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Publisher: Routledge

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## Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cmet20>

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Linda Beane-Katner<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> St. Norbert College

Published online: 04 Apr 2014.

To cite this article: Linda Beane-Katner (2014) Anchoring a Mentoring Network in a New Faculty Development Program, *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 22:2, 91-103, DOI: [10.1080/13611267.2014.902558](https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2014.902558)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2014.902558>

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## **Anchoring a Mentoring Network in a New Faculty Development Program**

Linda Beane-Katner  
St. Norbert College

Intentional mentoring of the next generation of faculty is critical if they are to be successful teacher–scholars. The traditional model of one-on-one mentoring is insufficient given the changing demographics of next-generation faculty members, their particular expectations, the limited professional training they receive in graduate school, and the rapidly changing landscape in higher education. Building a mentoring network with different levels and types of mentoring can help new faculty meet these challenges. A mentoring network that is anchored in an extended new faculty development program and aligns with the needs and expectations of this cohort will better develop the competencies necessary for their success in the professoriate.

*Keywords:* mentoring new faculty, new faculty development, mentoring network

New faculty members have always faced a range of challenges when entering a career in academia. But in the current, rapidly changing landscape of higher education, the ground under a new faculty member's feet may seem particularly unstable. Faculty roles and responsibilities are changing as institutions navigate cultural, social, political, and economic pressures. New higher education models (such as Udacity, Coursera, and edX) and changing student learning preferences challenge traditional pedagogies and curricula, forcing faculty to re-think the best way to educate students (Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013). Business, community, and government leaders pressure institutions to align degree preparation with twenty-first century skills, and demonstrate student achievement of specific learning outcomes (Barber et al., 2013). Traditional tenure-track positions are being replaced with contingent faculty, while at the same time, expectations for scholarly productivity in grants and publications are increasing (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Clearly, challenges facing the professoriate are legion.

Addressing these challenges is critical for the success of both institutions and individual faculty members, and will require innovation as well as a transformation of faculty culture. A promising place to start is with new faculty who can help lead the necessary cultural change (Otieno, Lutz, & Schoolmaster, 2010). Despite more than two decades of concerted efforts to align graduate school training with the full range of responsibilities of the contemporary academic workplace, new faculty still generally arrive unprepared for important parts of the job (Austin, 2003; Helm, Campa III, &

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Linda Beane-Katner, Office of Faculty Development, St. Norbert College.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Linda Beane-Katner, Office of Faculty Development, St. Norbert College, 100 Grant St. De Pere, WI 54115, USA. E-mail: [linda.beanekatner@snc.edu](mailto:linda.beanekatner@snc.edu)

Moretto, 2012). In particular, graduate students receive little or no training in the fundamentals of course and curriculum development, teaching with technology and active-learning strategies, incorporating civic engagement and service, and outcomes assessment (Nyquist & Woodford, 2000). They frequently do not understand the core purposes and values of higher education, professional expectations for service and outreach, or how to work with diverse groups both on and off campus (Austin, 2003; Helm et al., 2012). The current situation still reflects the findings of Golde and Dore (2001), that “the training doctoral students receive is not what they want, nor does it prepare them for the jobs that they take” (p. 7).

The next generation of faculty members, therefore, needs creative and intentional mentoring that builds professional competencies for today’s academic workplace. Anchoring a mentoring network in a comprehensive new faculty development program responds to next-generation faculty needs and expectations while assisting them to reach their full potential and lead institutional change.

### The Next Generation of New Faculty

Who makes up this next generation of faculty that is entering academe? It is crucial that faculty members and administrators realize that these new colleagues are not simply younger versions of themselves. This cohort of new faculty members, referred to in this article as *next-generation faculty*, has more women and is more racially and ethnically diverse than previous cohorts (Rice, 2004). It also increasingly shares characteristics of the generation born between 1982 and 2002 or so, popularly referred to as Millennials or Generation Y. Next-generation faculty generally differ from previous cohorts in their expectations for themselves, the institution, and workplace culture, particularly regarding the role of work in their lives (Maxwell, 2009). Next-generation faculty are expressing increasing dissatisfaction with the traditional academic work environment, citing concerns about unclear tenure policies and unfair practices, work-life balance, collegiality, adequate support for research, and leadership (Cullen & Harris, 2008; Trower, 2006). Also of concern is the perceived poor quality of faculty work life, with its concurrent stress, isolation, and lack of time to connect with students, family, and the community (Helm et al., 2012; Nyquist & Woodford, 2000).

