administrative assistant to an empty office (usually without a computer). “The lack of attention paid to an employee’s first day is mind-boggling,” they assert, and is “a wasted opportunity to make a new team member feel included and appreciated” (p. 18). The authors contend that organizations are often consumed by goals and suggest that we should be more interested in creating “defining moments,” times and occasions that are worthy of investment. In an effort to create a positive first impression and experience, our guild organized a special day of welcome.

The first RCOE Welcome Day was co-hosted by members of our Mentoring Guild and key staff that will support faculty during their first year and beyond. The day began as faculty approached their offices, some seeing the space for the first time. Their doors were decorated with signs made by guild members and kindergarten children. Instead of an empty space, faculty found a gift “swag bag” of RCOE branded items (e.g., insulated cup, lanyard, notepad, pens, clear stadium bag, stickers, seeds for local flowers, university pendant). The day’s events included a Q&A session with our Mentoring Guild, a tour of buildings and centers (e.g., College of Education building, Media Lab, Dean’s Suite), and meetings with key people (e.g., information technology [IT], CTL, and administrative support specialists). Meeting with key people before the semester began gave new faculty knowledge about day-to-day processes for the college and specific departments that were not covered in the main university orientation. Tasks as simple as making copies, using zone printers, or submitting an IT support ticket can take time with new systems. The culminating experience of the day included a social gathering at a local ice cream and coffee shop next door to our building.

Though our faculty may arrive for their official first day on different days, we scheduled a welcome so that they could meet one another and begin to make connections within our college community. We wanted them to leave experiencing a memorable first day of employment, thinking, *“I belong here. The work we’re doing matters. And I matter to them”* (Heath & Heath, 2017, p. 21).

Programming for New Faculty

In previous years, our faculty fellow implemented programming for new faculty, and in the coming year, the entire Mentoring Guild will support that work. One reason we are excited to begin collectively supporting new faculty is that they will have options to reach out to guild members who will not be responsible for evaluating their portfolios

for promotion and tenure. We will offer reading groups, third-year review panels, research gatherings (ours is called a Research Bonanza), grant-writing support, annual review writing workshops, and individual consultations. As new faculty get to know our guild members, they can reach out with individual questions to any one of us.

We will coordinate with our CTL so that we complement rather than duplicate offerings. The CTL offers monthly workshops to new faculty each fall, and we will attend those workshops as well so that we can answer any questions our new faculty have. After that semester of institutional programming, we will begin professional development and support sessions for new faculty within our college.

Partnerships

Our Mentoring Guild is made stronger by the partnerships we have formed in our college. We receive support from our dean's office in the form of monetary support for books, grab and go snacks for writing retreats, and stipends for Mentoring Guild summer work. In addition, our dean has helped publicize the Mentoring Guild in our college-wide meetings and communications so that the work is validated from our executive office. Our dean invites our faculty fellow to make presentations to the full administrative council (dean, associate deans, department chairs, and center directors) several times each year so that they are aware of the work we are doing and so that we can receive feedback and brainstorm ideas with the college leadership team. We partner with our college communications director, who helps us publicize our events and offerings. In addition, we send the communications director ideas for recognizing our faculty in regular communications (e.g., weekly newsletter, electronic signage, college meeting planning). Finally, within our college, we partner with our doctoral program. With our dean's office, they co-sponsor our writing retreats by providing coffee, tea, and workspace. We invite their doctoral students to join our writing retreats so that they can meet faculty (potential dissertation

committee members), deepen their writing skills, and give themselves space and time to make progress on qualifying exams or portions of their dissertation research. These partnerships also help to raise the visibility of the Mentoring Guild as a bona fide support structure in our college. When partners recognize a faculty need, they are more apt to share it with us when we are visible, authentic partners.

We also partner with our university's CTL, which offers a mid-career faculty learning community (FLC) titled ReVision. Our faculty fellow is a co-facilitator of this FLC. Our guild members receive priority consideration in ReVision so that they benefit from interactions with other mid-career faculty from across campus. Three of our five original members have now participated in the campus mid-career FLC. Of the other two original members, one retired at the semester break and the other is an experienced departmental chairperson.

Agile Research and Evaluation Models

Our developmental community model provides an example of community-based participatory research (CBPR) (Berge et al., 2009; Israel et al., 2011; Minkler, 2004) as we work together to solve practical problems related to faculty support by focusing primarily on real-world applications during program development. Minkler and Wallerstein (2008) describe CBPR as being *based* in a community and its needs rather than *placed* in a community. Like Israel et al. (2011), we recognize the community as a unit of identity; build on the strengths and resources within the community; facilitate collaborative, equitable partnerships in all phases of the program research and implementation; promote co-learning and capacity building among all stakeholders; integrate a balance between research and action; and develop systems through an interactive cycle. As we continued to move from theory to practice, we were also influenced by the emerging field of *implementation science* (Damschroder et al., 2009), or the study of how programs are implemented in community settings.

