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The Journal on Empowering Teaching Excellence (JETE) is a bi-annual publication released in the Fall and Spring. We accept articles and multimedia submissions from higher education professionals who have practical, experience-based insights to share with their peers. We value material that is up-to-date, proven, and easy to implement in today's teaching environments.

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Table of Contents

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About this Issue

Jason Olsen, Ph.D., Assistant Editor
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Welcome to the Fall 2021 issue of Utah State University's *Journal on Empowering Teaching Excellence!* This marks our tenth overall issue, and the teaching landscape has changed in ways that could not have been foreseen in 2016 when JETE first entered the world. While JETE obviously filled a great need in teaching pedagogy when it debuted, the changing world of teaching has made the work we share in this journal essential. We always encourage submissions that contribute to this conversation, and we are currently reading for our future issues. Please continue to send work our way. We also encourage you to click the *follow* button on our homepage, https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/jete, for updates on new issues and calls for articles.

At this point in the fall of 2021, it is hardly noteworthy to state that the last year and a half has changed the way teachers at every level approach their craft. Many articles and talks have been given on myriad ways of discussing these changes, including incredibly important ones that appear in this issue. As we transition from the "teaching differently than ever before" phase to a "how these changes manifest into superior teaching" phase, it's essential that the research done on these changes does more than simply report their existences—they need to show practical ways of how to manifest that change into exemplary teaching and mentoring of students.

The articles in this issue of JETE talk practically about how instructors face the increasingly online world of teaching and how research can be applied in practical ways to help students. It begins with Julia M. Gossard's (2021) review of Flower Darby's *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classes* (2019). Gossard brings us into her first-time online classroom and shows us how she applied Darby's techniques into her pedagogy, emphasizing the practical application of the book's teachings.

Elena Taylor (2021), in "Using Online Genres to Promote Students' Audience Awareness," describes practical ways of encouraging student writing in the online environment by employing the genres students and instructors already read and write in non-academic settings. Taylor's description of scaffolding activities for each of the genres discussed allows readers to easily understand her methods and how others could adapt them.

"Designing and Implementing a Land-Grant Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program: Addressing Shortcoming in Academic Mentoring" by Law, Busenbark, Hales, Taylor, and Spears (2021) recounts the building of a Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program and how best to undertake such an important and difficult task by providing both the research that inspired the program and the specific process of creating and carrying out the program itself.

Joanna Weaver and Grace Mutti (2021) contribute the article "A Study of Incarcerated Youth: The Effect of Interest on Comprehension and Engagement" and discuss the role of individual motivation on a student's capacity to improve—in this case, the literacy levels of incarcerated youth in rehabilitation facilities. Of fundamental interest are the case studies on the specific ways the mentors studied used individual student motivation to improve student performance.

We conclude this issue with another book review that emphasizes the application of the book under discussion. In this case, Cuthbert, Rogowski, Vakula, Aguilar, and Kesler (2001) review David Gooblar's *The Missing Course: An Introduction to College Teaching for Graduate Instructors*. The authors guide the reader through not just the book itself, but the process they experienced as they read, discussed, and attempted to apply the book's recommendations—a process that changed their own perceptions of their power to implement classroom change.

The world of teaching has not only changed in the last year and a half, but the result of that change is not yet fully known. As we continue to navigate these challenging waters and successfully help our students, one of the most valuable things we can do is show our colleagues how these applications can work. That is why this issue of the JETE is of utmost importance to our collective pedagogy as instructors.

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Small Changes for a Big Impact: A Review of Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classrooms by Flower Darby

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Abstract

Book review of Darby, F. (2019). Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classrooms. Jossey-Bass.

This article provides a narrative review of Darby's work and the "small teaching approach," focusing on the practical skills that Darby provides for the online classroom. Comments are gleaned from the author and two learning circles (one sponsored by USU and another independent) on the book.

Keywords: Review, small teaching, pedagogy

As soon as it was confirmed that I would teach HIST 1110: Modern Western Civilization, a 110-person, survey-level course of European history from 1500 to the present, in an online, asynchronous capacity, panic started to set in. Having never taught or even taken an online class, I had little idea of what to do. So, I embarked on a summer crash course in online pedagogy. First on my reading list was Flower Darby's *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science in Online Classes* (2019). I read this book in two "learning circles" with educators across North America, one sponsored by Utah State University's Empowering Teaching Excellence program and the other organized independently through Twitter. In both groups, we largely agreed that *Small Teaching Online* offers practical, applicable advice that works well for online classes.

This short, 253-page book has been my intrepid field guide to online learning over the past year. Having previously read and applied techniques from James M. Lang's (2016) *Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning*, I was already familiar with the "small teaching approach," which provides "faculty small, actionable modifications that they can make without having to overhaul their teaching from the ground up" (Darby, 2019, p. xxii). Although Darby suggests that readers first peruse Lang's *Small Teaching* and come back to *Small Teaching Online* second, most of the educators I read Darby's book with only engaged with her text and found it easy to understand, impactful, and transformative.

Though instructors could read *Small Teaching Online* at any point in the semester, it will most benefit those in the planning stages of a course. The book's three parts, "Designing for Learning," "Teaching Humans," and "Motivating Online Students (and Instructors)" move progressively through the challenges that instructors face over the course of a semester. Each of the three parts contains concise thematic chapters on various learning phenomena like "Giving Feedback" or "Creating Autonomy." Darby models the teaching practices she preaches—that of consistency and clarity—in the organization of her chapters, with each chapter including the same subsections: Introduction, In Theory, Models, Principles, Small Teaching Online Quick Tips, and Conclusion. By having the same organization in each chapter, readers know what to anticipate and can move through the book according to their interests. For instance, not all instructors want to explore the "In Theory" sections that provide the pedagogical theory behind the practices and will, instead, want to move onto the Models and Quick Tips sections that are more action-oriented and practical.

The small teaching approach that Darby employs is successful because it does not overwhelm instructors. Nor does it demand that they completely redesign their course. Instead, what Darby suggests are small-scale revisions that can be easily integrated into existing structures. Darby argues, for example, that because asynchronous classes lack the spontaneous in-class touchpoints that may provide additional, off-the-cuff instructions to students on assignments, we need to be even more transparent and intentional in our directions. Following a simple template, instructions should clearly define (using headings) the "what, why, and how" of each assessment in as few words as possible. By making this small change to instructions, it will result in "fewer student questions" as well as "better-quality work" on the assignment (Darby, 2019, p. 17).