Next-generation faculty members generally want meaningful collegiality, effective mentoring, and professional development support (Trower, 2006). They also expect regular feedback on performance, emotional support, and concrete direction (Nyquist & Woodford, 2000). Women and underrepresented faculty report, in particular, a lack of collegial support and networking opportunities (Turner, González, & Wood, 2008). Furthermore, junior colleagues express frustration at the perceived disconnect between their own expectations and the expectations that their institutions have for them (Boice, 2000; Searby, Ivankova, & Shores, 2009). In an academic setting, next-generation faculty tend to seek learning that is interactive, collaborative, integrative, challenging, and empowering (Black, 2010). If institutions are to be successful in attracting and retaining their ideal candidates, mentoring opportunities must be aligned with the needs, expectations, and learning preferences of this cohort.

### The Case for Moving Beyond the Traditional Mentoring Paradigm

The traditional mentoring paradigm of a more experienced colleague guiding an inexperienced faculty member through the challenging transition to full-time faculty status is insufficient given the characteristics of next-generation faculty, the complexities of the modern academic workplace, and the competencies demanded therein (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007; Zellers, Howard, & Barcic, 2008). It is increasingly unrealistic to expect one person to have the time, skills, and expertise to do the comprehensive mentoring necessary in this environment. Historically, the mentoring of new faculty was done informally, and developed in a mutually spontaneous way without external involvement from the institution (Chao, 2009; Emmerik, 2004). However, these informal arrangements are not ideally suited to the demographics of next-generation faculty, as women and underrepresented faculty have a harder time generating mentoring in informal settings (Chao, 2009; Hyers, Syphan, Cochran, & Brown, 2012; Turner et al., 2008). Since mentoring makes such a crucial contribution to a successful academic career, particularly for women and underrepresented faculty (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007), the approach to mentoring needs to be formalized to provide equitable access for all.

Academe has been slow to formalize mentoring practices that respond to changing organizational dynamics and demographics of higher education (Zellers et al., 2008). Given the realities of the job market, new faculty are concerned with their marketability beyond a single institution (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). Therefore, the focus of new faculty development and mentoring needs to be broadened beyond the classic acculturation to a particular institution to expanding the professional competencies necessary for occupational excellence (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). A comprehensive approach to new faculty development and mentoring can be a source of competitive advantage for an institution, as it signals to faculty that they are valued, and that their contributions are welcomed (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Thomas & Goswami, 2013). Since next-generation faculty are career oriented and very concerned with their professional development, they will most likely respond well to creative and intentional mentoring (Meister & Willyerd, 2010).

One way to think broadly about meeting the needs of next-generation faculty members is to establish a mentoring network that has multiple layers and types of support (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007; Zellers et al., 2008). While a traditional, one-on-one mentoring relationship may still have value in some circumstances, current practice recognizes a greater diversity of mentoring types and opportunities, including peer, mutual, group, and reverse mentoring (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007; Zellers et al., 2008). Faculty may make use of several different types of mentoring, for different purposes and lengths of time, to meet their diverse and changing needs. Emmerik (2004) underscored the value of this approach by stating, “in today’s dynamic career environment, having a variety of different types of mentoring relationships is probably essential” (p. 578). Blending these mentoring opportunities into a network creates a more flexible, reciprocal, and non-hierarchical structure that will likely resonate with the learning preferences of next-generation faculty (Wasburn, 2004–2005).

Mentoring should be interactive and occur across various projects, functions, and learning environments (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). There should be ample opportunities for sharing, reflection, creation of community, coaching, and leadership development, as this speaks to next-generation needs and perspectives (Schechner & Poslusny, 2010). Furthermore, given the diversity of next-generation faculty, the mentoring network should be attentive to differences across gender, race, ethnicity, culture, and

generational lines (Cariago-Lo, Dawkins, Enger, Schotter, & Spence, 2010). This inclusive approach will appeal not only to next-generation faculty, but also to seasoned colleagues from other institutions and those with careers outside academe who may be among the new faculty cohort.