Similarly, we have been influenced by more nimble models of evaluation. Most program evaluation models are summative and include periods of implementation and data gathering followed by a period of analyzing data and drawing conclusions. Most program evaluation models evaluate success or achievement once implementation is completed. *Developmental evaluation* (Patton, 2008, 2011), however, has been identified for use in innovative settings that are in a state of continuous development and adaptation. The goal of developmental evaluation is to bring data forward to make decisions and guide choices throughout the process of development and implementation. Developmental evaluation is meant for program developers who are committed to ongoing program development and revision, those who may never want to achieve a fixed state. Patton (2008, 2011) contends that developmental evaluation engages a variety of stakeholders in the developmental process and requires a commitment to a culture of innovation. With developmental evaluation, data are neither summative (end) nor formative (in process to an end) but rather support a more ongoing process of constant adaptation. Developmental evaluation invites an atmosphere of constant collection and integration of feedback, merging the processes of program development and evaluation.

As an example of our commitment to CBPR and developmental evaluation, we will provide an example from our writing retreats. During the pandemic, our first writing retreat was held virtually. In a time when faculty were often working in isolation, the retreat provided an opportunity to connect with other faculty scholars in a supportive virtual environment. It provided community as well as accountability and helped faculty members focus on their research interests and obligations. When COVID restrictions eased, we advertised a writing retreat that would be held on campus for four consecutive days. While we had several who registered, we also received apologetic emails from faculty who could not commit to making the trip to campus each day. They told us about issues with child care, end-of-semester appointments, and loss of time that would result from the commute. Many of

our faculty members live nearly two hours away from campus, so they might spend four hours each day just driving to campus. Furthermore, we realized that many of those affected were already marginalized in other ways. They were newer faculty who lived in more affordable areas distant from our tourist town campus. They were new parents, restricted in their child care options. We did not wait to implement the retreat to revise the offering. Rather, we met and determined that we would meet the first day in person, offering a special time to gather, sharing tips and resources, and offering appointments with our grants office and library consultants. Then, we would work virtually for the next three days. As soon as we changed the modality of the meeting pattern of our retreat, our enrollment increased by 46%, with half of the new registrants being minoritized faculty.

Inputs and Outcomes

The RCOE Mentoring Guild's inputs, or resources, include time and space for regular meetings, faculty who are willing to dedicate time to regular meetings and program planning, funds for books and food, cards for writing personalized notes to faculty, support of unit leadership, and recognition that the Mentoring Guild is an endeavor worthy of faculty time. Our faculty fellow receives one course release per semester, which provides time for her to organize our meetings and other communications and planning. After the first year of work, the guild members and faculty fellow received small stipends through our dean's office to support summer work and planning for Year 2. These stipends were unexpected but indicate the value of our work to our administration.

As outcomes for our first year, our guild members indicate that they have an expanded professional network and that they are learning from and being mentored by near peers within the small but growing Mentoring Guild community. They agree that this service commitment, unlike some others, directly supports their personal and

professional missions. One guild member commented, “The work is fun, meaningful, and not mentally taxing. It’s service that I look forward to and I’m able to connect with others within my college.” Another noted the rewards of having the opportunity to brainstorm community initiatives that help shape our institutional culture in positive ways and then being able to implement them so quickly. Members have enjoyed visibility within the college and access to upper administration. All feedback from our programming has been positive, especially the feedback from our writing retreats.

Perhaps one of the most significant outcomes of our Developmental Community and Mentoring Guild is that they have gotten such positive traction and feedback on campus that our provost has endorsed scaling them up to the institutional level beginning with the 2023–2024 academic year. To that end, the RCOE Faculty Fellow has been appointed as the new Director of Faculty Mentoring and Career Support in the university’s CTL, a type of position our university has never had.