I decided to take Darby's suggestions for HIST 1110. On each assignment, I included the following section headers: What is the goal of this assignment? What will I learn doing this assignment? How do I complete this assignment? When is it due? I noticed I received far fewer questions than in previous semesters about how to complete the assignment and when it was due. Most importantly, though, students explained on end-of-semester evaluations that they appreciated the consistency and clarity the instructions provided. By cutting down on and better organizing the instructions, I got to the heart of the assignment and so did the students.

This adjustment requires minimal revision on the instructor's part with maximum payoff for instructors and students alike.

In addition to providing how-to guides on assignment and course design, Darby also provides practical small teaching suggestions for online learning. In chapter 3, for instance, Darby focuses on how to make short "content videos." Drawing upon pedagogical research and fitting with her small teaching approach, Darby insists that "the key word here is short" (2019, p. 52). In fact, she suggests that "online class videos should be no longer than six minutes." Darby continues this section by explaining how to pare down longer lectures, whether to record yourself or to do a voice-over, and what tools to use. Although for some disciplines, a six-minute lecture video seems far too short to cover your content, Chapter 3 makes the convincing argument that shorter and more focused videos are more effective. For instructors who are fretting about how to record a lecture, Chapter 3 also breaks down the process into an approachable format. Again, in giving these instructions, Darby takes her own advice, writing the instructions in a similar template she encourages instructors to use, explaining the what, the how, and the why of her small teaching suggestion.

I decided to give her content videos suggestion a try. I took my traditional 45-to-50-minute lectures and distilled them down into short "mini-lectures" on various topics. For each day where I would normally have had one large lecture, I now had two or three shorter mini-lectures. Although I was never able to get the lectures down to six-minutes, I was able to keep them around the 10-to-12-minute mark. Students commented on end-of-semester evaluations that these videos were sufficient for providing explanation without becoming boring. This length allowed me to explain the topic in-depth, provide some examples, and coach students on primary source analysis.

While the student evaluations were helpful to knowing that these videos served their purpose, the video analytics also demonstrated that students engaged with these mini-lectures. Using Canvas analytics tools, I compared attendance data from previous in-person semesters with mini-lecture video views to see if there was a correlation. To my surprise, roughly the same percentage of students who had attended a particular day were watching all of the mini-lectures on that topic. For instance, the first day of the French Revolution in HIST 1110 (usually the Tuesday of Week 3), I had 78% student attendance in the fall of 2019. This corresponded to 77% of asynchronous online students watching all three mini-lectures of the French Revolution in fall 2020. This was not only a confidence boost that kept me motivated to create good videos; it was also helpful to see that roughly the same percentage of online students were engaged despite being outside of the traditional classroom.

Darby's *Small Teaching Online* also suggests small but impactful ways to humanize the classroom. In particular, in Part II: Teaching Humans, Darby explores how to build instructor-student relationships without a physical classroom setting. Especially relevant for teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, this section reminds instructors of how to be compassionate yet establish boundaries. Building upon the work of Kevin Gannon (2018), Darby suggests that it is vital, essential even, for instructors to let our students know that "they are not just names on a screen," but "living, breathing people" (2019, p. 96). In order to better humanize the classroom and create a community, we need to understand that our students, like us, have "real pressures" in their lives that may have kept them from completing an assignment. To address this, Darby suggests employing the "Oops Token" in online classes that "allows students some wiggle room on class assignments" (2019, p. 98). Linda Nilson (2015) described a similar practice in *Specifications Grading: Restoring Rigor, Motivating Students, and Saving Faculty Time*. In order to help "students learn to take responsibility for their own learning," the Oops Token allows students to "make up for an unexpected challenge or honest mistake" through an extended deadline, dropping a grade, or anything else the instructor deems appropriate. Darby explains that the Oops Token helps students recognize that she cares about them but also that there "are consequences for not doing their work up to a standard" (2019, p. 99). The Oops Token is one way to humanize the classroom while also setting standards, maintaining rigor, and establishing boundaries.

Part III, "Motivating Online Students (and Instructors)," was particularly helpful for a first-time online educator. These chapters offer practical advice on how to encourage your students through small "nudges" or reminders; personalized feedback to students on their progress; and through goals contracts. This last idea of creating a goals contract further puts the role of students into view. Many of the suggestions that Darby provides are things that the instructor largely has control over—due dates, policies, and learning tools. But, in this section, Darby gently reminds her readers that "students will not succeed in an online class if they do not take responsibility for their own learning" (2019, p. 158). This is an incredibly important reminder for instructors. Though instructors can encourage their students and provide them with many opportunities to succeed, students have to take the responsibility to engage in learning. Reminders like this are what make *Small Teaching Online* such an impactful book for online educators.

In both of my "learning circles" last summer and fall, we discussed how easy it was to incorporate these suggestions into our courses. For those of us who had already experimented with certain practices like specifications grading, *Small Teaching Online* provided the confidence that our methods were "best" practices. Most importantly, though, many of us reflected that by engaging with the small teaching practices, we became much more intentional instructors. We were able to revise our classes slowly but effectively, implementing small teaching techniques into our course design, assignments, and lectures.

Some instructors, especially those who are education researchers themselves or deeply steeped in educational theory, may find *Small Teaching Online* too simplistic. A few of the teaching practices Darby describes have been around for over a decade. The way she packages these practices, however, providing multiple models of their application, can benefit even seasoned educators. As you embark on your first, second, or twentieth semester of online teaching, I would consider reading *Small Teaching Online* to see how you can make small changes for a big impact.

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Using Online Genres to Promote Students' Audience Awareness

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Abstract

Writing assignments that students complete in university courses are typically designed for evaluation and grading by the instructor, who, therefore, acts as the sole reader of student written work. However, most written genres students would--and do--encounter in the world beyond the classroom are composed for diverse audiences who influence writers' text construction considerably. Because most students will be likely to write for multiple audiences as part of their career or future academic endeavors, it is crucial for them to develop a sense of audience awareness as an indispensable rhetorical concept that shapes composing processes. Writing online presents a great opportunity to expose students to various genres that promote their interaction with real audiences, thus contributing to their writing development. The purpose of the current article is to describe several online genres that could be introduced in the classroom to develop students' sense of audience consideration. These genres include product reviews, blogs, instructional articles, and travel guides.

Keywords: audience awareness, writing, genre, writing online

Introduction

The majority of college-level writing assignments are designed with the ultimate goal of being assessed and graded. Often times, therefore, they are primarily written for a sole reader--the instructor. There is no reason, however, that students should not be writing for broader audiences, including the ones beyond the classroom. In fact, most writing genres they already encounter on a daily basis outside of institutional settings (e.g., emails, text messages, tweets, shopping lists, party invitations, comments on social media, and discussion boards) are written for various audiences. Similarly, as future professionals, students will be likely to write for multiple audiences as part of their career or future academic endeavors. Therefore, it is crucial for students to develop a sense of consideration for audience as an indispensable rhetorical element that shapes composing processes.