### **Building a Mentoring Network**

Ideally, the mentoring network would be a key component of an extended new faculty development program taking a learning community approach (Beane-Katner, 2013). With a learning community format, new faculty members form a cohort and meet regularly throughout the first year for professional development workshops, working together and with other colleagues to acculturate to the institution and develop professional competencies (Beane-Katner, 2013). This structure lends itself well to incorporating peer, mutual, group, and reverse mentoring opportunities.

Peer mentoring, in which the mentor is slightly more experienced, and mutual mentoring, in which new faculty have opportunities to mentor each other, will be very attractive to next-generation faculty since they value collaborative problem solving and teamwork (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010; Thomas & Goswami, 2013). Both types of mentoring also encourage faculty members to engage in interdisciplinary dialog (Reder & Gallagher, 2007), which will appeal to this cohort (Maxwell, 2009). Peer mentoring can occur in a new faculty development program by having junior faculty members lead one or more of the seminars. These colleagues have enhanced credibility on issues such as stress management and balancing teaching, scholarship, and service with personal responsibilities (Trower, 2006). Junior faculty members thus mentor their new colleagues and build cross-cohort supportive connections (Reder & Gallagher, 2007).

In addition to these peer-mentoring opportunities, it is important to give next-generation faculty the opportunity to mentor each other directly. One way to accomplish this is to reserve a portion of each workshop for mutual mentoring. Whether the topic is managing the classroom, assessing student learning, engaging the institutional mission, teaching with technology, adopting high-impact educational practices, or balancing teaching and scholarship, next-generation faculty members will be eager to share their experiences and learn from the collective expertise of their cohort.

Group mentoring can enhance peer and mutual mentoring and offer insight honed from the in-depth expertise and experience of more seasoned colleagues (Otieno et al., 2010; Zellers et al., 2008). This format involves a team of established faculty members who work directly with the new faculty cohort by facilitating additional seminars, which can be customized with input from the cohort. Topics may include navigating the tenure and promotion system, advancing a scholarly agenda, getting published, obtaining external funding, linking scholarship to teaching and service, assessing student learning, and making community contacts. Mentees can take advantage of the multiple strengths and perspectives of the mentor team as they set their professional goals for the first year and beyond (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Zellers et al., 2008).

A network approach that involves multiple layers and types of mentoring can also help drive necessary changes in faculty culture. By connecting new faculty to junior and senior colleagues, faculty developers build collegiality across departments and divisions. Reverse mentoring can occur as next-generation faculty make connections and share their particular expertise with more senior colleagues. Reverse mentoring is often linked

to the use of technology (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010), but the approach could easily be extended to innovative pedagogies such as high-impact educational practices. With reverse mentoring, next-generation faculty not only model the innovative pedagogies that the institution should be promoting, but also educate established faculty on the particulars of these pedagogical practices. The strengths of the new faculty cohort can thus be aligned to move departments and the institution forward (Wasburn, 2007). New faculty members feel engaged and that they are contributing, which they seek and value highly (Meister & Willyerd, 2010), as they drive the pedagogical change the institution is promoting.

### **An Example: New Faculty Development at St. Norbert College**

At St. Norbert College, a small, residential, liberal arts college near Green Bay, Wisconsin, the office of faculty development has piloted elements of a mentoring network within its yearlong new faculty development program. Over the last three years, the director of faculty development has worked to strengthen the yearlong program and implement a mentoring network that is anchored within it. The overall objective for these modifications has been to better respond to the needs and perspectives of next-generation faculty. Preliminary results from new faculty, gathered from written evaluations, are very positive. Even though this model is being instituted at a small, liberal arts institution, there may be program components and recommendations in this example that could inform directors of faculty development at other types of institutions seeking to adopt a different mentoring model or institute a mentoring program.

The subsequent new faculty development program at St. Norbert College begins with a two-day orientation in August, which gives incoming faculty members basic information about teaching at the college, preparing them for the start of classes. In addition to this preparation for teaching, new faculty members begin to form a cohort with their colleagues, make connections with established faculty and administrators, and learn about academic policies, procedures, information technology and academic support services, the writing center, and the library.