Conclusion

Due to the siloed nature of academia, it can be difficult for new (and seasoned) faculty to make the connections necessary to succeed. Pre-pandemic, only 41% of PhD earners who had committed to employment reported that they would be going into academia (NCSES, 2020). Once there, another portion of that 41% eventually leaves, as evidenced by the ever-expanding body of “quit lit”—personal reflections posted to various digital outlets about how and why the author left the academy (McKenzie, 2021). Our guild model is one way to help mitigate the isolation and frustrations that often lead to these exits. In removing the sentries from the ivory tower by making processes transparent, providing recognition for accomplishments, and otherwise offering guidance and mentoring to new and existing faculty, we are buttressing the guild tower and creating a

legacy of welcoming and true collegiality for those who come after us to the academy. Rather than treating academia as an elite club that few can join, we are throwing the doors open and welcoming new colleagues to our ranks, not only for their benefit but also for ours. After all, people are our most valuable resource.

Biographies

Dr. Tracy W. Smith is Director of Faculty Mentoring and Career Support and Professor in the Department of Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum at Appalachian State University. Formerly, she served as Faculty Fellow for Mentoring Initiatives for the Reich College of Education. For her fellowship, Smith designed a developmental community model of mentorship. In addition, in 2021, she founded the RCOE Mentoring Guild, a shared craft model of faculty support. Her research interests include mentoring and educational development in higher education, middle level education, and teacher preparation.

Dr. Jennifer R. Luetkemeyer is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media, Career Studies, and Leadership Development at Appalachian State University. She is interested in the ways that students access information and knowledge, in what resources and information they have access to, and in how information and knowledge are presented to them. The fundamental principle that all students deserve, and should be provided with, equal access to information, knowledge, and resources guides her work. She also serves as the Associate Faculty Fellow for Mentoring Initiatives for the Reich College of Education (RCOE), and is a member of the RCOE Mentoring Guild.

Dr. Rachel E. Wilson is a Professor in the Department of Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum and the Faculty Fellow for Mentoring Initiatives for the Reich College of Education at Appalachian State University. She

teaches undergraduate and graduate courses that focus on science education and environmental education. Her research interests are related to science teaching and learning identities and the use of multiple modes of representation in science education. She also served as a member of the RCOE Mentoring Guild prior to becoming Faculty Fellow.

Dr. Aftynne E. Cheek is an Associate Professor in the Department of Child Development, Literacy, and Special Education at Appalachian State University and Program Director for the Special Education Program. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses that focus on students with extensive support needs. Her research focuses on teacher preparation, eCoaching, and literacy/comprehension instruction for students with extensive support needs. She also serves as a member of the RCOE Mentoring Guild.

Dr. Denise Brewer is an Associate Professor in the Department of Child Development, Literacy, and Special Education at Appalachian State University. Her work focuses on infants/toddlers with disabilities and their families through Early Intervention, as well as developmentally appropriate, authentic assessment for young children. She also serves as a member of the RCOE Mentoring Guild.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflict of interest.

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Appendix A

Reich College of Education (RCOE) Developmental Community Model: Program Theory and Logic Model

* Please note that **Mentoring Guild** activities are noted in blue throughout this version of the model.

The program theory and logic model represents the underlying rationale describing how and why a program should lead to intended outcomes. In the chart that follows, the rationale/principles in the first column were derived from a review of the literature on mentoring and organizational development. The program activities are those activities that are intended, planned, and implemented based on the principles. The outcomes are the anticipated results of the activities. The inputs are the resources (including personnel, time, budget, and research) that need to be invested. We have used the program theory to communicate about the program and to gather feedback from our assessment director, department chairs, associate deans, and other stakeholders in our developmental community.

Program theories and especially logic models are not static documents. They are evolving representations of the best and most informed thinking at the time. They should be reviewed regularly by program stakeholders and participants.

Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
The RCOE developmental community model fits with the RCOE identity as a CoP (see RCOE conceptual framework).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet and greet with RCOE leadership team Reading groups Research Bonanza Sharing activities through weekly RCOE Connected newsletter Idea exchanges College-wide meetings Create RCOE Mentoring Guild <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing retreats WWR RCOE Welcoming Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction groups form identities as mutual mentoring communities Cultivating relationships between novice and veteran members of the CoP Dialogue and collective commitments into the “public domain so that all members [can] share in their ongoing creation and application” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCOE conceptual framework Office of Research, Sponsored Programs (ORSP) staff Copies of books RCOE leadership team members Program fellow/manager Program champion (dean) RCOE Mentoring Guild members 	<p>Qualitative comments from program participants (collected as survey responses)</p> <p>Acknowledgment and documentation of research and teaching collaborations from program activities</p> <p>Reports of writing retreat outcomes and products</p> <p>Attendance, including repeat attendees, as an indication of community building</p>
The RCOE developmental community model uses a mutuality approach that draws on and promotes high-quality connections and relationship research in the positive organization scholarship (POS). This line of scholarship advocates the importance of high-quality connections, those “marked by mutual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort meetings, Mentoring Map groups, panels Third-year review panel Research Bonanza grants panel Reading groups—all faculty and staff invited Create RCOE Mentoring Guild (done in Fall 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants learn about one another’s interests and strengths The expertise of pre-tenure faculty recognized and valued Cultivating research collaborations Increased collective intelligence Increased capacity of our “innovation ecosystem” (Pór, 2004) More members discover rewards of learning journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean as program champion Faculty who have successfully completed third-year review ORSP staff Copies of books Program fellow/manager Mentoring Maps RCOE Mentoring Guild members 	<p>Collaborative projects among/between individuals—can present to RCOE, present at conferences, publish, etc.</p> <p>Faculty and staff participation in college book groups; document new and repeat participants</p>