Audience is broadly defined as "the recipients of a message in a rhetorical situation" (Anderson, 2012, p. 6). Whereas the presence of audience is seemingly obvious in a writing process (i.e., "Something is written for someone to read"), applying this concept may appear to be challenging for students, particularly novice writers (Carvalho, 2002; Tang, 2005). Audience awareness, however, is not always explicitly taught in the classroom, unless it is a composition course that follows learning-to-write approaches to teaching writing (for the distinction between "learning-to-write" and "writing-to-learn" approaches, see Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014, Reichelt et al., 2012). Therefore, students may primarily focus on expressing themselves--that is producing *writer-based prose*, rather than crafting their writing in ways that would accommodate specific needs and expectations of the reader--that is producing *reader-based prose* (Flower, 1979).

Virtual digital spaces of the Internet expand the scope of audiences considerably by connecting people from various demographic backgrounds and locations and providing numerous opportunities to compose in many genres with various degrees of formality. Writing projects that involve online genres, therefore, appear to afford a favorable pedagogical venue to help students develop their audience awareness (Magnifico, 2010). Accessibility of online written materials is an obvious advantage when planning such projects, as teachers can find multiple pedagogical resources and writing models to create "units, assignments, and activities that engage students directly in purposeful encounters with authentic genres" (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014, p. 118).

This article describes four writing genres that can help students develop their audience awareness: product reviews, blogs, instructional articles, and travel guides. Composing in these genres entails an authentic social component that allows writers to communicate to real audiences in real sociocultural contexts. As Magnifico (2010) stated,

> Responding to an authentic audience requires students to go through the critical process of communicating about their ideas. They must […] consider what that specific kind of audience wants or needs to hear, and review how that audience's viewpoint might reflect back onto their own ideas (p. 180).

The description of each genre is followed by several scaffolding activities[1] that instructors can implement to facilitate student work with the genre. Each of these activities can be modified according to instructional contexts and student populations.

[1] Scaffolding activities are types of instructional activities that offer support to enhance students' learning of new skills and acquisition of new knowledge, as well as promote learner autonomy.

Product Reviews

Description

Online shopping is a popular way of purchasing products for many people around the world, and it is certainly becoming more and more widespread due to its convenience. One of the many advantages of online shopping, and a key factor for many people in their decision-making process, is becoming familiar with other customers' experiences with the product. Informative and unbiased product reviews that balance the description of positive features and constructive criticism can be extremely helpful to other users (Garnefeld, Helm, & Grötschel, 2020).

From an audience standpoint, writing a product review may give students a chance to visualize specific groups of customers that that might use a particular product and estimate the expectations that these groups of people may have for the product. Such visualization of potential audience can help students compose an effective product review.

The writing of product reviews could be appropriate in any number of different college courses. For example, instructors of biology, chemistry, or engineering courses can assign students to write a review of a product from their corresponding field. Alternatively, both in humanities and social sciences, students can be asked to write a review of a website, a software, a book, or another printed material.

Scaffolding Activities

Discussing Genre Conventions

Online product reviews have unique genre constraints, including specific lexical and stylistic features, organizational and rhetorical patterns, and author's tone and voice. Discussions regarding this genre will raise students' awareness of these conventions, providing a necessary preparatory stage for their own composing processes. As in the case with most written genres, however, there is a certain degree of flexibility in terms of genre conventions. Therefore, by analyzing and discussing the genre of product review, students should take into account "obligatory conventions, optional features, and the degree of variation allowed" (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014, p. 118). The textual analysis of product reviews may also help students understand differences between facts and opinions.

Analyzing Product Reviews

Looking at multiple product reviews available online (most commonly, on Amazon and Consumer Reports)and analyzing them individually, in small groups, or as a class may provide students with an in-depth perspective as to what counts both as their strengths and weaknesses. Based on the analysis, students can create a list of effective and less effective features of a particular product review and compare it with their classmates. To make this activity more structured, teachers can prepare a few questions to serve as guidelines for the analysis. Another possibility would be asking students to rank several product reviews using a rating sheet or a list of criteria. In each of these options, students need to explain their responses, or justify their ratings, by providing specific examples from the sample reviews.

Assessing Product Reviews from an Audience Point of View

An effectively written product review should always have a clear vision of the audience the product is geared toward. To help students unravel the concept of audience through working with this genre, the teacher can ask students to assess several models of product reviews with the audience in mind. Some questions that could facilitate this activity may include:

1. Who is the primary audience for this product review (in other words, for whom is it written)?
2. What are some needs and expectations of this particular population of consumers?
3. From your perspective, does the review satisfy these needs and expectations?
4. Is the tone of the review appropriate given the target audience?
5. What about the language and the style?
6. Are there any gaps in the review? (In other words, what should the author have addressed to better meet the needs and expectations of the target audience?)
7. If you belong/(ed) to this population of consumers, do/would you find this review helpful?
8. How would you revise this review to make it more effective from an audience point of view?

Expressing an Opinion

Providing a fair opinion supported with clear and cogent evidence is an important element of an effective product review. The teacher can promote this skill by designing classroom activities that aim at teaching students to effectively express and explain their positions. This can be done through holding class/group debates, giving students written prompts to respond to, asking students to explain their experiences with particular products they have recently used, or giving them the opportunity to either agree or disagree with another person's perspective or statement. The teacher can also supply a list of phrases that can be used in debates and arguments, including language for expressing a position (e.g., *I believe that…*; *The way I see it is…*), supporting an opinion (e.g., *The reason is…*; *I really think that because…*), and expressing a polite and respectful disagreement (e.g., *Here is another way to think about it…*; *True, but how about…*).

Exchanging Opinions About the Same Product

To extend the previous activity, geared toward helping students express an informed opinion and provide strong reasons/evidence to support it, the teacher can ask all students to exchange their assessments of a product everyone in class is familiar with/has previously used. To implement this activity, the teacher needs to make sure all students have an experience with the product. The activity can be designed in multiple ways: by having students brainstorm pros and cons of the product, by asking them to respond to a series of questions about the product and then share their responses with the classmates, by holding a class debate with one side presenting and supporting a more favorable opinion and the other side presenting and supporting a less favorable opinion about the product, or by having students work with a partner and create a pair review covering both positive and negative attributes of the product collected from both partners.