The yearlong program, facilitated by the director of faculty development, takes a learning community approach as the emphasis switches from orienting new faculty to developing them. Incoming faculty members participate in six ninety-minute professional development seminars, each of which has a mutual-mentoring component.

The director of faculty development has increasingly shaped these seminars as opportunities for peer, mutual, and group mentoring. Typically, the first hour of each seminar involves interaction between the panel and the cohort, structured as a group mentoring session on the topic rather than a traditional “talking-heads” panel. The faculty facilitators are encouraged to take an interactive, collaborative approach to the sessions, and solicit the collective experience and expertise of the cohort. The second and sixth seminars, on scholarship and preparing for tenure and promotion, respectively, are opportunities for peer mentoring as they are facilitated by junior faculty members who speak credibly on these issues.

The office of faculty development surveys new faculty on the seminars, and written comments from the last three years indicate that new colleagues are responding quite well to the built-in peer-mentoring components. For the seminar on scholarship, sample

responses to the question, “Which aspects of this New Faculty Seminar proved to be of most value to you?” include: “Advice and experience from professors further down the path!”; “Real examples from professors are definitely fantastic!”; “Panel members’ candid sharing of their own experiences made the session enjoyable and informative, too!”; “Hearing from current faculty about their own strategies”; and “Hearing from other faculty about their experiences.” These responses suggest that new faculty value the perspectives of their colleagues and find the peer-mentoring component very helpful. Additional comments underscore that new faculty members enjoy the seminar overall: “Thank you for the seminar! I am looking forward to the next one”; and “Always worthwhile to have the group together!”

The last half hour of each seminar is devoted to mutual mentoring about the topic at hand. The director of faculty development works with the cohort on the mutual mentoring component, as detailed in Table 1. If time remains, new faculty might pose a question and ask for suggestions on concerns such as increasing student participation in

Table 1  
2013–2014 New Faculty Seminar Lineup

Name of Seminar	Seminar Content and Mutual-Mentoring Component
Resources are all around you	Discussion with the directors of health and wellness and the counseling center on student services and policies. Cohort investigates case studies on classroom management strategies
Getting it done: scholarship in the trenches	Discussion with a panel of junior faculty on how to get scholarship done while balancing teaching, collegial, and familial responsibilities. Cohort brainstorms about their particular balancing challenges while sharing strategies for getting their writing done
Understanding our catholic intellectual and norbertine traditions	Discussion with senior faculty members on the centrality of the institutional mission, exploring ways to engage the mission in the classroom and in daily interactions with colleagues and students. Cohort members investigate how the mission might be integrated into their courses
Exploring faculty roles in high-impact practices I	Discussion with the directors of undergraduate research and academic technology on how new faculty might incorporate these practices into their work with students. Cohort explores ways to engage students
Exploring faculty roles in high-impact practices II	Discussion with the directors of academic service learning and the honors program on how new faculty might contribute to these programs. New faculty brainstorm about incorporating service learning or community-based research into their courses. They also discuss how to get involved with the living-learning communities, tutorials, and the first-year common course of the honors program
Preparing for first-year review, tenure, and promotion	Discussion with two newly tenured faculty members sharing tips and strategies for navigating the tenure and promotion system. Cohort strategizes about artifact collection in support of their eventual applications

class, dealing with a difficult student, getting grading done, and managing work-life balance. These cohort-generated discussions typically spark lively interaction as new faculty share ideas and strategies based on their own experience at St. Norbert College and elsewhere.

Written evaluations increasingly identify this mutual-mentoring component as the most valuable aspect of the seminar. Examples of responses to the question, "What aspect of the seminar was most useful to you?" include: "An exchange of ideas with new faculty members at the end;" "Small-group work;" and "It was nice to hear from the cohort." These comments would suggest that new faculty members respond well to the mutual-mentoring aspect of the sessions; in fact, they would like to see more. Sample responses to the question, "What changes, or additions, would have enabled you to gain more from this New Faculty Seminar?" include: "Maybe more discussion from the new faculty would have been good;" and "More interaction – maybe all of the new folks could say what they were struggling with during the introduction and presenters could tailor their comments?" The approach would seem to be resonating with new faculty as they find the sessions useful and enjoyable.

