

A Three-Year Evaluation of a Graduate Student Peer Mentor Program in the Werklund School of Education (2014 – 2017)

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Purpose of the Evaluation

Research has shown that as students transition into the university setting, regardless of ethnicity, gender, and background, they are faced with a “whirlwind of changes” or major lifestyle changes (Bailey, 2013, Why Peer Mentoring? Para. 2; Girard & Musielak, 2012). Some encounter problems of isolation, uncertainty, and lack of needed support, for example, as they attempt to embrace and cope with university life (Cantwell & Scevak, 2004; Clark & Andrews, 2009; Fox & Stevenson, 2006). Some students do not feel comfortable discussing certain concerns with their faculty advisors (Girard & Musielak, 2012), and may doubt their abilities when transitioning to graduate school (Gardner, 2005), all of which may result in an increase in first year attrition rates.

As a higher educational institution concerned with these issues and whose goal is to enhance the success and satisfaction of all graduate students who are pursuing their graduate programs, a peer mentoring program was designed and developed the Werklund School of Education. This program was meant to facilitate a successful student experience by supporting incoming students as they transition to graduate student life, and provide leadership, mentoring and teaching experiences for current students. Its goal was to enhance collaborative peer learning and a community of practice among graduate students by:

- providing intentional supports for graduate students.
- mentoring and problem-based learning opportunities for graduate students to build leadership and post-secondary teaching and learning capacity.
- building mentorship competencies and capacity in both mentors and mentees.
- providing an opportunity to build academic and social relationships.
- offering regularly scheduled seminars, workshops, and events for students to learn from one another.
- sponsoring community and connections among graduate students across specializations and years in programs.

At the end of its first year of operation, a program evaluation was commissioned and guided by the following question over three years (2014-17): *In terms of the program goals, what are the intermediate outcomes that result from the program by the end of its second year of operation?*

To carry out this evaluation, a multi-evaluative approach including a developmental evaluation (Patton, 2010) and practical participatory evaluation (P-PE) (Cousins & Earl, 1992) was employed in collaboration with the program’s primary and secondary stakeholders.

Program Description

The Werklund School of Education Peer Mentor Program (PMP), initiated in June 2014, was led by the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and graduate students in collaboration with the Graduate Program in Education Students Association (GPESA). The PMP operated within the Office of Graduate Programs in Education (GPE), in Werklund School of Education. The program director, a PhD candidate, also worked as a peer mentor and research coordinator. With the leadership of Associate Dean and the Academic Advisor for Graduate students, the program director worked with graduate student mentors to implement and evaluate impact of peer mentoring. Figure 1 summarizes the participation of 49 master’s and doctoral students in year one, 62 master’s and doctoral students in year two, and 76 master’s and doctoral students in year three, and the growth trajectory over the three years.

	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
PhD Director / PhD Researcher	4	2	2
Mentors	17	25	34
Mentees	28	35	40
Total	49	62	76

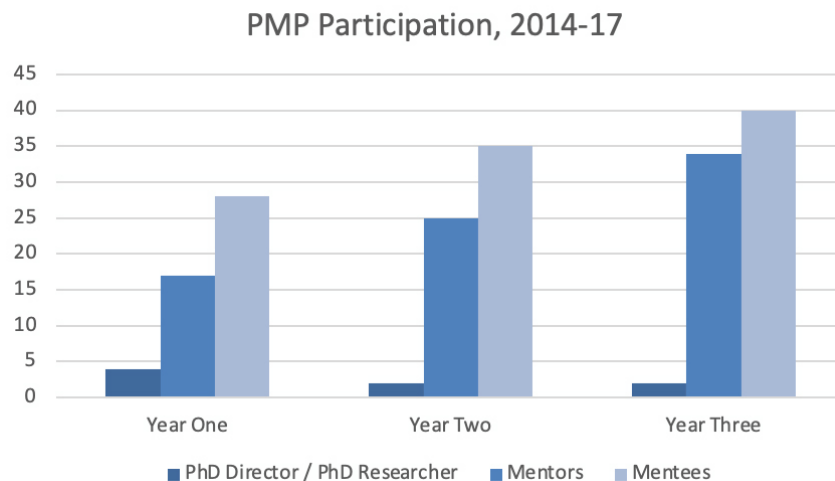


Figure 1. Program Participation Numbers and Growth Pattern (2014 – 2017).

Support Services and Resources Provided by the Program

The PMP aimed to enhance the success and satisfaction of all graduate students who pursued their program in the Werklund School of Education. It aimed to facilitate successful student experiences by supporting incoming students in transitioning to graduate student life, and provide leadership, mentoring, and teaching experiences for current students. The purpose was to enhance collaborative peer learning and a community of practice by:

- providing intentional supports for graduate students.
- mentoring and problem-based learning opportunities for graduate students to build leadership and post-secondary teaching and learning capacity.
- building mentorship competencies and capacity in both mentors and mentees.
- providing an opportunity to build academic and social relationships.
- offering regularly scheduled seminars, workshops, and events for students to learn from one another.
- sponsoring community and connections among graduate students across specializations and years in programs.

The PMP also aimed to provide leadership and mentoring opportunities for graduate students who have had at least one year of experience in the school by matching them with incoming graduate student mentees. The Peer Mentor's main role is to help the mentee to connect with existing people, resources and services on campus that are in place to support graduate students. Peer Mentors can provide advice and support and encouragement to their mentees as graduate students make the transition to graduate school. Peer mentors provide

support to their mentees within the confines of regulations and policy in the Faculty of Graduate Studies and within Graduate Programs in Education, Werklund School of Education.

Peer mentorship in the Werklund School of Education is defined as a reciprocal relationship, whereby both mentor and mentees develop their competencies and strategies for success as more experienced graduate students assist newer students. A community of practice is encouraged through ongoing mentoring and problem-based learning opportunities for graduate students to build leadership and post-secondary teaching and learning capacity.

Logic Model

A logic model or graphic representation outlining inputs, outputs, and impacts on these outputs (short & long term) of the Werklund School of Education PMP is presented in Figure 2.

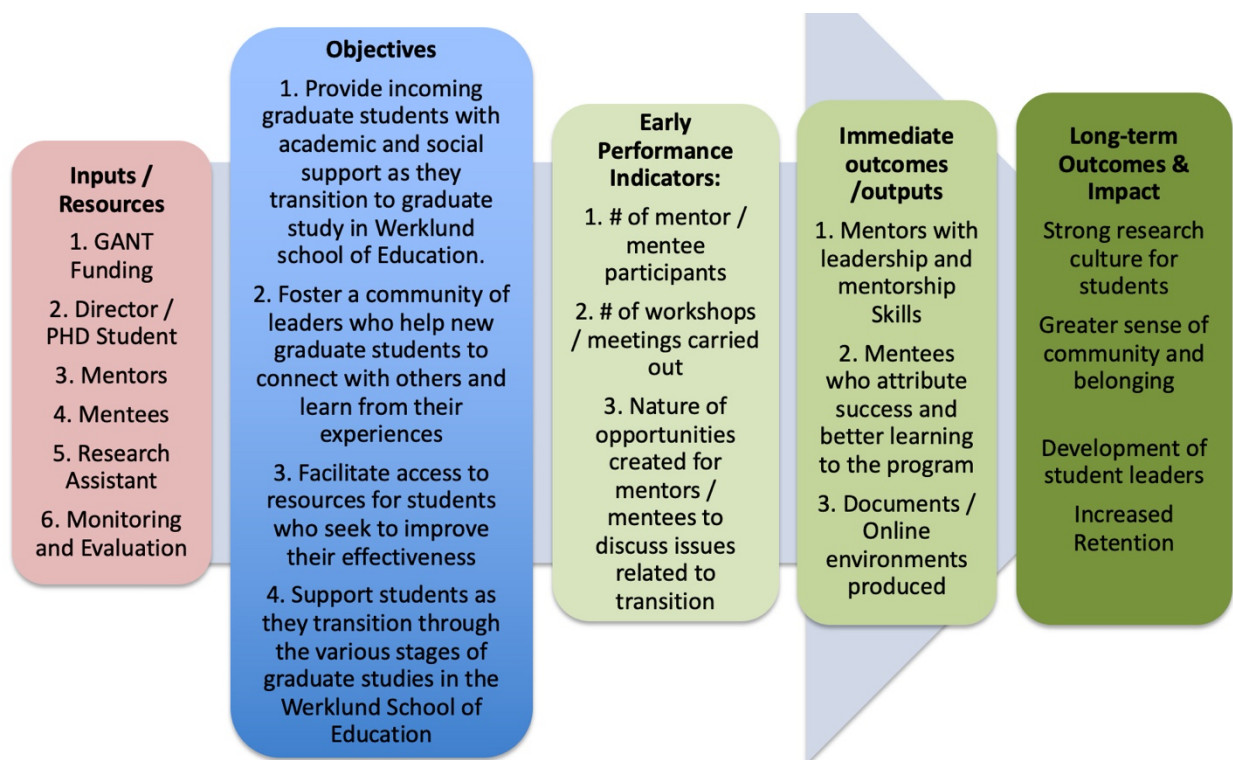


Figure 2. Logic Model for Werklund School of Education Peer Mentor Program (PMP).