Conducting Peer Reviews

Students can also provide feedback on their classmates' reviews in various peer review activities (either oral or written). As known, peer reviews can be helpful not only for the author but also for the reviewer (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009); therefore, through effective and properly designed peer-review activities, students will benefit both from giving and receiving feedback. The literature offers teachers key pedagogical principles of peer feedback (e.g., Baker-Smemoe, 2018; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Hyland, 2019; Storch, 2019; Yim & Warschauer, 2019) as well as numerous practical suggestions (e.g., Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Nelson, 2013; Shvidko, 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b; Wang & Perren, 2013) on how to implement effective peer review activities to facilitate students' writing skills, promote their analytical and critical thinking, and help them become more aware of their own writing.

Blogs

Description

In our Internet era, many people enjoy both writing and reading blogs, making them one of the most popular writing genres in virtual spaces. Countless blog posts are being created every day, covering a wide variety of topics and targeting diverse populations of readers. Similar to personal journals, blogs present a great opportunity for anyone who enjoys this type of writing and is eager to share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences with a broader readership. Along with helping students expand their knowledge about the conventions of the blog genre (Oravec, 2002; Richardson, 2005) and develop an appreciation for their readership through blog writing (Williams & Jacobs, 2004), this genre can accomplish various other purposes related to writing development, including helping students establish a consistent writing habit (Armstrong & Retterer, 2008; Fellner & Apple, 2006) and giving them the opportunity to understand the meaningfulness and value of their personal writing (Murray & Hourigan, 2006; Oravec, 2003; Pinkman, 2005).

Selecting a blog theme would depend on the subject matter of a particular course or students' individual preferences and experiences. For instance, in a language class, students can write blogs on their language learning experiences or provide suggestions to other learners on how to avoid common mistakes in a particular language or navigate a certain socio-cultural environment while studying abroad. In an upper-level university course, students can describe their paths towards becoming professionals in their field. Online blogs also offer a wide range of applicability in different undergraduate college classrooms. Thus, students majoring in education can write blogs focusing on their teaching experiences. Those studying psychology may discuss topics from various psychological subfields. Similarly, sociology students can reflect on a variety of current issues regarding everyday societies, such as population and demographics, social organization, cultural biases, human ecology, and social change. Or students can choose to describe their experience of being a university student, a foreigner, someone new in town, a roommate, or a new parent. Students' personal interests and hobbies may also offer a wide range of stimulating topics that they can explore in their blogs.

Scaffolding Activities

Examining Genre Conventions

Being quite informal in nature, this genre has rather fluid conventions. Nevertheless, some blogs are more effective than others and attract hundreds or even thousands of followers. Therefore, it is helpful for students to understand what makes an effective blog post before they create their own. The analysis of blogs from a genre point of view, done either in small groups or a whole class, can be a useful learning task. First, students would look through several blog models and identify interesting linguistic, rhetorical, stylistic, or organizational features (i.e., various textual features that stood out to them). Then they would discuss their findings with others in class, thus creating a more concrete description of this genre. The discussion questions could include:

1. Are there any particular organizational patterns you noticed across the samples? What are they?
2. Did you notice any similarities between authors' tone and stance in these pieces?
3. What are some common stylistic features that stood out to you in these blog posts?
4. What can you say about the language used in these samples (e.g., various degrees of formality, patterns in sentence structures and punctuation, certain use of vocabulary)?

5. From your point of view, how did the author's understanding of their audience in each sample influence the content, the style, and the organization of the piece?
6. Based on your analysis, do you think this genre has specific conventions? If so, what are they? If not, what implications does it have both for writers and readers?

Compiling Dos and Don'ts

Another simple activity that would expose students to genre conventions of online blogs is creating a list of dos and don'ts. Students would make this list based on the analysis of several blog posts in which they would identify effective and less effective features (e.g., rhetorical, stylistic, linguistic, and/or organizational), as well as indicate whether the authors have knowledge of the subject matter and exhibit audience awareness. Alternatively, the teacher can follow a deductive model by first presenting a list of dos and don'ts to students and then asking them to find those dos and don'ts in several sample blogs.

Analyzing a Blog From an Audience Point of View

To do this activity, the teacher would select one blog post (the topic/focus of the blog can vary depending on the target instructional objective) and create 5-7 descriptions of potential/imaginary readers. For example, the description would read: *Gloria is a 27-year-old graduate student majoring in psychology. After her graduation, she is planning to open her own practice to help people with behavioral, emotional, and mental disorders. Gloria's hobbies include cooking, playing tennis, and crafting. She has a 3-year-old son.* Students would analyze the selected blog in relation to each imaginary reader by answering the following questions:

1. Would this blog be interesting to this person? Why or why not?
2. What areas/topics covered in this blog would particularly attract the attention of this reader?
3. What changes could be made in this blog to make it more appealing to this particular reader?
4. What are other blogs that would attract this reader's attention?

Students can discuss their thoughts in small groups and provide specific examples from the blog to support their positions.

Creating a List of Blogs Targeting a Particular Reader

This activity can help students visualize a broader spectrum of reader characteristics. Students would create their own imaginary reader and write a description (similar to the one above). They would then find examples of online blogs that, from their perspective, would potentially be appealing to this particular reader. For example, blogs on the following topics could possibly draw the attention of Gloria, described in the previous activity: people's emotional and behavioral disorders, navigating the life of a graduate student, publishing as an emerging scholar in the field of psychology, starting and marketing a business, attracting potential clients and customers, dealing with toddler temper tantrums, effective communication with little children, as well as various blogs related to sports, crafts, and cooking. Alternatively, instead of creating a fictional character, students can use themselves as readers and find online blogs that would appeal to them personally. The activity can be done individually or in small groups. (If done in groups, students would write a short description of themselves to share with other group members).

Comparative Analysis of Blogs

Students can expand their understanding of blog genre conventions by conducting a basic comparative analysis of several blog posts targeting the same population(s) of readers. For example, they can examine a few blogs that describe how to upgrade a kitchen on a budget, comparing their rhetorical arrangement, stylistic and linguistic features, and/or organizational patterns, as well as the authors' ability to appeal to the target audience. To facilitate the activity, the teacher can prepare questions guiding students through the analysis. The questions can include:

1. From a genre conventions point of view, which blog post is the most/the least effective and why?
2. What particular features make this blog effective/less effective?
3. In your opinion, which of the samples succeeded the most in attracting the target audience and why?
4. What suggestions would you give to the authors of the less effective posts on your list to make them more appealing to the target audience?
5. If you had to rank these blog posts, what would your ranking look like? Explain your ranking.

Another option to facilitate the comparative analysis of blogs would be providing students with an assessment rubric, which can be created based on dos and don'ts discussed above.

Collective Revision

As Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) stated, "The exchange of ideas, reactions, criticisms, and opinions is an integral literacy practice" (p. 136). As a class (or in small groups), students can revise a sample blog to make it more appealing to the target audience. The activity would start with an initial analysis that includes identifying the target audience and effective and less effective features of the blog. Then students would brainstorm specific suggestions on how to revise the blog to attract more readers from the targeted category(ies).