Moving forward, the director of faculty development intends to strengthen the mentoring network anchored in the new faculty development program. The director will expand the time allotted for the mutual-mentoring component of each seminar to 45 min, as faculty indicate that they would welcome more time for this type of interaction. The director will also introduce a stronger peer-mentoring component to the seminars on high-impact practices by having each director partner with a junior faculty member who is very engaged in that practice to talk with the cohort. The junior faculty member can respond with great credibility to concerns of the cohort about challenges to implementation of a particular high-impact practice, strategies to manage the increased workload during implementation, and ways to disseminate results through conference presentations and articles.

As the director of faculty development strengthens the mentoring network, she will become more intentional about articulating the goals and program components to the mentees, the seminar facilitators, and the campus community. St. Norbert College has had a long-standing traditional mentoring program with formal training for the mentors and mentees. This program remains in place, and is being supplemented by the mentoring network to better respond to the needs and expectations of next-generation faculty. Mentor training for the traditional program consists of a ninety-minute workshop facilitated by the director of faculty development. This session clarifies expectations for mentors, discusses best practices in mentoring, and introduces mentors to the characteristics and perspectives of next-generation faculty. The director plans to adapt that training for facilitators of the new faculty development seminars so that they are more aware of the goals and objectives of the mentoring network and their role within it. The director also runs a training session during the two-day August orientation for new faculty to discuss skills and qualities necessary to be a good mentee within the traditional program. She plans to adapt that training as well to introduce new faculty to the goals and objectives of the mentoring network.

Finally, the director will strengthen the assessment of the components of the mentoring network. She will institute participant evaluations for the mentee and seminar facilitator training sessions to see if the sessions are meeting their goals. Furthermore, she will ask more direct questions about the mentoring component of the new faculty

development seminars in order to have more concrete data on the extent to which the program is meeting its goals. The director will use the results of these assessments to further strengthen the program.

### **Recommendations for Building a Mentoring Network**

A network approach to mentoring new faculty offers many benefits—it helps new faculty form a mutually supportive cohort, establishes relationships between new faculty and important resources on campus, and demonstrates the kind of dynamic, flexible mentoring that can continue to evolve throughout a faculty career. But because a mentoring network is less structured and less familiar than a traditional one-on-one relationship, institutions may need to intentionally introduce both new and established faculty to the concept. In addition, the flexible and variable nature of mentoring networks means they require a different approach to administering them. Institutions wishing to institute a mentoring network should consider the following recommendations, which are based on the pilot experience at St. Norbert College and a review of best practices in the mentoring literature.

(1) Shift the focus of the new faculty development program from delivery of information to opportunities for mutual, peer, and group mentoring. As demonstrated by the experience at St. Norbert College, this does not mean that directors must restructure the whole new faculty development program. If an institution has a series of workshops or seminars, they can be re-envisioned as time for cohort members to engage with peers and each other on topics of greatest interest and value to them. Frame these sessions as opportunities to expand the mentoring network of the new faculty rather than just deliver information. Recruit junior faculty members to act as peer mentors for topics on which they would have particular credibility and expertise. Recruit more established faculty members to act as group mentors to share their expertise and experience. Allow enough time for the seminars so that the new faculty themselves can also mutually mentor each other, bringing their expertise to the table.

If an institution does not have a series of workshops following the pre-semester new faculty orientation, consider designing several seminars that respond to the most important development needs of new faculty within the context of the institution. It would be helpful to also consider the interests and perspectives of new faculty members when shaping the seminars. Sample topics might relate to teaching (adopting innovative pedagogies, effective classroom management, use of instructional technology, evidence-based assessment of student learning), and scholarship (balancing time for scholarship with teaching, collegial, and familial responsibilities, linking scholarship to teaching or service, fundamentals of grant writing to support research and creative activities). It would be important to also consider institutional mission and service (nature of engagement and service, integrating institutional mission with scholarship, teaching, or service). These topics reflect what scholars have identified as competencies that are necessary for success in today's academe and that are lacking in graduate school training (Austin, 2003; Helm et al., 2012; Nyquist & Woodford, 2000). It would be helpful to think of the seminars as a series that builds professional competencies in the cohort over the course of the year. Taken as a whole, the seminar series for new faculty should also strive to build community and respond to the expectations of next-generation faculty.