positive regard, trust, and active engagement on both sides” in all workplace relationships (Dutton, 2003).

- Members contribute to expanding and nurturing their shared intelligence and the infrastructure that supports it (the stronger the infrastructure, the more support it provides to each individual’s learning journey)

<p>A developmental community model is associated with organizational benefits such as retention of faculty, job satisfaction, leadership development, organizational commitment, more learning, and an overall sense of optimism (see Dobrow et al., 2012). Professors who understand the expectations of their various roles enjoy their jobs more than those who struggle with understanding or fulfilling their responsibilities (Robison, 2013).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop faculty database • Develop satisfaction/unit culture survey • Track involvement in RCOE, university, and other leadership • Develop mid-career FLC • Recruit RCOE faculty for mid-career FLC • Coordinate mid-career FLC across units • Program fellow presents at university/leadership academy (succession planning effort) • RCOE representatives participate in university leadership academy (succession planning effort) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased faculty retention • Monitoring job satisfaction and working conditions (sense of optimism, collegiality) • Deepening of our leadership “bench” • More effective succession planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean as program champion • Database to track retention • Exit interview data • RCOE assessment director • Program fellow/manager • CTL mid-career mentoring coordinator • NCDPI Working Conditions survey • PACE-R framework (Robison, 2013) • RCOE Mentoring Guild members 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” column</p> <p>Increased participation (and sharing out, when applicable) in “Activities” column leadership opportunities</p> <p>Increased faculty retention</p> <p>Satisfaction survey results (goals?)</p> <p>Documentation of RCOE guild members’ work as unit leaders to strengthen their leadership</p>
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(Continued)

<i>(Continued)</i>	Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create RCOE Mentoring Guild • RCOE Welcoming Day 			
	<p>The RCOE developmental community model is an assets-based model because it supports a process of identifying the strengths within individuals and across the organization (see Carayol, 2017).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-year panel • BYOBB with internal guests • Purpose, Mission, Vision, Goals (PMVG) exercises with induction cohorts • Process for recognizing achievements of faculty (e.g., grant recipients published on Grants & Awards page; faculty and staff awards published) • Program faculty lead portions of whole-college meetings • Faculty author-experts featured in programming and presentations • Fulbright recipients featured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition of professional profiles, documents, and portfolios into a more uniform system • Frequent recognition of induction faculty and faculty at all levels in RCOE Communications and Celebrations • Increased participation in and representation in whole-college meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful pre-tenure faculty • Internal guests (e.g., digital learning director, Inclusive Excellence [IE] fellow, LTS liaison) • Digital Measures • A-Portfolio • RCOE director of digital teaching and learning • RCOE communications director • College Meeting Planning Team 	<p>Implementation/completion of "Activities" column</p> <p>Sharing of portfolios/research/etc. similar to what is being done now in college-wide meetings</p> <p>Increased marketing/sharing of achievements</p> <p>Recognition of faculty authors (books, external grants, similar creative projects) at awards celebration</p>

<p>The RCOE developmental community model supports individuals' purpose, mission, vision, and goals (see Robison's Pyramid of Power, 2013) and can thus be customized to meet individual needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading group with induction cohort • PMVG exercises with induction group • PMVG exercises with mid-career group • Post-Induction group members meet bi-annually to update/discuss Pyramid of Power • Fellow provides individual consultations as requested • Fellow creates Dream Book prototype 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction group members use PMVG statements to inform research agenda, mentoring, map development, and professional development planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>The Peak Performing Professor: A Practical Guide to Productivity and Happiness</i> (copies for each induction cohort) • RCOE Mentoring Map • Faculty fellow convenes induction group and provides individual consultations • Faculty fellow convenes post-induction group • Dream Book resources, prototype (Robison, 2013) 	<p>Collective documentation of faculty purpose statements</p> <p>Documentation of stories of faculty making career path choices based on their individual purpose</p>
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(Continued)