Instructional Articles

Description

Many people use online "how-to" guides and instructions for various purposes--out of necessity, as part of their career or education, or for personal information. Online "how-to" guides are easily accessible, and users can find multiple instructional formats (e.g., videos, written articles, visual instructions, user manuals) that would fit their needs and expectations. Audience awareness is key in "how-to" instructions; therefore, projects and assignments based on writing an instructional article can help students further develop this abstract rhetorical concept. Teachers can either let students choose the skill they would describe in their instructional articles, or assign specific topics depending on the subject matter, course units and themes, or student majors.

Because writing instructional articles helps students demonstrate their knowledge on a particular subject or area of study, they can be introduced in most college courses. Here are a few examples of instructional articles from various fields of study[2]:

- Business and Finance (How to choose a network marketing company; How to create an online subscription business; How to start investing; How to read a financial report);
- Computers and Electronics (How to clear a flash drive on PC or Mac; How to use Microsoft Publisher; How to connect a laptop to a projector; How to decode binary numbers);
- Health (How to increase walking stamina; How to treat numbness in legs and feet; How to avoid unhealthy health goals; How to do a health assessment);
- Education and Communication (How to take advice; How to keep kids engaged in a remote classroom; How to communicate well with people from other cultures; How to make an open educational resource).

Scaffolding Activities

Analyzing Textual and Visual Features

In order to compose effective instructional articles, students first need to familiarize themselves with linguistic and visual features typical of this particular genre. For example, frequently occurring linguistic features include clear and concise sentences, simple syntactic structures, active voice, imperative mood, and step-by-step descriptions. Also, as supplemental

[2] Examples of these topics are taken from wikiHow.

images are a common element of instructional articles, students can speculate on how these visual stepping stones contribute to the intended purpose of these articles. Finally, the overall design of instructional articles (e.g., the use of numbered or bulleted lists and spacing) may contribute to readers' comprehension, which can also be brought to students' attention. To implement this activity in class, teachers would prepare several instructional articles (from "wikiHow," for instance) and ask students to analyze them both from a textual and a visual point of view.

Analyzing Author's Tone

Students can also be asked to analyze the tone of instructional articles or the stance that authors take when presenting their instructions. Some questions guiding students through this activity may include:

1. Does the author present themselves as an expert?
2. Is the author aware of the needs of the target audience? What features of the instructions made you believe so?
3. What gaps in skills and knowledge does the author assume on the part of their audience?
4. Does the author avoid patronizing the audience?
5. Are there any other elements that stood out to you in the author's tone (e.g., humor)?

Holding a Workshop on Writing Instructional Articles

As a preparatory writing step, teachers can hold a hands-on workshop on how to compose instructional articles. Topics covered in the workshop may include: writing concise and clear descriptions, explanations, and definitions; balancing textual and visual information; crafting an effective design for instructional articles; using external sources (if needed) and correctly documenting them; (see Mott-Smith, Tomaš, & Kostka, 2017 for practical ideas and lesson plans on using sources in writing). As part of a practice element of the workshop, students can watch a short instructional video (examples can be found on YouTube) and outline an instructional article based on the video. Such workshops can also include opportunities for peer review.

Travel Guides

Description

Creating a travel guide can be an engaging multimodal project to help students further explore the concept of audience. This project can easily be modified to fit the needs of the class as well as students' interests and expectations. For example, students can create a travel guide for visitors to their town, thus exploring a whole range of attractions available in the local community, including museums and galleries, performance arts, restaurants and shopping malls, family-friendly attractions, nightlife, and outdoors. Alternatively, students can select one group of tourist attractions (e.g., amusement parks or restaurants and shopping malls), thus narrowing the scope of intended audience (e.g., families, "foodies," or those who enjoy shopping). The multimodal aspect of this genre also offers a range of options--that is, students can create a brochure, a website, or a poster. Finally, working with this genre in a language classroom can promote language development, in accordance with second language socialization theory (Duff, 2010; Duff & Talmy, 2011), by giving students various opportunities to integrate in their local sociocultural communities (Shvidko, 2018).

Similar to other genres described in this paper, travel guides can be introduced in classrooms focusing on different subject areas. Thus, students majoring in engineering, business, architecture, or public health can create travel guides for professionals of their own fields. To illustrate, while creating their travel guide for a particular audience, students would focus on specific points of interest available in their local communities, for example, bridge structure designs, family-owned businesses, local architecture styles, and hospitals, clinics, and medical centers.

Scaffolding Activities

Identifying Components of a Travel Guide

To familiarize students with the genre conventions and expand their schematic knowledge (Chen & Graves, 1995; Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Rumelhart, 1980), they can be asked to identify elements that make an effective travel guide. Some such elements relate to linguistic features, rhetorical patterns, design and format, writing style, and multimodal components. Students can do this assignment either in groups or individually.

Exploring the Basics of Visual Rhetoric

Because composing a travel guide is likely to involve a multimodal component, it is important for students to become familiar with the basic principles of visual rhetoric (Foss, 2005; Hocks, 2003), such as contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity (e.g., Williams, 2015). Visual elements--images, typography, colors, space, and layout--have a powerful rhetorical influence on the reader, but it may not be easy for students to see these visual systems as logical--i.e., "sometimes a picture is just a picture." To raise students' awareness of the core elements of visual rhetoric, they can be asked to first analyze familiar pieces, such as famous works of art, movie posters, or their own photographs, from the visual rhetoric standpoint, and then apply their knowledge to the analysis of travel guides.

Collaborative Peer Review

If composing a travel guide is assigned as a group project, collaborative peer review can be implemented during its intermediary stages. For example, two groups can be assigned to work together, and the "evaluating/reviewing" group would take the target audience perspective (e.g., being campus visitors or a group of friends visiting the town) while providing feedback on the work created by the other group. Teachers can facilitate this peer review activity by providing students with a list of guiding questions, some of which may include:

1. Is this travel guide effective from an audience point of view?
2. Is the purpose of this guide likely to be clear to the target audience?
3. How well does the appearance of this guide support its purpose?
4. How are textual components (e.g., linguistic features, rhetorical patterns, writing style) and visual strategies used to communicate to the audience? And to what ends?
5. Based on your feedback, what specific suggestions can you offer to help the authors improve this travel guide?

Conclusion

The examination and use of writing genres such as those described above may help students develop a sense of audience in their writing, as they encourage learners to apply various strategies to visualize and communicate to real audiences in authentic sociocultural environments. The incorporation of these genres can take many forms in the classroom, and teachers can design either single writing assignments or more ambitious course projects varying in scope and complexity.