Stakeholders of the Program

The characterization of a program's stakeholders is a critical component in describing the program (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2011). They further note that involvement of the stakeholders in describing the program, setting program boundaries, identifying evaluation questions, and making recommendations about data collection, analysis, and interpretation adds to the validity of the evaluation because stakeholders can also be program experts. Alkin (2010) also noted that stakeholders are the individuals or groups that hold a 'stake' or interest in a program and categorized them as primary stakeholders—those with the most power and interest in an evaluation and other interested stakeholders—those who have an interest but may not have the power to influence decisions. As such, their identification early on in the evaluation of the program is important in order to create an open relationship that supports the evaluation process.

Identifying the Stakeholders of the Program

To identify the primary and other interested stakeholders of the Werklund School of Education program, a stakeholder analysis was carried out. A stakeholder analysis, according to Bryson, Patton and Bowman (2011), "may reveal evaluation stakeholders that will be affected by the evaluation results (positively or negatively)" (p. 7) and may also determine the type of influence, both positive and negative the stakeholders might have on the evaluation process.

Step One

The first step in the stakeholder analysis involved the brainstorming of stakeholders of the program and was done in collaboration with the co-ordinators of the program (Appendix A; and see Stakeholder matrix, Figure 3).

P O W E R	High	Keep Satisfied	Manage Closely
	Low	Werklund School of Education Faculty developers, co-ordinators /facilitators, researchers Program director Graduate students/mentors, mentees	Werklund School of Education Faculty developer, co-ordinators /facilitators, researchers Program director Graduate students/mentors, mentees
Low	Interest	Low	High
		Monitor	Keep Informed (Minimum Effort)
		Werklund School of Education Administrative Staff Other Faculty of the Werklund School of Education University of Calgary community	Program director Graduate students/mentors, mentees Other University of Calgary peer mentor programs

Figure 3. Stakeholders Matrix for the Werklund School of Education PMP

Step Two

Using this list of stakeholders of the program, a stakeholder analysis chart was utilized, which was adapted from the Stakeholder Analysis toolkit, to clearly identify the stakeholders, their role in the evaluation, any potential conflicts, and the risk the evaluation runs if they are not engaged (Appendix B). This process enabled us to visualize stakeholder involvement and risks if they are not involved in the evaluation.

Step Three

As noted by Bryson et al. (2011),

Power versus interest grids typically help determine which players' interests and power

bases must be taken into account in order to produce a credible evaluation . . . they also help highlight . . . whose 'buy in' should be sought or who should be co-opted, in part by revealing which stakeholders have the most to gain (or lose) and those who have the most (or least) control over the direction of the evaluation. (p. 5)

Therefore, in the final step of the stakeholder analysis, stakeholders' power versus interest using a stakeholder's matrix (see Figure 3, X-axis, Y-axis) was identified and used.

Primary stakeholders of the program. Based on the stakeholder analysis, the primary stakeholders of the Werklund School of Education PMP include the Werklund School of Education co-ordinators/facilitators and program director. These individuals play an important role in the collection and/or analysis of data and the dissemination of the findings.

Other interested stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are differentiated from other interested stakeholders who do not hold powerful positions in the evaluation of the program, but have a stake in its results (Alkin, 2010). According to Alkin (2010), "It is important to ensure that the broader stakeholders' interests are somehow brought to the attention of the primary stakeholders, and their concerns are potentially reflected in the evaluation" (p. 44). As such, in this evaluation of the program, the other interested stakeholders of the Werklund School of Education PMP included secondary stakeholders, such as the mentors, mentees and other Faculty of the Werklund School of Education and tertiary stakeholders, such as the Werklund School of Education administrative staff, other University of Calgary peer mentor programs and the University of Calgary community. In subsequent evaluations of the program, other primary and interested stakeholders may become involved or less involved in the evaluation of the program, since

evaluation does not get completed all at once. There are many stages in an evaluation, and we can conceive of the involvement of appropriate primary stakeholders for an evaluation in relationship to different stages or steps that an evaluator pursues (Alkin, 2010, p. 45).

Stakeholder Involvement in the Evaluation

Garaway (1995) notes that stakeholder involvement in the evaluation of a program should be a participatory process in which stakeholders, especially primary stakeholders, should be able to contribute towards the evaluation of the program in collaboration with the evaluator(s). In considering the active participation of stakeholders in the evaluation of the Werklund School of Education PMP, three major categories of evaluation stakeholders (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2001) were used. The first category includes the primary stakeholders: (i) the Werklund School of Education co-ordinators/facilitators, (ii) program director and (iii) funder(s) of the program. They represent the individuals who are going to use the findings of the evaluation in a purposeful way to make improvements to the program. The second category includes the secondary stakeholders such as the mentors, mentees and other Faculty of the Werklund School of Education are likely to be affected by any changes made because of the evaluation findings. The third category includes tertiary stakeholders, such as the Werklund School of Education administrative staff, other faculty of the Werklund School of Education, other University of Calgary peer mentor programs and the University of Calgary community who may not be directly affected but will be generally interested in the results.

Cousins and Whitmore (1998) note that involvement can vary "from consultation (with no decision-making control or responsibility) to deep participation (involvement in all aspects of

an evaluation from design, data collection, analysis and reporting to decisions about dissemination and use)" (p. 10). We narrowed the stakeholders' involvement into: (i) all aspects of the evaluation; (ii) data collection; (iii) data analysis; and (iv) final reporting to focus the evaluation. Guided by Alkin's (2010) ideas on stakeholder involvement in the evaluation of a program, that "decisions are not formally unilateral—that is, they cannot be made solely by one person—but instead require agreement among several individuals" (p.42), we encouraged collaboration and feedback mainly from both primary and secondary stakeholders of the program.

Organizational, Social and Political Contexts of the Evaluation

Programs exist within the broad context of people who have opinions and can influence the program (Alkin, 2010). As such, in our evaluation of the Werklund School of Education PMP, we took organizational, social, and political contexts into consideration to distinguish the influence of these contexts on the program's design and implementation (Alkin, 2010).

Organizational Context

When carrying out a program evaluation, it is important to have knowledge and understanding of the governing entity of that program to identify and address needs that would serve the purposes of its evaluation (Alkin, 2010). The history of the Werklund School of Education PMP, how it was designed, and who makes the decisions are all key to an understanding of the program and can all inform the organizational context of the program and its successful evaluation (Alkin, 2010; Allen, Smith, & Da Silva, 2013). In addition, program developers and co-ordinators are more likely to use the findings of the evaluation of the program if the evaluator has a working knowledge of the program and presents

recommendations that align with its overall objectives (Allen, 2010). This is a point-form description of roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in two primary roles.

- **Director, Peer Mentoring Program:**
 - Recruitment
 - Matching Mentors & Mentees by specialization
 - Support peer mentors and mentees as they engage in mentoring relationships
 - Plan and Lead Events and Activities
- **Post-Doc Research Assistant**
 - Help to design the framework for the program and the evaluation
 - Data collection and analysis
 - Report writing

In point form, we capture the PMP timeline for the annual cycle of activities and tasks carried out in the operation of the program.

- Year Round Research
- May/June Recruitment of Mentors (ongoing)
- July Invitation to Mentees (prior to Sept program start)
- Aug & Sep
 - Mentor Training
 - Matching Mentors+Mentees
- Sep Fall Orientation (all new students)
- Oct & Nov Mentor-Mentee Events
- Dec Mentor Pot-Luck and Check-in
- Jan - Mar Monthly Mentor-Mentee Seminars
- Apr Spring Tea & Celebration
- Apr – May
 - Recruit Director
 - Recruit Mentors

A summary of the resources provided and required for the Werklund School of Education Peer Mentor Program is presented in Table 1.