<i>(Continued)</i>	Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
The RCOE developmental community model provides more "efficiency" of resources than a traditional dyad model and therefore eases the "service fatigue" inevitably faced by human services professors: "No single person is expected to possess the expertise required to help another person navigate the shoals of a faculty career" (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). [One example here might be that the induction cohort would conduct peer observations for one another.]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretch goal: induction cohort members conduct peer observations for one another In-house writing retreat Coordinate schedule of university-sponsored events; fellows helps publicize CTL events Programming includes sessions for induction cohort, newer faculty on common topics/needs of new faculty Mid-career FLC—partnership with CTL; RCOE is facilitator and recruits within RCOE Flash mentoring based on needs of faculty Faculty fellow serves as ad hoc promotion and tenure review committee member as needed Create RCOE Mentoring Guild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of assets/expertise in our community Reduced mentoring fatigue Mentoring fellows helps college leadership track and respond to needs of faculty Reduced time, effort, and financial resources going to searches due to excessive fluctuation Increased productivity and job performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty fellow as coordinator Internal faculty or external experts serve as flash mentors Resources for writing retreat: space, librarian support, stipends, research seed grants, stipend for faculty fellow (if retreat is in summer), meals, snacks CTL/human resources calendar of offerings CTL mid-career ReVision coordinator CTL mid-career writing retreat slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of writing space Increased productivity as evidenced by unit publication metrics Writing retreat: plans, presentations, outcome documents—movement to an internal writing retreat supported within the unit Writing retreat evidences Survey results (satisfaction/other?) 	

<p>The RCOE developmental community model acknowledges and leverages both intra- and extra-organizational supports. Some organization supports can be pre-populated on the DCM, in consultation with the RCOE Administrative Council and other units such as the CAE and the Office for Research (see Dobrow et al., 2012).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants complete RCOE Mentoring Map, pre-populated with RCOE and institutional supports • Create mentoring calendar • Create Lifeline of Support programming • Participants identify their community of mentors (feedback, sponsorship, accountability, professional development, safe space, and intellectual stimulation) • Create RCOE Mentoring Guild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced mentor/veteran faculty fatigue • Increased network diversity and range (see guidebook for definitions of terms) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty fellow coordinates and convenes • RCOE Mentoring Map • RCOE Mentoring Guild members 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” column</p> <p>Analysis of Mentoring Maps, which include virtual, social, and professional connections beyond the unit</p>
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(Continued)

<i>(Continued)</i>	Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
<p>The RCOE developmental community model allows for flexibility in meeting the needs of individuals based on identity factors such as gender, age, and race as well as personality factors such as extroversion or introversion (see Crawford & Smith, 2005; Montgomery, 2017).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants complete RCOE Mentoring Map, pre-populated with RCOE and institutional support Stretch goal: connect with Women Faculty of Color group and other affinity groups for faculty support Stretch goal: partner with Women in Educational Leadership Symposium (WIELS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased network diversity and range within RCOE and for individuals Multiplicity of perspectives an individual can leverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCOE Mission—focused on transforming “lives through meaningful collaborative relationships and inclusive excellence” IE liaisons 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” column</p> <p>Documentation of increased participation/collaboration with Women Faculty of Color group, WIELS, and affinity group members</p>	
<p>The RCOE developmental community model is consistent with adult learning and developmental theory (Levinson, 1978).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing the RCOE Mentoring Map or Free-Form Map exercise Individuals revisit map periodically Completing PMVG frameworks Maps and PMVG statements can be used as tools in annual review meetings with department chairs to guide discussions about resources, goals, and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased flexibility in programming Learner/faculty member agency in selecting learning opportunities and mentors Faculty’s prior knowledge and expertise valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty fellow is supported in her professional development related to adult learning and the faculty development professional organizations 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” column</p>	