While a composition classroom or a language course devoted specifically to writing instruction may present the most convenient space for employing these genres, with certain modifications they can be incorporated in other instructional settings, including various university courses, as part of a "writing-to-learn" approach (Bazerman, 2009; Bean, 2011; Carroll, 2002; Smart, Hudd, & Delohery, 2011; Zinsser, 1988). A product review, as mentioned, can be transformed as a review of a website, a software, a book, or another print material. Online blogs, as illustrated previously, can be assigned in different courses to give students the opportunity both to present their knowledge of the subject and to become members of their professional communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Similarly, as indicated earlier, students in most college courses can be asked to compose an instructional article to demonstrate their acquisition of the target content. Alternatively, students can be assigned to compose various instructional articles for other students in their own university (e.g., "How to navigate library resources," "How to prepare for the finals,") or specifically for students of the same major, department, or program (e.g., "How to successfully write a course paper in a business management course," "How to survive the first semester as a freshman in biochemistry"). This approach may promote students' acquaintance with institutional services and resources and facilitate their socialization in local academic environments (Shvidko, 2018). Finally, as previously mentioned, a travel guide can be crafted for particular audiences as well, such as engineers, business people, architects, or medical workers.

Aside from giving students the opportunity to compose for multiple audiences beyond the classroom, these genres can also prepare them for real-life outside of the institutional settings, particularly after the completion of their academic studies. More specifically, many scaffolding classroom activities presented above can be designed as collaborative activities, in which students not only discuss and exchange ideas while deconstructing textual and visual features of the target genre but also engage in collaborative construction of texts, which, as Ferris and Hedgcock (2014) stated, is "a common educational and professional practice" (p. 119). Additionally, the genres described above promote students' interaction with real audiences in sociocultural, professional, and academic online spaces, thus positively contributing to their socialization in these digital discourse communities. This, in turn, may gradually increase their legitimate peripheral participation[3] (Lave & Wenger, 1991) until they ultimately become full members of their communities of practice. Educators should strive, therefore, to expand the scope of learning spaces by incorporating writing "in the wild' in their curricula, thus inviting students to participate in authentic educational environments outside the classroom.

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[3] Legitimate peripheral participation is a fundamental concept of Lave and Wenger's learning theory. Learning, according to Lave and Wenger, "involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to social communities--it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 2). Legitimate peripheral participation, therefore, is a process by which newcomers gradually move from their peripheral position in the community toward the center, thus achieving full participation in that community.

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Designing and Implementing a Land-Grant Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program: Addressing Shortcomings

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Abstract

Mentoring programs at universities have become common because of the perceived benefit to student persistence and retention. Evaluation of the effectiveness of these programs has not kept pace, primarily due to the following three problematic issues: (1) lack of theoretical guidance, (2) lack of an operational definition of mentoring, and (3) lack of methodological rigor. This article describes the evolution of a regional Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program into a statewide program, and how it addressed each of these three problematic issues. Using logic modeling, the intimate connections between theory, operational definitions, and sound methodology are made explicit, thereby addressing many of the shortcomings of previous mentoring programs. By addressing these shortcomings, universities can better evaluate if mentoring programs should be part of the overall strategic plan to help students be successful.

Keywords: mentoring, student success, Faculty-to-Student Mentoring, academic mentoring

Addressing Shortcomings in Academic Mentoring

The purpose of this article is to generate an ongoing conversation that addresses weaknesses in previous Faculty-to-Student Mentoring research and publication. As stated in a literature review conducted by Law, Hales, & Busenbark (2020), many mentoring programs have been developed to address attrition in enrollment numbers at higher education institutions. Law et al.'s (2020) study of the literature published about these mentoring programs revealed weaknesses categorized as lack of theoretical guidance or framework, lack of an operational definition of mentoring, and lack of methodological rigor. This article is designed first to describe how a Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program addresses these shortcomings that have plagued academic mentoring programs for the past 30 years. Secondly, briefly describe the evolution of this one program from a regional Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program to a multiple-campus, statewide program. This program is in its early stages, and this article is designed to benefit other Faculty-to-Student Mentoring programs in designing and structuring mentoring with clarity and rigor. Although increasing student persistent rates is the goal of most mentoring programs, without a proper framework, definitions, and rigor, it is not possible to capture data to show whether mentoring programs are achieving their purpose. This article intentionally focuses on strategic design and is meant to discuss this focus so that programs, and future literature, can offer valuable data for analysis and assessment. It is important to discuss early and often the weaknesses of previous programs so that future data can be reliable and applicable.

In January 2017, administrators and faculty/staff from Utah State University (USU) Uintah Basin (USUUB) met to discuss ways to improve enrollment numbers through retention. As a result, a Student Success Committee was formed and drew from the work of retention expert Vincent Tinto (1993), who emphasized that creating a sense of "belonging" for students is key in effective retention efforts. Influenced by Tinto's work, the Student Success Committee formalized that a Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program would help increase the sense of belonging for students in the Uintah Basin and help retain students. In January of 2018, the Student Success Committee implemented the Faculty-to-Student mentoring program at the USU Uintah Basin campus.

During the first two years of the program, the majority of faculty volunteered to be mentors, and 88 students volunteered to be mentees, with about half of those agreeing to participate in the research portion of the program. Early results of the program supported that mentoring students helped them feel like they belong at the university. Using a five-point Likert scale with high scores representing more feelings of connection, students receiving various amounts of mentoring were compared. Participants ($n=15$) who did not receive mentoring had mean scores of 2.13 ($SD = 1.30$), those mentored between zero minutes and 1 hour ($n=12$) scored 2.67 ($SD = 1.30$), and those mentored more than one hour ($n=12$) scored 4.42 ($SD = .70$). This pattern showed a dose-response, with those receiving more mentoring experiencing more connection ($F = (2, 36) = 13.955$, $p = .000$). Eta-squared, the effect size of .44 was moderate. While these early findings need to be interpreted with caution due to the small size of the Uintah Basin Pilot program, they were encouraging. They supported Tinto's assertion of the positive impact mentoring has on students feeling like they belong at the university. This early data validates the emphasis on the theoretical framework and methodological rigor. Future analysis and assessment will be completed once more data has been gathered.