(2) Orient the seminar facilitators. It will be important for the director of new faculty development to formally train the seminar facilitators (Feldman et al., 2012). Peer, mutual, group, and reverse mentoring may be less familiar to faculty members than the traditional one-on-one model, so it will be important that colleagues involved in the network understand the different types of mentoring and the goals of the network approach. The seminar facilitators should realize that their new colleagues will consider them as resources and part of the mentoring network. They should be aware of next-generation faculty members' needs and interests, the implications of these characteristics for mentoring, the changing landscape of higher education and corresponding pressures on the professoriate, and existing institutional support systems for mentees. The seminar facilitators should model the network approach by helping mentees make connections with other faculty and resources as necessary. They should also be encouraged to be empathetic and compassionate, given the demands next-generation faculty members are facing. In the experience at St. Norbert College, these goals for training can be accomplished with a ninety-minute workshop at the start of the academic year. Outcomes of the training would be seminar facilitators who are knowledgeable about the mentoring network approach and their role in it.

(3) Orient the mentees. While much of the mentoring literature describes what institutions and mentors need to do to promote good mentoring, the skills and attitudes that make for a successful mentee are rarely mentioned. Given the importance of good mentoring for new faculty members, it is critical to engage and educate them on this issue. In order for new faculty to maximize their mentoring opportunities, they will need to understand the concepts of mutual, peer, group, and reverse mentoring, as well as their role in the mentoring network. It might be helpful to have next-generation faculty collectively create a profile of requisite skills and qualities of a good mentee, based on their previous experiences, both positive and negative. They could strategize together about how they might best take advantage of these expanded mentoring opportunities.

An orientation session for mentees can also help overcome any resistance new faculty may have to the concept of mentoring. New faculty may perceive themselves as too busy to participate or feel overwhelmed with simply navigating the institution (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005; Otieno et al., 2010), so it is necessary to acknowledge their workload and schedule seminars carefully. New faculty colleagues may also feel that mentoring would be seen as remedial and hinder their advancement, so those perceptions need to be countered (Girves et al., 2005). This session for the new cohort on the mentoring network could become part of the pre-semester orientation program. Outcomes for this training would ideally be new faculty members who take full advantage of the range of mentoring opportunities available to them through the network.

(4) Create an infrastructure to support the mentoring network. Organizational support is key to a flourishing mentoring network (Chao, 2009). There should be a point person responsible for organizing and overseeing the network (Chao, 2009), ideally the person who facilitates the new faculty development program. It would be important to enlist support from senior administration (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004), so that the mentoring network is meaningfully funded (Chao, 2009) and mentors' contributions are recognized (Girves et al., 2005). Since next-generation faculty are typically digital natives (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010), the mentoring network should embrace the use of technology and social media, as appropriate. By intentionally supporting the mentoring network, institutions can strengthen the relationships that form within it.

(5) Assess program results. It will be important to assess how well the mentoring network for new faculty is meeting its objectives. Formal evaluations, through written or online surveys, should be administered periodically to determine how effectively the network is meeting its goals and those of the participants (Lumpkin, 2011). The training sessions for mentees and seminar facilitators should also be evaluated to determine if they are meeting program goals. Participants should be asked to evaluate the mentoring components of each new faculty seminar in addition to commenting on the efficacy of the overall approach. These evaluations should be used to gauge the impact of the network on the mentees, facilitators, and the institution and to make program improvements (Lumpkin, 2011).

### Conclusion and Implications

Mentoring networks with multiple levels of support and types of mentoring have been recognized as a valuable expansion of the traditional mentoring model (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). Such networks are also likely to appeal to next-generation faculty members because of the flexibility, autonomy, and choice in mentoring options they offer (Fogg, 2009). Given the limited professional training new faculty receive in graduate school and the rapidly changing landscape in higher education, a mentoring network can be a valuable asset in helping new faculty create the foundation for a successful career. However, because of their diffuse nature, mentoring networks may be harder to establish than a traditional program, where each incoming faculty member is matched with an established colleague. At St. Norbert College, the director is finding that re-envisioning the yearlong new faculty development program has been an effective way to create and expand the network. New faculty members express appreciation for the multiple mentoring options that are built into each seminar of the yearlong program.