Table 2

Resources for Werklund School of Education Peer Mentor Program

Program Resources

Website

- Description of the program
- Recruiting procedures
- Responsibilities of peer mentors and mentees
- Benefits of the program to peer mentors and mentees
- Guidelines for peer mentors and mentees
- Testimonials

**Desire to Learn (D2L):
Resources for peer mentors**

- Werklund School of Education Resources
 - Werklund School of Education contacts
 - Peer mentor contracts
 - Tips for peer mentors
 - Links to resources
 - Links to journals and other peer mentor programs
- University of Calgary resources
 - Student success centre
 - Wellness centre
 - Welcome centre
 - Students' Union
 - Students' Union housing
 - Residence services
 - Campus security
 - Campus parking
 - Graduate Students' Association
- Research on peer mentoring

**Peer mentor-mentee
activities and events**

- Orientation
 - Mentor-Mentee Mixers
 - Mentor events
 - Spring tea
-

Social Context

A deeper understanding of the social context of a program is critical to the evaluation of a program (Alkin, 2010). The evaluator needs to take into consideration how the program contributes to the community and who benefits from the program's continuation, to develop understanding of the social context of a program (Alkin, 2010).

The Werklund School of Education PMP provides the University of Calgary community with a much needed psychosocial and extended academic service by:

- Providing intentional supports for graduate students.
- Mentoring and problem based-learning opportunities for graduate students to build leadership and post-secondary teaching and learning capacity.
- Building mentorship competencies and capacity in both mentors and mentees.
- Providing an opportunity to build academic and social relationships.
- Providing regularly scheduled seminars, workshops, and events for students to learn with and from each other.
- Sponsoring community and connections among graduate students across specializations and years in the various masters and doctoral programs.

It is important to note that “participants [in the school community] come to the program with ...varying views [that] affect the way they will experience the program” (Alkin, 2010, p. 55). These views should also be taken into consideration throughout the evaluation process.

Political Context

“Evaluation work, in itself, is political” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2011, p. 68).

Therefore, when conducting the evaluation of a program, it is also important for the evaluator to take the program’s political context/environment into consideration. Weiss (1993) also noted that when considering the political context/environment during the evaluation of a program, the evaluator also needs to consider the relationships of the various stakeholders of the program, and at the same time ensure political pressures don't undermine the progress of the evaluation process.

In the Werklund School of Education PMP, there are stakeholders with a vested interest in the evaluation findings, and, as a result, they were actively involved in the evaluation process. A knowledge of their interests and motivations and how they intended to use the findings allowed the evaluator to be creative in carrying out the evaluation of this program (Weiss, 1993). This knowledge was obtained using a participatory evaluation approach in order to maintain the balance of power between the primary and secondary stakeholders (Alkin, 2010). The participatory evaluation approach allowed for shared involvement and dialogue throughout each relevant stage of the evaluation process. It was imperative, however, that the evaluator remained neutral (Fine, Thayer & Coghlan, 2000; Fitzpatrick et al., 2011).

In the Werklund School of Education PMP, the faculty co-ordinators/facilitators and director of the program are accountable to the other stakeholders of the program, especially the mentors and mentees (secondary stakeholders), and its funder(s), and, as such, they needed to rationalize their decisions and demonstrate that these decisions helped to improve the program’s effectiveness (Braverman & Arnold, 2008). The evaluators were conscious of this

fact and sought to communicate and involve these primary and secondary stakeholders in the evaluation process, which is key to working in a political environment (Alkin, 2010). Working closely with these primary and secondary stakeholders helped to inform the validity and credibility of the evaluation process, and allowing the evaluators to objectively present findings and recommendations.

Methodology

Multi-Evaluative Approach to Guide Evaluation of the Program

Based on program goals, a multi-evaluative approach, including Patton's (2008, 2011) developmental evaluation and Cousins and Earl's (1992) practical participatory evaluation (P-PE) was employed with the program's primary (Associate Dean, academic Faculty and program directors) and secondary (mentors and mentees) stakeholders to determine the program's effectiveness in meeting the goals. A multi-evaluative approach was utilized to "enhance the viability and fidelity" of the evaluation of the program to better understand the needs of the stakeholders and to "yield more accurate recommendations by which to enhance program development and change" (Bledsoe & Graham, 2005, p. 303). For this evaluation, the developmental evaluative approach was concerned with a partnering relationship between the evaluators and the primary and secondary stakeholders involved in the yearly development, operation and participation of the program. The P-PE approach was also concerned with such a partnering and went further in allowing primary stakeholders to actively engage in developing the evaluation and some phases of its implementation, including identifying and formulating questions for the evaluation, selecting data collection methods, collecting the data and identifying intended use of the findings (Zukoski, & Luluquisen, 2002).

Participants

The PMP participants served as the informants in this study. Specifically, the stakeholders who participated in the evaluation process over three years comprised a graduate research assistant, the Associate Dean, three Peer Mentor Program Directors and 34 graduate students/educational professionals (18 mentors and 16 mentees), who completed an informed consent form to participate in the evaluation. The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board approved the program evaluation protocol and ethics application (REB14-1235).

Procedures for Data Collection

In this evaluation, data was collected using a mixed-methods approach, more specifically a convergent, parallel mixed-methods approach (Creswell, 2013) to gather both quantitative and qualitative data on the intermediate outcomes of the program's first three years of implementation. In this approach, the evaluator "merge[d] both quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis" (Creswell, 2013, p. 44) of the evaluation questions guiding the evaluation of the program. The evaluator "typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results" (Creswell, 2013, p. 44).

The data collected and analyzed was compared with the existing literature on peer mentoring. Thus, this approach provided the opportunity for us to triangulate data for a better understanding of the peer mentoring process in this context (Creswell, 2003). The data collection procedure complied with the general ethical standards approved by The Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB).

Quantitative method. The main quantitative method used was an online survey questionnaire (Appendix C). The purpose of this survey was to gather observations and insights from graduate students on their experiences, mentorship relationships, training and development, other events and outcomes as mentors and mentees in the PMP. Their responses and comments were essential in helping to evaluate and strengthen the program. Outcomes were deemed to be any change in behaviour, actions, activities, policy, or practice associated with the program (Wilson-Grau & Britt, 2012).

Qualitative methods. The qualitative data was collected mostly through phone interviews and a focus group discussion (Appendix D). These interviews took place in these contexts to ensure that the participants were in an environment where they felt safe and comfortable to be vocal and honest about their responses to the questions posed to them about the program. The purpose of these interviews was to mostly gather insights from graduate students' expectations and experiences in the program and to provide recommendations for further program improvements based on their experiences. The interview questions were mainly open-ended, providing opportunities to probe further into the participants' experiences and to clarify questions that were probably misunderstood.

The phone interviews were carried out throughout all three years and both mentors and mentees participated. The focus group interview was only carried out in the second year of the program's implementation (2015-2016) with a group of six mentees. Before interviews started, participants invited to be honest about their experiences, and assured that any critical feedback would be constructive for future implementation of the program. Participants were assured that what was shared during the interview would be confidential.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed using an adaptation of Ritchie and Spencer's (1994) framework analysis, in order to explain how the participants described and interpreted their experiences in the program. After becoming familiarized with the collected data, a coding framework was identified by "drawing upon a priori issues, emergent issues raised by the respondents themselves and analytical themes arising from the recurrence or patterning of particular views or experiences" (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994, p. 313). We used an a priori (explicit) approach to coding, which focused on categories or data sets established before the analysis based upon the research question and program goals (Stemler, 2001). We also used emergent (implicit) coding which focused on categories or data sets established after preliminary examination of the data to categorize the data into themes/topics (Stemler, 2001). The analytical approach was used to determine what the mentoring experiences meant for the participants and to illustrate these experiences as accurately as possible and to help address possible evaluator bias.

Findings and Discussions

Analyzing multiple sources of data allowed the evaluators to identify, formulate, analyze, and interpret outcomes to determine the extent to which the program was meeting its goals (Wilson-Grau & Britt, 2012) and to inform decisions on areas for improvement of the program for subsequent years of implementation. It was imperative, however, that, as the evaluators, we remained neutral (Fine, Thayer & Coghlan, 2000; Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2011).

Data analysis enabled the authors to gauge the effectiveness of the program in meeting its goal. Key findings from the analysis of data on mentor-mentee perspectives on their overall experiences, supports for mentees, building mentoring and leadership skills, building social and academic relationships and experiences to develop post-secondary teaching, and learning capacity are presented and discussed in the sections that follow.

Mentor-Mentee Opinions on Their Overall Experiences

Overall, based on mentor/mentee responses for 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, (Figures 4, 5 & 6), it became evident that the mentor-mentee experiences in the PMP were primarily positive.