During spring semester 2019, as part of the *USU Strategic Enrollment Management Planning* (SEMP), the SEMP steering committee chair encouraged statewide administrators to roll the Uintah Basin program into a new, soon-to-be-developed Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program. With a targeted implementation date of fall semester 2020, the first order of business was to create the Statewide Faculty-to-Student-Mentoring Steering Committee. Faculty in the statewide system with reputations for engaging students were selected for this committee and tasked to oversee the program's operations at their respective campus (see *Appendix A* for the committee's organizational structure). During the academic year 2019-2020, with the full support of statewide administrators, the steering committee began the tasks of 1) designing the program, 2) detailing the program's implementation, and 3) planning how to evaluate the program to assess its effectiveness. As the steering committee worked through the process of designing the program, the program's goals were identified. The primary goals of the program were identified as helping students:

1. Successfully adjust to university life.
2. Feel like they are valued members of the university.
3. Have a clear sense of purpose.
4. Achieve their educational goals.

The steering committee met monthly during the 2019-2020 academic year to fulfill its charge. In preparation, the steering committee completed a thorough review of the academic mentoring literature to identify shortcomings in the field. As a result, the committee recognized they were in a unique position to address these shortcomings as they developed the Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program.

Shortcomings Identified in the Mentoring Literature and How These Are Addressed in the USU Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program

The steering committee framed its review using three well-known previous literature reviews on academic mentoring. The first was by Jacobi (1991), the second by Crisp and Cruz (2009), and the third by Gershenfeld (2014). Jacobi's (1991) review did not exhaustively survey all mentoring literature but focused on noteworthy research related to undergraduate academic success. Crisp and Cruz examined 42 empirical studies from 1990 through 2007. The last review by Gershenfeld (2014) reviewed 20 studies from 2008 to 2014 that focused on undergraduate students. Jacobi was the first to identify three problematic issues in academic mentoring research, which Crisp and Cruz (2009) and Gershenfeld (2014) later used to frame their reviews as well. The three problematic issues were: (1) lack of theoretical guidance, (2) lack of an operational definition of mentoring, and (3) lack of methodological rigor. These three problematic issues are described more fully in the following sections, as well as how the Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program addressed each issue.

Theoretical Framework

Describing theoretical links between mentoring and academic success is not just an intellectual exercise; it shifts the focus of what is being emphasized. Without a theoretical framework, links between mentoring and academic success cannot be explained. In empirical studies, theory guides how the independent variable (in this case, mentoring) will be measured, as well as the selection of intervening and dependent variables. Jacobi (1991) cautioned that mentoring programs may be inadequately developed when models or frameworks of mentoring remain implicant and lack clarity.

The reviews by Jacobi (1991) and Crisp and Cruz (2009) identify the lack of theoretical or conceptual framework as a limitation in the field. There were improvements made from the first review by Jacobi (1991) to the third review by Gershenfeld (2014), as more studies identified a theoretical foundation. However, even though more studies identified a theoretical foundation, few studies linked theory with methodology. Most studies simply gauged the satisfaction of mentoring and called that enough. The most refined theoretical models, such as Kram's Mentor Functions (Kram, 1985), Hunt and Michael's (1983) Model of Mentoring, O'Neil and Wrightsman's (2001) Sources of Variance Theory, and Tinto's (1993) Social Integration Theory, have rarely been researched (Johnson, Rose, & Schlosser, 2010). Law, Hales, and Busenbark (2020) include a brief description and useful chart (p. 9) of theoretical or conceptual frameworks used in mentoring studies reviewed by Gershenfeld (2014). Gershenfeld (2014) suggested that future mentoring programs use more than one theory or framework to guide the research because of the wide range of outcome measures modern mentoring programs should include.

Following Gershenfeld's (2014) suggestion that modern mentoring programs should use more than one guiding theory, the statewide steering committee chose three different and unique theories: (1) Kram's Mentor Functions (Kram, 1985); (2) Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977): and (3) Social Integration Theory (Tinto 1987, 1993).

Kram's Mentor Functions

Kram (1985) helped differentiate mentoring from other forms of developmental relationships by clarifying that mentoring had two components: one practical and the other supportive. The practical component prepares the mentee to navigate the career or academic world. The supportive component is about emotional or psychological support and helps create a safe place for the mentee to explore and process. Using factor analysis, Tenenbaum, Crosby, and Gliner (2001) confirmed these two factors. Nora and Crisp (2007), also through factor analysis, found that in academic settings, the practical component could be further differentiated into Academic Expertise and Career Guidance. These three constructs (Academic Expertise, Career Guidance, and Psychosocial Support) are considered independent variables and provide the foundation of the Theory of Change Logic Model, as shown in the middle three red-colored text boxes in *Appendix B*.

Social Learning Theory

Erkut and Mokros (1984) and Thomas, Murrell, and Chickering (1982) have suggested that Social Learning Theory provides a theoretical foundation for mentoring. Social learning occurs through the observation of other people's behaviors (Bandura, 1977). In the context of mentoring, the mentor guides the mentee in adjusting to the academic world. The mentor also helps the mentee explore career options and pathways. As this practical guidance is given in a supportive manner, the mentee develops trust and a bond with the mentor over time. Through this process, social learning occurs, and the mentor becomes a role model for the mentee in how to be successful in the academic/career world. The mentor serving as a role model is the fourth construct or independent variable of the Theory of Change Logic Model. This construct is in the bottom left of the red-colored boxes in *Appendix B*.

Social Integration Theory

Vincent Tinto's Social Integration Theory was the most widely used theory in the latest review by Gershenfeld (2014). On page 147 of his landmark book *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, Tinto (1993) states that "Effective retention programs are committed to the development of supportive social and educational communities in which all students are integrated as competent members." When students are socially integrated into the academy, they feel like they belong; they feel like they are valued members. Allen and Eby (2010) note that all individuals possess a universal and fundamental "need to belong" (p. 399). Tinto's Social Integration Theory provided a framework that explained that when mentees receive academic and career guidance in a supportive environment, they become integrated into the academy and feel like they belong. Having a sense of belonging to the statewide campus system of USU, as explained by Social Integration Theory, is another key construct or intervening variable of the Theory of Change Logic Model and is found in the bottom green-colored boxes of *Appendix B*. By using a clear and explicit theoretical framework, the steering committee identified the links between mentoring and the desired goals of the statewide program, which were articulated previously. This clear and explicit theoretical framework paved the way for the team to move on to the second problematic issue identified, the lack of an operational definition of mentoring.

Operational Definition

Operational definitions should be closely connected to the theoretical frameworks being used. When these connections are obvious, they clarify which constructs will be used and how they will be defined.

In a recent literature review of faculty mentorship, Law, Hales, and Busenbark (2020) discussed the lack of an operational definition related to mentoring. In addition, Gershenfeld (2014) found that over 50 articles dedicated to mentorship lacked an operational definition. This lack of conceptual agreement about the definition of mentoring is problematic to the mentoring field because it limits the ability to measure what constitutes a successful mentoring experience. Furthermore, not being clear about what is being measured also contributed to overall weak research designs commonly found in the mentoring literature (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Jacobi, 1991).