<p>The RCOE developmental community model is a needs-based model and fosters agency and self-reflection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCOE Mentoring Map—places participant at the center of the network • PMVG exercises invite written reflection for participants • Faculty fellow collects feedback about Mentoring Map, faculty development needs • Annotation of exemplar faculty annual reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased agency and self-reflection for faculty • More productive annual review processes that focus on needs, reflection, growth • Faculty believe that their needs are important to others in the CoP • Faculty with exemplary annual review reports feel legitimized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty fellow • RCOE Mentoring Map • Sessions (group and individual consultations) related to purpose-setting, completing Mentoring Map 	<p>Analysis of Mentoring Maps</p> <p>Sharing of annotated faculty annual reviews and tracking “hits” on those reviews</p> <p>Data from department chairs and promotion and tenure committees regarding the quality of faculty annual reviews</p>
<p>The RCOE developmental community model acknowledges contemporary work factors such as social, professional, and virtual networks that influence academics. For example, thought leaders can be “developers” even if they are unaware that they appear on an individual’s DCM (see Cotton et al., 2011; Hamilton & Scandura, 2003; Kezar & Lester, 2009).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants identify their community of mentors (feedback, sponsorship, accountability, professional development, safe space, intellectual inspiration and stimulation); map includes intra- and extra-organizational supports, including thought leaders, authors, and scholars • Faculty fellow provides feedback on departmental promotion and tenure (P&T) documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased network diversity and range for individuals • Increased visibility and clarity of P&T expectations • Increased job satisfaction and efficacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty fellow • Collection of P&T documents • Survey/questionnaire related to job satisfaction • Analysis of RCOE Mentoring Map (faculty fellow) 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” and “Outcomes” columns</p> <p>Analysis of Mentoring Maps</p> <p>Satisfaction survey</p>

(Continued)

<i>(Continued)</i>	Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
<p>The RCOE developmental community model acknowledges the complexity of the professoriate, including the teaching, research, and service aspects of this work. Furthermore, as the bar for teaching excellence and expectations for service and engagement seem higher among College of Education faculty, more role models and supports are available (see Yun et al., 2016).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty fellow conducted analysis of departmental P&T documents Some departments have assigned tenure teams Analysis of RCOE mission, vision, and strategic plan and provided feedback to the associate dean who leads the revisions Faculty fellow can work with department chairs to create plans of support for faculty as needed Stretch goal: celebrations for P&T Create RCOE Mentoring Guild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentoring, organizational development are codified into RCOE documents, policies, and mission Success with P&T Reduced faculty turnover Retention of faculty of color 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCOE website Faculty mentors within departments and programs Faculty fellow P&T documents P&T committees Annual review processes Department chairs (formative feedback) RCOE Mentoring Guild members 	<p>Implementation/completion of “Activities” and “Outcomes” columns</p>	

<p>The RCOE developmental community model benefits protégés, developers, administrators, and all members and participants in the organization. In addition, developmental networks overlap and interact in ways that can be dynamic and energizing to the organization and its members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of Mentoring Guild • Development of language for departmental and college documents • Faculty fellow and department chair consultations • Briefings and feedback from faculty fellow to Administrative Council 	<p>Faculty identify more nodes on their Mentoring Maps with more range and diversity</p>	<p>Faculty report and show membership in multiple, differing networks</p> <p>Analysis of Mentoring Maps</p>
<p>The RCOE developmental community model acknowledges the norms of a white supremacy culture, including characteristics of perfectionism, sense of urgency, defensiveness, quantity over quality, worship of the written word, paternalism, power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norms for communities include "growth mindset" • Programs such as virtual lunchtime conversations, town hall meetings, fireside chats, and coffee chats are slow, informal times to connect • Department chairs and Mentoring Guild members meet with new faculty to explain departmental expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-authorship is valued? • Satisfaction/retention of underrepresented faculty • Openness to emerging forms of scholarship 	<p>Increased membership and participation of marginalized faculty on the RCOE Mentoring Guild and in other Developmental Community programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department chairs • Faculty volunteers (recent reviews) • Sample portfolios • P&T documents • Annual review processes • Formative feedback from department chairs

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Rationale/principle	Program activities	Outcomes	Inputs	Evidence
hoarding, and especially individualism and seeks to incorporate antidotes and community practices to offset the harmful effects of these characteristics (Okun, 2013).*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panels of successful third-year review and P&T candidates help clarify expectations 			

* "It is important that predominantly white institutions (PWIs) explicitly acknowledge the paradox of racism of the American system of education through adopting a community development approach to minority faculty and staff recruitment, particularly in those departments and spaces within which few people of color are currently found. Such an approach is a necessary strategy for the stability of equity efforts and long-term growth of higher education itself and the diverse students it serves."

Source: Muhammad & Horton, 2020.