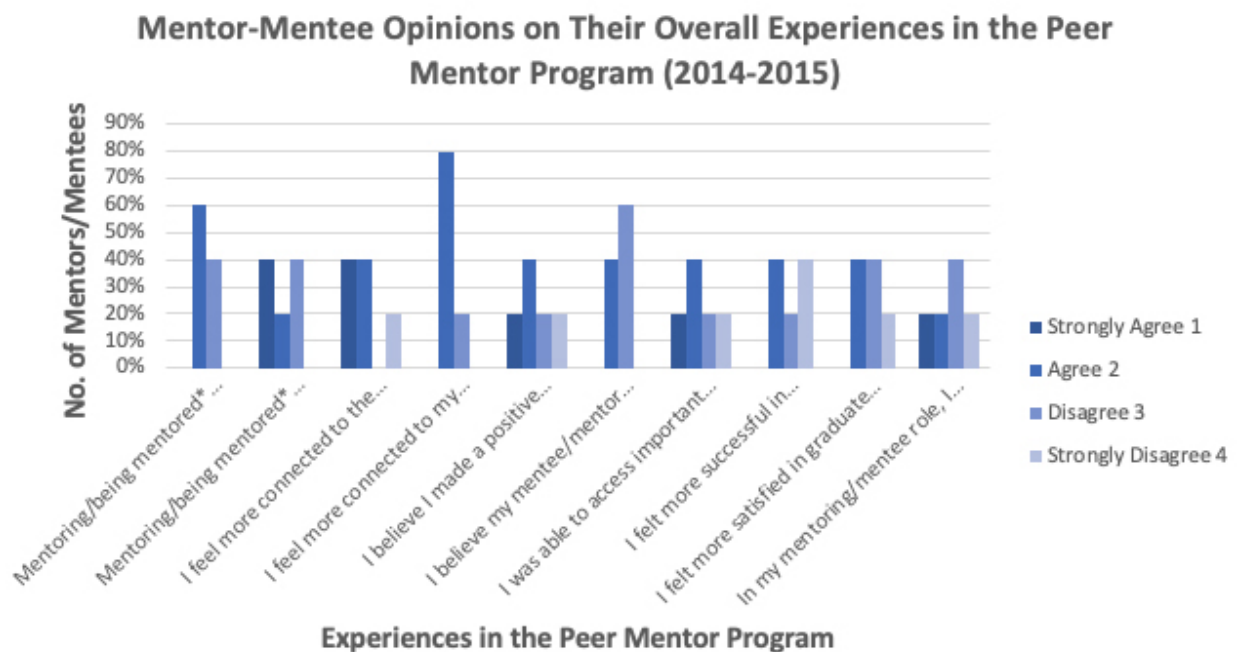


Figure 4. Mentor-mentee opinions on their overall experiences in the peer mentor program in year one (2014-2015).

Specifically, in the first year of the program’s implementation (2014-2015), most mentor and mentee respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they had positive experiences during

participation in the PMP. Of the most prominent experiences, 80% of the mentors/mentees agreed their participation in peer mentoring resulted in a stronger connection to their graduate programs, while 60% agreed it was as rewarding experience for them. About 40% of mentors/mentees agreed that participation in the program had been a worthwhile investment of their time, it made a positive contribution to their social engagement in graduate school, the mentee-mentor interactions contributed to a stronger academic engagement in their graduate school experience, allowed them to access important information about the graduate program, and helped them to feel more successful in graduate school and more satisfied in graduate school. It was also observed that 40% of the mentors/mentees strongly agreed that their participation in the program had been a worthwhile investment of their time and resulted in a stronger connection to the graduate student community. However, most respondents (60%) did not agree that the mentee-mentor interactions contributed to a stronger academic engagement in their graduate school experience. It was also noted that 40% strongly disagreed that participation in the PMP made them feel more successful in graduate school.

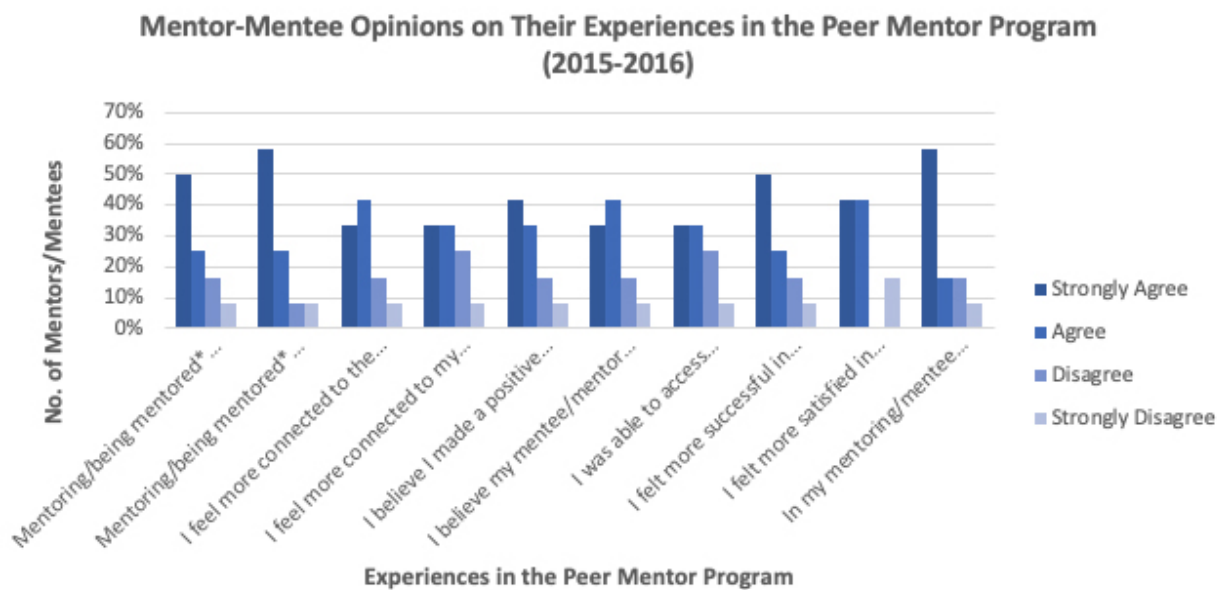


Figure 5. Mentor-mentee opinions on their overall experiences in the peer mentor program in year two (2015-2016).

In the second year of the program's implementation (2015-2016), most mentor and mentee respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they had positive experiences during their participation in the PMP. For instance, of the most prominent experiences, 58% of the mentors/mentees strongly agreed that their participation in the program had been a worthwhile investment of their time, 58% became more confident in their leadership skills, and 50% agreed that it had been a rewarding experience and they felt more successful in graduate school. Approximately 42% of mentors/mentees strongly agreed that their participation in the program made a positive contribution to their social engagement in graduate school and feeling more satisfied in graduate school, while 42% also agreed that they felt more connected to the graduate student community, agreed that the mentee/mentor interactions contributed to a stronger academic engagement in graduate school and felt more satisfied in graduate school. However, 25% disagreed with feeling more connected to their graduate program. More specifically, in year 2 survey results, most mentors and mentees (approximately, 58%) strongly agreed that the mentor-mentee experience was a worthwhile investment of their time and in their roles as mentors and mentees, they felt more confident in their own leadership skills.

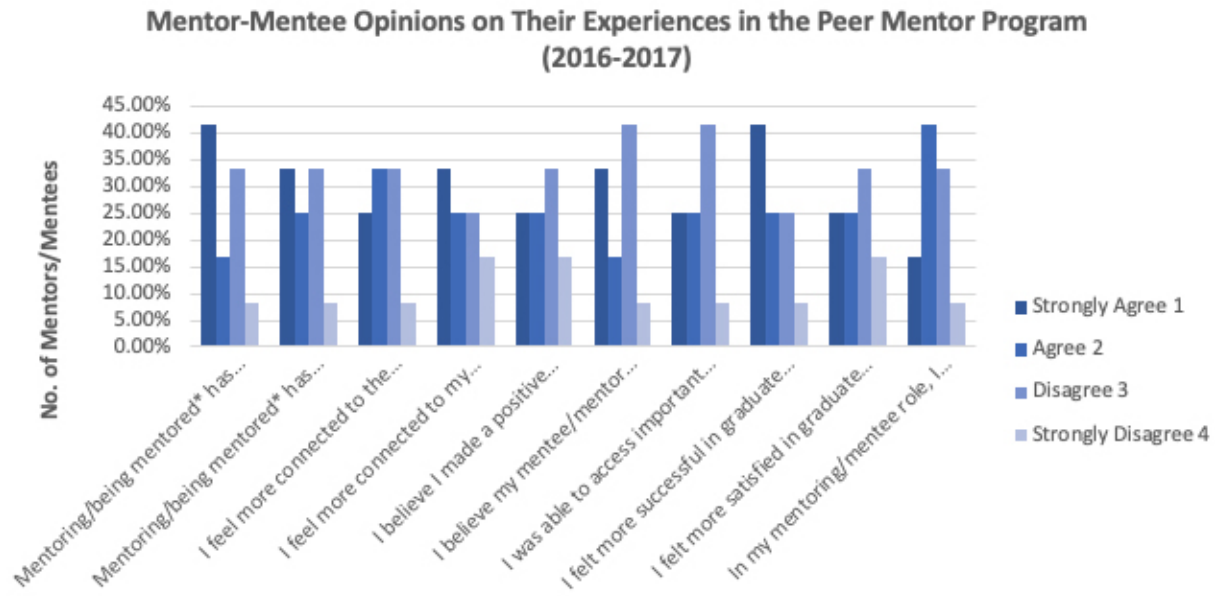


Figure 6. Mentor-mentee opinions on their overall experiences in peer mentor program in year three (2016-2017).