A vibrant mentoring network can not only make new faculty development more effective, but it can also potentially bring institutional change. New faculty and those in the early years of their careers at the institution can support one another in the implementation of new pedagogies and the introduction of current issues and approaches in the disciplines. Intentionally creating opportunities for reverse mentoring can also help established faculty members imagine adopting new ideas and practices in their classes. Having new faculty share their experience with high-impact educational practices, for example, can encourage established faculty to consider implementing one or more of these innovative pedagogies in their teaching (Beane-Katner, *in preparation*). Next-generation faculty can also demonstrate to more senior colleagues ways to use instructional technology to enhance their learning outcomes (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). This group of new colleagues has close affinities to current students in term of their learning styles, their interest in creative approaches to collaborative, meaningful work, and their desire for regular, constructive feedback. Mentoring networks may offer institutions creative ways to harness these synergies between the characteristics and interests of next-generation faculty and what institutions need to do to evolve with the demands of the changing higher-education landscape (Beane-Katner, 2013).

There are challenges to establishing and nurturing a mentoring network, however. A first consideration is that each person's mentoring network will be more customized and unique, compared to the traditional mentoring model. As the relationships within the

network are likely to be more opportunistic and goal oriented, interactions may be more diffuse, short lived, and dependent on new faculty taking the initiative. Therefore, the responsibilities and expectations of new faculty and mentors in the network will change more rapidly than under a traditional model. As the mentees seek out different mentors for particular questions and assistance, maintaining the vibrancy of the network as a whole might pose a challenge.

To address this challenge, the person responsible for the creation and functioning of the network will have to pay close attention to see if new faculty are taking advantage of the multiple mentoring options offered and if these interactions are meeting their needs. This monitoring will involve close communication and interaction with the cohort to get the appropriate feedback as to the efficacy and usefulness of the model. The structure of a yearlong faculty development program can help initiate and support diffuse mentoring relationships, but it will be important to take steps to nurture and sustain them. Involving second- and third-year faculty as facilitators in the program for new faculty is one way to reinforce the network model for these now more-established colleagues, and to monitor its ongoing success.

The establishment of these mentoring networks will also create avenues for future research. It will be helpful to see what happens to the mentoring networks over time for individual faculty members. Do the networks persist beyond the structured opportunities afforded by the yearlong new faculty development program? If persistence happens, what form do the networks take over the longer term? What can explain this persistence? What administrative structure and support is necessary so that the mentoring networks persist? Assessment of these questions will be an important tool moving forward as directors of faculty development create and sustain the most effective mentoring networks possible at their institutions.

It will also be useful to gauge the impact of the mentoring network on the new faculty, the mentors, and the institution. Are new faculty better integrated into the institution? To what extent do they develop the professional competencies necessary for success in today's academe? Have the formal and informal venues for reverse mentoring helped change faculty culture and advance the institution on innovative pedagogies and the use of instructional technology, for example? Formal and informal assessment of these and other questions should help guide directors and institutions as they adapt their mentoring networks to the needs of both the institution and the new faculty.

As the landscape of higher education changes and places more burdens on faculty members, effective mentoring can help new faculty be successful and meet these challenges. That mentoring needs to match the characteristics of the next generation of faculty, and address their particular goals, expectations, and learning styles. Fortunately, a network approach offers a solution that has benefits for both the new faculty and the institution, and it can be established as part of a yearlong new faculty development program. Such a network can be a valuable recruitment and retention tool, getting new faculty off to a strong start in their career. It can also foster broader changes across the institution, helping new and experienced faculty adopt the innovative pedagogies that lead to better student learning. Anchoring a mentoring network in a new faculty development program has the potential to help any institution wishing to improve its existing mentoring program or institute a new one.

### Notes on contributor

Linda Beane-Katner is associate professor of French and has been the Director of Faculty Development at St. Norbert College since 2006. She earned her PhD in French Literature at the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign. Her research now focuses on strategies for developing and mentoring the next generation of new faculty, and expanding faculty use of high-impact educational practices.

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