Appendix B

Call for Interest: Reich College of Education (RCOE) Mentoring Guild, 2022–2023

The Reich College of Education (RCOE) Dean's Office and Administrative Council invite faculty members in the RCOE to apply to become members of the RCOE Mentoring Guild, which was established and began its work in Fall 2021. The purpose of the Mentoring Guild is to build capacity in our college to support members of our faculty community. Members of the Mentoring Guild (at least one representative per department) will meet regularly (twice a month) to envision practices that will support faculty at all career levels in our college and will receive ongoing support from the RCOE Faculty Fellow (Dr. Tracy W. Smith). Mentors will serve as non-evaluator supports to colleagues as well as communication liaisons to each department and across the college.

Rationale

To build college capacity for supporting faculty at all career levels, including effectiveness in relation to teaching, scholarship, and service, as well as their satisfaction and happiness in their work, we are expanding the intentional structural supports for the RCOE developmental community model (our internal mentoring program model). The first new structure is the RCOE Mentoring Guild. A **guild** is an association of artisans who oversee the practice of their craft in a particular area. Guilds are often associated with the idea of a respected set of skilled craftspeople.

One of our RCOE Developmental Community program principles asserts that a developmental community model is associated with **organizational benefits** such as retention of faculty, job satisfaction, leadership development, organizational

commitment, more learning, and an overall sense of optimism (see Dobrow et al., 2012). Professors who understand the expectations of their various roles enjoy their jobs more than those who struggle with understanding or fulfilling their responsibilities (Robison, 2013).

Establishing a Mentoring Guild composed of representatives from each academic department in the college will provide a way to build mentoring capacity and relationships across the college. Specifically, we hope guild members will provide support to faculty in their home departments (especially newer faculty) as well as to colleagues in other departments, and possibly even to one another. We hope to develop a Mentoring Guild with a diverse range of identity and personality factors, skill sets, and levels of experience. Initial appointments will be for one year, but the Mentoring Guild members and college leadership will continue to discuss how this model might be sustainable over time (e.g., staggered appointments, expanded membership and representation).

Sample Tasks for the [Redacted] Mentoring Guild **Collective**

Members will work together to determine and prioritize the tasks.

- Craft language recommendations related to faculty support for college documents such as the strategic plan.
- Curating and annotating faculty benchmarks to serve as supports (annual review reports, for example).
- Develop and/or provide feedback on the RCOE community development (mentoring) model and the evaluation plan.
- Facilitate bi-annual RCOE writing retreats and other structured Work/Write/Read opportunities.
- Share the model within their departments (with support from faculty fellow, as needed).
- Yearly roundtable discussion with Administrative Council.
- Other?

Sample Tasks/Suggested Roles for *Individual* Guild Members

- Work with departmental chairpersons to help make the first day of work for your departmental faculty memorable and meaningful.
- Participate alongside faculty colleagues in activities offered to faculty groups throughout the college. Invite and/or accompany faculty colleagues to activities.
- Lead or co-lead one RCOE Developmental Community activity per academic year (e.g., coordinate with the director of digital teaching and learning, faculty champions, book groups, third-year or tenure panel discussions).
- Work with department chairs to orient new faculty to departmental expectations and culture, referencing their specific documents and processes.
- Connect faculty with campus resources and targeted mentors within and outside the university.
- Serve as a point of contact for new faculty, as needed.
- Other?

Mentor Qualities (from the literature)

- Desire to support and foster faculty growth and development.
- Interest in organizational citizenship; skills in vision implementation, from planning to negotiation; ability to influence other colleagues and to be persuasive; political skills to help navigate resistance, if it emerges; and interest in creating a network of like-minded colleagues.
- History of investment in mentoring or, lacking experience, enthusiasm for the role.
- Credibility with the faculty as well as respect and support from administration.
- Self-directed, sense of agency.
- Skilled, patient listener and a good communicator.

- Tenure status? (“near peer” vs. experienced mentor; departmental/program decision)—It is probably appropriate that the mentor has gone through a successful third-year review but tenure may not be necessary. As with most other personnel decisions, specific departmental culture and context should guide the decision of the mentor selection process.

To apply

- For the 2022–2023 academic year, we will meet on **alternating Mondays, beginning September 12, from 10:00–11:30 a.m.** Alternating meetings will be on Zoom; therefore, we will meet in person about once per month and via Zoom about once per month.
- Please send a document stating your interest in serving on the RCOE Mentoring Guild to your departmental chairperson by **Friday, April 30**. Include information about why you would like to be a member of the Mentoring Guild as well as the experiences and qualities that you believe you bring to this position.
- We hope to have members of the Mentoring Guild identified by May 13, so that new members can contribute to plans for the 2022–2023 year.
- If you have questions about the Mentoring Guild or the RCOE developmental community model (our broader mentoring initiative), please contact Tracy Smith (smithtw@appstate.edu).