In the third year of the program’s implementation (2016-2017), most mentor and mentee participants strongly agreed and agreed that they had positive experiences during their participation in the PMP. Approximately 67% strongly agreed or agreed that because of their involvement in a mentee-mentor relationship, they felt more successful in graduate school, while about 69% strongly agreed or agreed that their participation in the program had been a rewarding experience. About 58% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation had been a worthwhile investment of time and that they felt more connected to the graduate program as a result of mentoring or being mentored, while about 58% agreed/strongly agreed that as a result of mentoring or being mentored, they felt more connected to the graduate school community. It was also observed that about 69% of the mentors/mentees strongly agreed/agreed that they gained confidence in leadership skills from participation in the PMP.

In survey results from year 3, 42% disagreed that the mentee-mentor interactions contributed to a stronger academic engagement in their graduate school experience neither

were they able to access important information about the graduate program through the mentee-mentor relationship, and 33% disagreed that their participation in the program had been a rewarding experience, was a worthwhile investment of my time, felt more connected to the graduate student community, made a positive contribution to their social engagement in graduate school, made them feel more satisfied in graduate school and more confident in their own leadership skills.

In summary, mentor/mentee experiences seemed to be the most positive in the second year of the program's implementation, compared to the first and third years. Peer mentoring program experiences appeared to improve by the second year of the implementation of the program and were most prominent in that year. The most prominent positive experiences that seemed to be consistent in all three years were as follows: (1) the PMP was a rewarding experience, (2) was a worthwhile investment of their time, (3) students felt more connected to the graduate student community, (4) students felt more connected to graduate program, (5) the PMP contributed positively to mentee/mentor social engagement in graduate school.

The most prominent positive experiences that seemed to have improved from year one and were consistent in years two and three were as follows: (1) mentee/mentor interactions contributed to stronger academic engagement in graduate school, (2) students felt more successful in graduate school because of involvement in a mentee-mentor relationship, (3) students were more satisfied in graduate school because of involvement in a mentee-mentor relationship, and (4) students accessed important program information through mentee-mentor relationships, and (5) students were more confident in own leadership skills.

Supports for Mentees

Overall, in the three years of the PMP, most participant mentees (71%) reported that the PMP and mentor-mentee interactions provided a strong support system that enabled their successful transition into graduate school. Examples from their comments help to highlight the types of support. One mentee explained, *“In my first weeks of school (after moving to Calgary from Toronto) my mentor made a great effort to meet with me for coffee. Those meetings went a long way and were very appreciated”*. Another stated, *“My mentor helped me with finding the information about my graduate program and study. She answered my questions clearly and listened to my concerns patiently”*. Yet another explained, *“My mentor helped me in every aspect of adaptation to the Canadian culture and the academic process in the university”*.

A majority of participant mentors (67%) indicated that they created an atmosphere of trust and confidence by collaborating and building relationships with mentees, thus, reducing mentees' stress levels associated with transitioning into graduate school and by modeling successful graduate student behaviors and actions for their mentees. For example, one mentor explained,

I helped my mentee navigate the process of choosing a research supervisor. That was something that was quite difficult. She had interests in a number of supervisors and I was worried about the process of having to let go of her intern supervisor and worrying about whether or not that was going to cause any upset in that relationship.

Some mentors (33%), however, indicated that they could not support their mentees as much as they wanted due to difficulty in communicating with their mentees. One mentor's comment summarized one challenge in communication. They stated that the relationship with their mentee was *“somewhat distant. . . Her busy schedule made it impossible to plan anything,*

as she continually canceled on me". Both the mentor and mentee need to make or find time to connect for the relationship to grow.

Mentor-Mentee Interaction

Mentor-mentee interactions throughout the PMP enhances their students' peer learning experiences. Findings and a discussion of these interactions for each year follows.

Year one (2014-2015). In its first year of implementation, most of the mentors (60%) stated that the main goals for their interaction with the mentees were to: (i) provide strong support to their mentees, when needed; (ii) be a model graduate student to their mentees; (iv) create an atmosphere of trust and confidence in collaborating with their mentees; (v) reduce my mentees' stress levels associated with their transitioning to graduate school. The mentor-mentee interaction mostly took place in a face-to-face format (44%) and through email (44%), and 'as-needed' (100%). It was also noted that mentors and mentees rarely used online communication tools such as Skype or the Desire2Learn meeting space to communicate with each other. The few who accessed the D2L space, used it mainly for accessing student information (29%) and to contribute sources and links (29%). Mentor-mentee interaction was most frequent in Fall semester, especially in September and October, and to a lesser extent throughout the rest of the year, especially in the Spring Semester.

Mentors indicated that the main issues that tended to initiate their interaction with their mentees included questions about course loads, content, requirements and expectations, and requests for advice about work assignments, applying for awards/scholarships, supervisors, and conference presentations. Mentees indicated that the main issues that initiated

interaction were isolation, progress checks, perceived disconnects between quality education and actual course experiences, and questions about doing research.

Some mentors (50%) indicated that the mentor-mentee interaction resulted in a positive relationship with their mentees. Several keywords used by mentors to describe interaction were, “Connected”, “Fun” and “Open”. One mentor stated that positive interaction, *“helped me to be a model example to new graduates. I was able to contribute towards making the first year of graduate school less stressful”*. One mentee used the following keywords to describe her interaction with her mentor: “Enjoyable”, “Beneficial” and “Inspiring”. However, other mentors (50%) indicated that the interaction was strained or non-existent. They used keywords such as “limited”, “lack of contact” and “tenuous” to describe that interaction. For example, one mentor stated, *“I was very unsuccessful in creating a bond with my mentee. Basically, it made me more aware of the balance that I should ask of myself”*.

Year two (2015-2016). In the second year of the PMP, the mentors did not specifically state the main goals for their interaction with mentees, such as they did in year one. Mentor-mentee interactions mostly took place face-to-face (58%) and through email (32%), mostly on an ‘as-needed’ basis (50%), some on a regular basis (25%), a few during scheduled social events and Thursday Graduate Seminars. It was noted that mentors and mentees rarely used online communication tools such as Skype or the Desire 2 Learn meeting space. Mentees indicated they were unaware the D2L space existed. A mentee who used the D2L space accessed it for student information. Mentor-mentee interaction was most frequent in October and November and to a lesser extent throughout the rest of the year, especially in the Spring Semester.

Mentors indicated the main issues that tended to initiate interaction with their mentees included questions about scholarships, supervisors, and classes; conference presentations; program and course-related issues, such as questions around meeting with potential supervisors, and seeking advice about papers/coursework; course work and course load. For example, in an interview, one mentor stated,

I would say it was issues like navigating things in the program, selecting a permanent supervisor, thinking about applications for practicum for the upcoming year, as well course-related concerns, questions about a specific course assignment, talking about academic research-based writing and preparing for upcoming exams and stuff.

Another mentor stated,

Typically, I'd help her with her SSHRC application, and we would talk about tests that she was going to take in the courses that I had taken and then her trying to figure out who to have as a supervisor. We had a lot of discussions about that.

Mentees indicated the main issues that tended to initiate interaction with their mentors included isolation; checking in on program progress and discussing 'fit' in program; and the process of a graduate program and questions about doing research. A mentee indicated an issue that continuously kept her connected to her mentor was the disconnect between quality education and actual experiences in her courses. She stated,

It was always the discussion about the disconnect that I was feeling between what I see as quality education and what was happening in my courses. So, I come at this from a very biased perspective, but in sort of an opening up space to talk about anything. That's what we ended up talking about and that led us down a rabbit hole.

Two mentees also indicated that issues with their progress usually initiated an interaction with their mentors. One mentee stated, *"It was really about well how are things, is everything okay type thing. And then we just sit and chat and have coffee type conversations"*. The other explained, *"She would actually email and say why don't we get together and see if you guys have any questions"*.

Some mentors (60%) used the following keywords to describe their interaction with their mentees: *kind, willing to help, engaging, knowledge, friendship, rewarding, connecting, encouraging*. One mentor stated, *"I enjoyed offering support and advice to my mentee when she asked. I also felt more of a bond to the cohort that my mentee belonged to"*. Another mentor explained,

It was very rewarding to give back some of the knowledge and experiences that I have gained through my years of grad school and helped to keep me feeling engaged and energized in my own process. I wanted to pass along the knowledge and experience I had to someone else.

One mentor used these keywords to describe interactions with her mentee: *Intellectual-overload, Lacking meaning and Intense*. Mentees used these keywords to describe interaction with their mentors: *supportive, caring, fun, dependable, friendly, fun, nice and helpful*.

One mentee stated that she *"felt more connected and supported"* as she interacted with her mentor. Another mentee explained that because of that interaction, she had the opportunity to *"talk to people who knows [sic] much more than [her] in the field"*. Still another stated that because of that interaction, she *"felt more involved in the program and connected"*

to others that [were] not in [her] EDSA". Yet another stated that her interaction with her mentor helped her to feel safe. She explained,

It made me feel more comfortable and it contributed to me having a safe psyche. So, if I should run into any difficulties, then she would be the first person that I would think of to communicate with. It helped me to navigate whatever issue I may be facing at the time.

Some mentees also indicated their interaction with their mentors provided opportunities to identify areas for further improvement as a critical thinker and to critically engage with peers.

For instance, one of these mentees explained,

I would say that given the nature of my relationship with my mentor, he kind of has pushed me to think more critically about what I'm doing in my graduate studies and that's certainly something that I'm discovering is a problem. I know I'm recognizing now, especially this semester that my critical engagement is not there. So, I need to build that. So, I think, if anything, he's helped me discover that.

Year three (2016-2017). In the PMPs third year, all the mentors stated that the main goals for their interaction with the mentees were to: (i) commit in providing strong support to their mentees, when needed; (ii) be a model mentor to their mentees; (iii) provide mentees with a skill set that will serve them well in transitioning to graduate school. The mentor-mentee interaction was mostly done face-to-face (43%%) and through email (54%), and on an as-needed basis (75%). It was also noted that mentors and mentees rarely used the online communication tools such as Skype or the Desire 2 Learn meeting space. Mentor-mentee

interaction also seemed most frequent in October to November and January. There was no interaction from February until the end of the program.

As in the previous two years, the mentors indicated that the main issues that tended to initiate their interaction with their mentees included information about scholarships, supervisors and classes; program and course-related issues, including advice about assignments, and workload. One mentor explained,

my mentee talked about her feelings of being overwhelmed and confused with the workload in the first year of the Master's, which I can absolutely relate to. I helped her with organizing her assignments and the expectations for papers and navigating the challenges of working with certain parts and knowing what their preferences are . . . I also gave her ongoing support in the scholarship process.

Mentees indicated that the main issues that tended to initiate interaction with their mentors included academic challenges and progress, perspectives on class assignments, coping experiences in general, and cultural issues/differences. One of these mentees stated,

It was academic in nature. How is your course work going? We also took one course together, so we obviously addressed questions about that course . . . how I was coping on campus, my activities off campus and how I was integrating into the Canadian culture.

Some of the mentors (67%) used the following keywords to describe their interaction with their mentees: *engaging, responsible, friendship, fun, connecting, enjoyable*. One mentor explained, "*I felt elated in giving back as I helped my mentee settle into his new apartment . . . and with*

the challenges he had with choosing a supervisor". Two mentors, however, used the following keywords to describe their interaction with their mentees: *distant, tense*.

Some mentees (60%) used the following keywords to describe the interaction with their mentors: *supportive, dependable, friendly, fun, nice and helpful*. One mentee stated that he "*felt safe and connected with other mentees*" as he interacted with his mentor. Another mentee explained that because of that interaction, she was able to attend many social events. She explained,

he belonged to the student association and promoted all the events. He invited me to all the events and I was there. I enjoy social life. Whatever had to do with meeting people, having fun, just chatting, I'm there. It was very beneficial in the sense that he invited me and brought me to these social events.

Two mentees used these keywords to describe interaction with their mentors: *unsupportive, disconnected*. One explained, "*I didn't hear from my mentor until November and so, I started to find my own connections, to find my own ways of getting information*".

In summary, along with challenges that the research identified, the majority of mentors and mentee respondents reported benefits from peer mentoring interactions with each other. At the end of year one, 67% of mentor participants indicated the mentor-mentee interactions resulted in a positive and helpful relationship along with 75% of mentee participants who found interaction with their mentors enjoyable, beneficial to their transition, and inspiring.

At the end of second year, 60% of mentor participants indicated that interaction with mentees was a rewarding and engaging experience that allowed them to bond with peers and to give back some of the knowledge and experiences they had gained in graduate school. 71%

of mentee participants indicated the interaction with mentors allowed them to feel safe, comfortable, more connected and supported, to become more involved in the program and provided opportunities for further improvement as critical thinkers.

In year three, 67% of mentor participants indicated their interaction with mentees were rewarding and enjoyable experiences, that allowed them to give back some of the knowledge and experiences that they had acquired as senior students, while 60% the mentee participants found these interactions helped them to feel more connected and prepared to embrace graduate education with more confidence.

Building Mentoring and Leadership Skills

Overall, in the three years of the PMP, findings indicate that most mentors and mentees who provided feedback reported some positive development in their mentoring and leadership skills as they participated in the program. In year one, 50% of the mentors and no mentee indicated that they had developed mentoring and leadership skills, which allowed them to improve on their sense of responsibility to their mentees. One mentor explained that being a mentor had *“helped to improve on my communication skills, improved my sense of responsibility to other graduate students and I had the opportunity to expand on my skill set regarding demonstrating applied leadership skills”*. Another mentor commented that the experience *“enhanced my awareness of servant leadership, and how I was really tuned to whatever my mentee felt was in her best interest”*.

In year two, 100% of mentors (mentees from year one, who had become mentors and repeating mentors from year one) and 29% of the mentees indicated they had developed mentoring and leadership skills. One mentor stated, *“I learned about my leadership style and*

gained insights into my communication style as a leader. I feel like I got to develop good communication and it helped to develop my interpersonal skills within that leadership role”.

Another mentor stated,

I like seeing how I was as a leader. I felt it was a really safe place and especially at the initial meeting where they gave us pointers on how to do this. So, I felt really confident and I like seeing how I handled that. I felt like it was nice little baby steps in becoming a leader.

Yet another mentor explained,

I feel that being a peer mentor helped to increase the skills I need to be a successful supervisor in the future. By helping my mentee work through some difficulties and providing helpful tips and advice, I feel more confident in my developing supervision abilities.

A mentee who indicated he had developed some mentoring and leadership skills explained that the peer mentoring experience

helped me to see that I am a leader in my own right. It maybe helped me to become more confident in that because at first I was really anxious and how was I going to navigate all this, and then I realise okay, like I can and I don't need to be guided as much as I thought.

One mentee-mentor pair stated that working with each other to address challenges helped them both to realize leadership skills and inspired the mentee to become a mentor in the next year so they would have a chance to pay forward the benefits they had accrued in the program.

In year three, 71% of the mentors and 40% of mentees indicated they had developed mentoring and leadership skills. One of the mentors explained the experience, *“enhanced my leadership and coaching skills and challenged me to think about how to get the most of my program, thus maximizing my potential”*. Mentees also stated that their experiences encouraged them to become mentors in subsequent implementations of the program. One mentees stated that her mentor had encouraged her to apply for leadership roles in various school-based associations and to be very resourceful in taking initiatives to find needed information that would solve some of her problems. Another mentee added that her mentor allowed her to take the lead in their meetings to help her to develop as a leader.

Building Social Relationships

Peer mentor directors reported that social events, such as potluck lunches, brown bag lunches and the Spring Tea were planned and implemented to encourage the socialization of mentors and their mentees within the mentoring community. The attendance of mentors and mentees, however, tended to be low (20% of the community) throughout all three years, with more mentors attending than the mentees. In response to questions about low attendance, both mentors and mentees commented that scheduling conflicts were the primary reason for their inability to attend. Despite low attendance at social events, findings indicated that most mentors and their mentees found other ways to socialize within the mentoring community. As a result, from the mentors' and mentees' perspectives, building social relationships is a successful outcome of the program. For instance, throughout its three-year implementation, 60% of the mentors (year one), 100% (year two) and 86% (year three), who participated in the evaluation, indicated that they had also positively contributed to and benefitted from social engagement with their mentees through activities such as, getting coffee, scheduled sports events or informal 'hang outs'.