If you would like to know and read more. . .

Theoretical Grounding for the Mentoring Guild Approach

The mentoring guild model described is informed by Everett Rogers’s diffusion of innovations (DOI) theory (2003), which has been used as a framework in disciplines such as political science, public

health, communications, history, economics, technology, and education (Dooley, 1999). The four elements of the diffusion of innovations model are innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system. These elements make the theory particularly applicable for developing a new approach to community development and mentoring.

Diffusion, as defined by Rogers (2003), is “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (p. 5). Rogers explains further that diffusion is a special type of communication, typically about a new idea and characterized as interactive rather than linear. Diffusion implies uncertainty, including a probable lack of predictability, structure, and information. Diffusion can create social change or alterations in the structure and function of a system. Building on the DOI theory, Kempe et al. (2005) studied the problem of maximizing the expected spread of an innovation within a social network and developed a general model of influence propagation. Central to their model is the identification of individuals (called *nodes* in their model) who serve as initial innovators and who make recommendations that contribute to a cascade model of diffusion.

The DOI theory has two tiers of application in the mentoring guild model described here. The scope of the first tier is at the college level and involves the development of the initial RCOE Developmental Community and Mentoring Guild as the innovations. Essential to this tier is an effort to identify key influencers (*nodes*) within the various departments of the college (social system). The second tier will engage what Kempe et al. (2005) called *contagion*, or the spreading of innovation beyond the initial adopters. Within their respective units and across those units, the mentors will explore potential needs and responsive programming and communicate those to Mentoring Guild colleagues, the faculty fellow for mentoring, and other members of the college leadership team in ways that make sense to them given their department’s particular contexts.

The initial set of innovators, or mentors, will work within their departments (nodes) or with other groups of faculty while also collaborating with the other mentors and the faculty fellow for mentoring initiatives to assess faculty needs and share knowledge and resources to provide faculty development support programming (contagion). In keeping with Rogers's (2003) view of communication, we imagine a network of interactive communication that will invite "mutual understandings" among those within the same academic unit as well as the collective understandings of the mentors. Embedded in their departments, mentors represent and support their unit peers by developing programming to meet their particular needs. In addition, the mentors' interactions with unit peers and one another could inform the Administrative Council, CTL, and other service units within the institution about the needs of faculty.

Qualities of Effective Mentors from Carnegie Mellon University

Resources

- A guide for the mentor from Carnegie Mellon University
- A guide for the mentee from Carnegie Mellon University
- Mutual Mentoring Model and Mutual Mentoring Guide from the Institute for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Mutual Mentoring Groups from Elon University
- Near-Peer Mentoring Exchange from Duquesne University
- Institutional Approaches to Mentoring Faculty Colleagues (Inside Higher Ed)

Appendix C

Summary of RCOE Mentoring Guild Activities and Outcomes

Program activities	Strengths/benefits	Challenges	Program theory outcomes addressed
Sharing and building knowledge: meetings, reading, writing retreats	Dedicated time and space for writing; accountability through check-ins at the beginning and end of each session; support from colleagues; modeling/sharing of experiences and techniques from colleagues.	Scheduling conflicts, particularly with other end-of-semester obligations; remote faculty unable to attend in-person sessions; prioritizing writing with other competing obligations (e.g., grading, advising, search committees).	"Cultivated relationships between novice and veteran members of the CoP" with doc students, newer and more senior faculty.
Recognitions: Scholars Gallery, career milestones	Low cost and effort: incorporating recognitions like the Scholars Gallery into an established annual event did not require any monetary investment; lunch is already provided at these events. While there is a monetary reward for achieving particular career milestones, congratulations by peers at an event is an opportunity to promote a culture of support and celebration.	Identifying those to be recognized and reliance on self-identification; providing differentiated recognitions based on the preferences of the faculty; funding for tangible rewards.	"Legitimizing the work of faculty"; a celebration of work at the college level to promote an assets-based model.

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Program activities	Strengths/benefits	Challenges	Program theory outcomes addressed
RCOE Welcome Day	Faculty experience a sense of belonging from the outset of their careers; new faculty benefit from knowledge of institutional processes; low-cost initiative to cultivate community connections with peers, administrators, staff, and Mentoring Guild members.	Scheduling for the arrival of new hires as well as conflicts with other relocation events; due to cost of housing, some new hires live quite a distance from campus; faculty, staff, and administrators may be away during a scheduled time.	Cultivating identities in new faculty; Welcoming Day is intended to contribute to the outcome of increasing faculty retention/monitoring job satisfaction/collegiality.