Building Academic Relationships

The academic relationships between mentors and their mentees were focused on assistance in completing scholarship applications, advice on course load and assignments and working with research supervisors. Findings indicated that throughout the three years, the mentor-mentee relationships appeared to contribute towards participants' stronger academic engagement in program. For instance, in the first year evaluation of the program, only 40% of mentors and no mentees indicated that the mentoring relationships contributed to stronger

academic engagement in graduate school. By year two, 100% of mentors and 33% of mentees connected mentoring with stronger academic engagement. By year three, 86% of mentors and 100% of mentees indicated that mentoring relationships had contributed to stronger academic engagement in graduate school.

Conclusion/Recommendations for Ongoing Implementation of the Program

Key findings of this evaluation indicate that in its first three years of implementation, the Peer Mentor Program in the Werklund School of Education was largely effective in meeting its goals to enhance the success and satisfaction of new graduate students, to enhance collaborative peer learning and cultivate a community of practice among graduate students. However, the implementation of the PMP came with some challenges. Therefore, for continued growth and improvement to better align the program's components with its goals, a number of recommendations are offered from the graduate students who participated in the evaluation.

Recruitment and Matching

To promote mentor-mentee connections, participants recommend that the director start recruitment of mentors and mentees, and matching pairs, a few months before students start their degree programs. Early connections support relationship building and problem solving before classes start. Aim for the most effective peer mentor-mentee matches from the start. For example, it may work best if mentors and mentees from the same specialization are paired, if mentees can choose mentors, if mentors and mentees are paired according to gender,

if mentors and mentees are paired according to common international experiences, and so on. As mentees are recruited for the PMP, information should be sought through a short survey about preferences and this data used to inform more effective matching with mentors. As mentors are recruited, the program can improve and better communicate roles and responsibilities as a form of self-selection criteria so mentors can reflect on their suitability for the program.

Supporting Regular Interaction

The student director of the PMP should be provided with office support and a budget to plan several types of social events during the academic year. Staff can help with room bookings, catering, and communication. The director can plan lunch meetings or late afternoon seminars for the mentors and mentees to attend together. At least once per term, the mentors should be invited to come together to share their experiences and strategies as mentors to build capacity among the group. In the PMP, the end of term potluck lunches was a successful way to gather mentors together for mutually supportive co-mentoring. To support regular mentor-mentee interaction, mentors with more than one mentee should be supported in using group meetings along with one-to-one meetings to promote richer conversations and networking. Mentors should be encouraged to attend other academic, professional learning and social events on campus and to invite their mentee to accompany them to these events.

Training for Both Mentors and Mentees

Support greater engagement and provide ongoing training sessions that can support both mentors and mentees in carrying out their roles and responsibilities in the PMP. As part of the early training, ensure that volunteer mentors are a match for the goals of the PMP, provide

clear expectations for mentors and mentees, and encourage all mentors sign a commitment contract to emphasize the mentor's roles and responsibilities. While not legally binding, the commitment contract emphasizes the mentor's moral and ethical obligation to cultivating the relationship with their mentees, and the focus on helping their mentees make a successful transition into graduate school.

It has been successful to invite experienced mentors to serve as resources and guides in training and supporting new mentors. It has also been successful to provide an initial training session for mentees during the initiation of the program to establish expectations and clarify roles and responsibilities. An initial collaborative training session for both mentors and mentees should be held early on in the program and can serve to bring the whole community together and to introduce and discuss the structure, resources and expectations of the program and to address questions in moving forward.

In addition to these recommendations, ongoing research into the impact of PMPs on students' successful transitions to graduate school will be carried out to expand understanding of design and delivery structures, recruitment, and training, as well as the benefits and challenges, for peer mentoring programs in higher education.

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Appendix A
Stakeholder Analysis to Identify Stakeholders, their Roles and Potential Risks if Not Involved
in the Evaluation of the Program

Stakeholder	Stake in project	What do we need from stakeholder	Perceived attitude/risks	Risk(s) if not involved
Werklund School of Education Faculty developers, co-ordinators /facilitators	Develop, support, co-ordinate and facilitate the program	Resources for the implementation of the program; training of mentors for participation in the program; psychosocial support; effective co-ordination of the program	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program; ineffective evaluation
Program Director	Co-ordinates and facilitates the program	Resources for the implementation of the program; training of mentors for participation in the program; psychosocial support; effective co-ordination of the program	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program; ineffective evaluation
Werklund School of Education (Funder)	Funder	Funding	Inadequate use of funding	Withdraw funding
Mentors	Participants of the program	Participation; information on effectiveness of program	Lack of interest; reduced participation	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program; ineffective evaluation
Mentees	Participants of the program	Participation; information on effectiveness of program	Lack of interest; reduced participation	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program; ineffective evaluation

table continues

Stakeholder	Stake in project	What do we need from stakeholder	Perceived attitude/risks	Risk(s) if not involved
Other Faculty of the Werklund School of Education	Provide psychosocial or academic support to the faculty co-ordinators, director and participants in the program	Information on what they have heard about the program	Lack of interest	Insufficient information on the effectiveness of the program
Werklund School of Education Administrative Staff	Provide clerical and other support to the faculty, director and participants in the program	Access to extra information about the program	Concern about workload	Could become barriers to accessing significant information about the program
Other University of Calgary Peer Mentor Programs	Provide support to the faculty, director and participants in the program	Commitment to implementing change	Lack of interest	Could become barriers to continued implementation of program
University of Calgary Community	Know about the program and those co-ordinating and participating in the program	Commitment to implementing change	Lack of interest	Could become barriers to continued implementation of program; negative perception of program

Appendix B

Stakeholder Involvement in the Evaluation of the Werklund School of Education PMP

Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Category	Interest or Perspective	Role in the Evaluation	How / When to Engage
Werklund School of Education Faculty developer, co-ordinators /facilitators	Primary	Program developer, funder, co-ordinator /facilitators, resource providers, researchers	To make operational decisions, to react	Active participant, Final report
Program Director	Primary	Program co-ordinator /facilitator, resource provider, researcher/evaluator	To make operational decisions, to react	Active participant, data collection and analysis, reporting
Werklund School of Education (Funder)	Primary	Funder(s)	To react	Final report
Mentors	Secondary	Direct beneficiaries	To provide input to evaluation, to react	Active participant, data collection
Mentees	Secondary	Direct beneficiaries	To provide input to evaluation, to react	Active participant, data collection
Other Faculty of the Werklund School of Education	Tertiary	Indirect beneficiaries	To react	Final report
Werklund School of Education Administrative Staff	Tertiary	Indirect beneficiaries	To react	Final report
Other University of Calgary Peer Mentor Programs	Tertiary	Indirect beneficiaries	To react	Final report
University of Calgary Community	Tertiary	Indirect beneficiaries	To react	Final report

(Table developed from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Learning and Growing through Evaluation: State Asthma Program Evaluation Guide and Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, p. 289).

Appendix C
Survey Questions for Evaluation of Werklund School of Education PMP:
Mentees

Thank you for your participation in the Peer Mentor Program during 2016 - 2017. The purpose of this survey is to gather observations and insights from graduate students on experiences, events, and outcomes as a mentee in the Peer Mentor Program. Your responses and comments are essential in helping us to evaluate and strengthen the program.

SURVEY: SECTION ONE

1. Please rate your **level of agreement** with the following 10 statements:

*Please answer as appropriate to your role as a mentee	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree	
a. Having a mentor has been a rewarding experience.	1	2	3	4
b. Engaging with a mentor has been a worthwhile investment of my time.	1	2	3	4
c. I feel more connected to the graduate student community as a result of my mentor.	1	2	3	4
d. I feel more connected to my graduate program as a result of my mentor.	1	2	3	4
e. I believe I made a positive contribution to my mentor's social engagement in graduate school.	1	2	3	4
f. I believe my mentee-mentor interactions contributed to stronger academic engagements in graduate school.	1	2	3	4
g. I was able to access important information about the graduate program through my mentee-mentor relationship.	1	2	3	4
h. I felt more successful in graduate school because of my involvement in a mentee-mentor relationship.	1	2	3	4
i. I felt more satisfied in graduate school because of my involvement in a mentee-mentor relationship.	1	2	3	4
j. Because of my mentee-mentor relationship, I now feel more confident in my own leadership skills.	1	2	3	4

2. Please describe one or two **highlights / benefits** of your experience in the Peer Mentor program.

3. In what ways did a peer mentoring relationship **make a difference** in your graduate school experience this year?

4. In what ways did a peer mentoring relationship make a difference in your development as a **leader** this year?

SECTION TWO: MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

1. Please provide 2 - 3 words that describe your mentee-mentor relationship(s):
2. My mentor and I interacted the most during the months of: _ (*check all that apply*)
 - Sep
 - Oct
 - Nov
 - Dec
 - Jan
 - Feb
 - March
 - April
 - May
3. My mentor and I met: _ (*check all that apply*)
 - on a regular basis
 - on an as-needed basis
 - when there was a scheduled social event
 - during Thursday Graduate Seminars
4. For meetings, my mentor and I usually:
 - met in-person
 - connected over e-mail
 - connected over Skype
 - met in the online D2L meeting space
 - met using some other way to connect (please describe)
5. What **goals**, if any, did you develop for your mentee-mentor relationship?
6. What **issues** typically prompted discussions between you and your mentor?
7. In what ways, if any, did you use the online forums and materials in D2L: _ (*check all that apply*)
 - For your own information
 - To contribute sources and links
 - To connect with the Director, Peer Mentoring Program
 - To connect with mentors
 - To connect with other mentees
 - To support your mentee-mentor interaction
 - Did not use

SECTION THREE: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT (text response)

1. What are 2 – 3 skills, traits, or characteristics that you believe a mentor needs to be successful?

2. To what extent did you feel prepared to engage in a mentor-mentee relationship?

Unprepared 1---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9---10 Well Prepared

3. In your view, what are the key **benefits** of having a mentor?

4. What do you perceive to be the **strengths** of the Peer Mentor Program?

5. What do you perceive to be the **weaknesses** of the Peer Mentor Program?

6. Do you have any additional comments or feedback that you think would be informative towards ongoing, continual program improvement?

We thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; your input is very valuable. An aggregate report of these findings will be available to you on request. Please do contact the researchers to request a copy.

**Survey Questions for Evaluation of Werklund School of Education PMP:
Mentors**

Thank you for your participation in the Peer Mentor Program during 2016 - 2017. The purpose of this survey is to gather observations and insights from graduate students on experiences, events and outcomes as a mentor or mentee in the Peer Mentor Program. Your responses and comments are essential in helping us to evaluate and strengthen the program.

SURVEY: SECTION ONE

1. Please rate your **level of agreement** with the following 10 statements:

*Please answer as appropriate to your role as a mentor	Strongly Agree		Strongly Disagree
a. Mentoring has been a rewarding experience.	1	2	3 4
b. Mentoring has been a worthwhile investment of my time.	1	2	3 4
c. I feel more connected to the graduate student community as a result of mentoring.	1	2	3 4
d. I feel more connected to my graduate program as a result of mentoring my mentee(s).	1	2	3 4
e. I believe I made a positive contribution to my mentee's social engagement in graduate school.	1	2	3 4
f. I believe my mentor-mentee interactions contributed to stronger academic engagement in graduate school.	1	2	3 4
g. I was able to access important information about the graduate program through my mentor-mentee relationship.	1	2	3 4
h. I felt more successful in graduate school because of my involvement in a mentor-mentee relationship.	1	2	3 4
i. I felt more satisfied in graduate school because of my involvement in a mentor-mentee relationship.	1	2	3 4
j. In my mentoring role, I now feel more confident in my own leadership skills.	1	2	3 4

2. Please describe one or two **highlights / benefits** of your experience in the PMP.

3. In what ways did a peer mentoring relationship **make a difference** in your graduate school experience this year?

4. In what ways did a peer mentoring relationship make a difference in your development as a **leader / mentor** this year?

SECTION TWO: MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

1. Please provide 2 - 3 words that describe your peer mentoring relationship(s):

2. My mentee and I interacted the most during the months of: _ (check all that apply)

- Sep
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec
- Jan
- Feb
- March
- April
- May

3. My mentee and I met: _ (check all that apply)

- on a regular basis
- on an as-needed basis
- when there was a scheduled social event
- during Thursday Graduate Seminars

4. For meetings, my mentee and I usually:

- met in-person
- connected over e-mail
- connected over Skype
- met in the online D2L meeting space
- met using some other way to connect (please describe)

5. What **goals**, if any, did you develop for your mentor-mentee relationship?

6. What **issues** typically prompted discussions between you and your mentee?

7. In what ways, if any, did you use the online forums and materials in D2L: (check all that apply)

- For your own information
- To contribute sources and links
- To connect with the Director, Peer Mentoring Program
- To connect with other mentors
- To connect with your mentee(s)
- To support your mentor-mentee interaction
- Did not use

SECTION THREE: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. What are 2 – 3 skills, traits, or characteristics that you believe a peer mentor needs to be a successful leader / mentor?

2. As a mentor, to what extent did you feel prepared to engage in a mentoring relationship with graduate student mentees?

Unprepared 1---2---3---4---5---6---7---8---9---10 Well Prepared

3. In your view, what are the **benefits** of being a mentor?

4. What do you perceive to be the **strengths** of the Peer Mentor Program?

5. What do you perceive to be the **weaknesses** of the Peer Mentor Program?

6. Do you have any additional comments or feedback that you think would be informative towards ongoing, continual program improvement?

We thank you for taking the time to complete this survey; your input is very valuable.

An aggregate report of these findings will be available to you on request. Please do contact the researchers to request a copy.

Appendix D
INTERVIEWS: Mentors

1. Please describe the initial interest or motivation that lead you to participate in the PMP
2. What were some of your **expectations** about volunteering as a mentor in the PMP?
3. In what way(s) were your **expectations** of the PMP met?
4. In what way(s) were your **expectations** of the PMP not met?
5. Describe one or two highlights of your experience in the PMP.
6. Was there a disappointing aspect of your experience in the PMP?
7. In what ways did the peer mentoring relationship make a positive difference in your graduate school experience this year?
8. In what ways did the peer mentoring relationship make a difference in your leadership development, or any other skill development, this year?
9. What goals, if any, did you develop for your mentor-mentee relationship?
10. What issues typically prompted discussions between you and your mentee(s)?
11. Without revealing any identifying details, can you describe a typical interaction between you and your mentee(s)?
12. Without revealing any identifying details, can you describe an instance where you felt you were able to make a positive difference in your mentees' experience?
13. Was there any time that you felt challenged by the demands placed on you as a mentor? Please elaborate.
14. Did you encounter any institutional or program barriers that hampered your abilities to support your mentee(s)? Whether yes or no, please elaborate.
15. What recommendations do you have for sustaining effective mentor-mentee relationships throughout the duration of the Peer Mentor Program? (Sept – April). For example: What can be done to better support mentors and mentees in the graduate program? How can the school better support mentors and mentees?

We thank you for taking the time to engage in an interview/focus group; your input is very valuable. An aggregate report of these findings will be available to you on request. Please do contact the researchers to request a copy.

Appendix D
INTERVIEWS: Mentees

1. Please describe the initial interest or motivation that led you to participate in the PMP.
2. What were some of your **expectations** about taking part in the PMP?
3. In what way(s) were your **expectations** of the PMP met?
4. In what way(s) were your **expectations** of the PMP not met?
5. Describe one or two highlights of your experience in the PMP.
6. Was there a disappointing aspect of your experience in the PMP?
7. In what ways did the peer mentoring relationship make a positive difference in your graduate school experience this year?
8. In what ways did the peer mentoring relationship make a difference in your leadership development, or any other skill development, this year?
9. What goals, if any, did you develop for your mentee-mentor relationship?
10. What issues typically prompted discussions between you and your mentor?
11. Without revealing any identifying details, can you describe a typical interaction between you and your mentor?
12. Without revealing any identifying details, can you describe an instance where you felt you were able to make a positive difference in your mentor's experience?
13. Was there any time that you felt challenged by the demands placed on you as a mentee? Please elaborate.
14. Did you encounter any institutional or program barriers that hampered your abilities to engage as a mentee? Whether yes or no, please elaborate.
15. What recommendations do you have for sustaining effective mentee-mentor relationships throughout the duration of the Peer Mentor Program? (Sept – April). For example: What can be done to better support mentees and mentors in the graduate program? How can the school better support mentees and their mentors?

We thank you for taking the time to engage in an interview/focus group; your input is very valuable. An aggregate report of these findings will be available to you on request. Please do contact the researchers to request a copy.