In preparing to create the operational definition of mentoring, the steering committee for the Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program reviewed many of the most common definitions of mentoring and the functional aspects of mentoring advanced by Nora and Crisp (2007). Over time, the committee gravitated towards the definition offered by McWilliams (2017), who oversees mentoring programs at Wake Forest University. McWilliams (2017) defines mentoring as: "building a purposeful and personal relationship in which a more experienced person (mentor) provides guidance, feedback, and wisdom to facilitate the growth and development of a less experienced person (mentee)" (p. 70). Though the steering committee liked the general definition offered by McWilliams (2017), they recognized that it lacked functional components of mentoring, continuing to make measuring mentoring difficult. To remedy this, and as recommended by Gershenfeld (2014), the committee drew upon Nora and Crisp's work (2007). Nora and Crisp identified four domains or latent constructs from the mentoring literature:

1. Psychological/emotional support: listening, providing moral support, identifying problems, and providing encouragement.
2. Goal setting and career paths: assistance with setting academic/career goals and decision making.
3. Academic subject knowledge support: acquisition of necessary skills and knowledge, educating, evaluating, and challenging mentee academically.
4. Role model: mentee's ability to learn from a mentor's present and past actions and achievements/failures.

Using factor analysis, Nora and Crisp (2007) found support for the first three constructs. The last construct, role modeling, was not supported. However, the committee chose to retain it because some limitations identified by Nora and Crisp may have contributed to it not being supported, such as students being enrolled at a two-year institution.

After reviewing many of the most common definitions of mentoring, as well as the functional aspects of mentoring, the steering committee for the statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program selected the following operational definition of mentoring:

> *Mentoring is defined as building a purposeful and personal relationship in which a more experienced person (mentor) provides guidance, feedback, and support to facilitate the growth and development of a less experienced person (mentee). Operationally, mentors provide mentees with services such as:*
>
> 1. *Academic Subject Knowledge and Institutional Support*
> 2. *Education/Career Exploration and Goal Setting*
> 3. *Psychosocial Support*
> 4. *Role Modeling*

By providing an operational definition of mentoring and clearly identifying what constitutes a mentoring experience, the steering committee addressed a significant problem in the mentoring literature. Addressing this problem increased the committee's ability to measure what is meant by "the mentoring experience."

A review of *Appendix B* illustrates the interconnection between the three theoretical frameworks (Kram's Mentoring Model, Social Learning Theory, Social Integration Theory) chosen and the operational definition. The overall Theory of Change Logic Model displays this interconnectedness and explains how it helps students achieve their educational goals described earlier. After developing the theoretical framework and a clear operational definition of mentoring, the committee was prepared to address the third and last problematic issue, which was also the most complex: the lack of methodological rigor.

Methodological Rigor

Although some progress was made in the area of theoretical frameworks, and definitional clarification evolved between the reviews of Jacobi (1991) and Gershenfeld (2014), the same cannot be said of methodological rigor.

Jacobi (1991) found that most empirical research on mentoring relied on retrospective, correlational designs using small samples with data collected at a single time. She recommended that future research use quasi-experimental designs and that data be collected at multiple time points because it is unknown how long it takes for mentoring effects to emerge.

Crisp and Cruz (2009) identified the same methodological shortcomings as Jacobi (1991). In addition to suggesting similar ways to improve future research, Crisp and Cruz suggest that researchers should be mindful of mediating effects or potentially extraneous variables such as institution type, mentee and mentor attitudes, and other characteristics of mentee and mentor; for instance, gender or ethnicity.

Gershenfeld (2014) ended her review by stating that her most important finding is the need for more rigorous research designs in the studies of undergraduate mentoring programs. She continued to point out the same problems that threaten external validity, such as small sample sizes, single geographical locations, and narrowly focused programs. Gershenfeld contributed to the mentoring literature in three significant ways. First, she applied the Levels of Evidence-Based Intervention Effectiveness (LEBIE) developed by Jackson (2009) to assess methodological rigor for evidence-based practice. LEBIE includes five levels: Level 1 = Superior; Level 2 = Effective, Level 3 = Efficacious, Level 4 = Emerging, and Level 5 = Concerning. None of the studies reviewed by Gershenfeld (2014) qualified for the two highest levels because none used an experimental design. Five studies qualified for Level 3 by using a nonrandomized control or a comparison group. Four studies met Level 4 requirements. Most studies, 11, received the lowest classification of Level 5. These Level 5 studies only collected data at one point in time on mentees or mentors, with no comparison group. In summary, most studies reviewed by Gershenfeld (2014) continued to have the same methodological concerns as those noted by Crisp & Cruz (2009) and Jacobi (1991). While each of the studies Gershenfeld reviewed reported some positive effects of mentoring, their significance needs to be viewed with caution due to the methodological limitations identified.

Gershenfeld contributed secondly by identifying the dependent variables for each study. Of these studies reviewed, 60% (n=12) used more subjective measures, whereas the other 40% used more objective measures. In some cases, the subjective measures were used as proxy measures for predicting academic and other outcomes.

The third and final contribution from Gershenfeld (2014) was a description of the operational features of each study, such as the number of students who had access to mentors, nature of mentor/mentee relationship, mentor-mentee ratio, volunteer status, financial compensation, frequency of meetings, duration of mentor/mentee relationship, training resources for the mentor, and ongoing supervision of the mentor.

By the time the steering committee was focusing on the lack of methodological rigor in academic mentoring studies, they had already developed the theoretical framework and operational definition for the statewide mentoring program. As such, they were positioned to address the lack of methodological rigor in a manner that was consistently informed by the theoretical framework and operational definition. The following describes the methodological limitations identified and how the USU statewide program addressed these limitations in additional detail. The methodological limitations are research design, clearly identified variables, extraneous variables, time points for data collection, threats to external validity, and operational features. Addressing these limitations will increase both the program's internal and external validity, resulting in greater confidence in the program's future findings.

Research Design

Because there is support for the positive effects of academic mentoring (Eby, Allen Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008), the steering committee felt it would be unethical to employ a classical research design with random assignment to the treatment and control group. Following the suggestion of Jacobi (1991), the committee chose a quasi-experimental design, specifically a propensity-matched control group. In this design, the control group consists of matched individuals who are like the participants in the treatment group. For example, if one of the participants in the mentoring program was from the Blanding campus, age 35, native American, majoring in finance, with a GPA of 3.7, then a student who was not in the mentoring program but similar in the selected characteristics would be included in the propensity-matched control group.

Clear Identity of Variables

Clearly identifying the variables is essential for two reasons. First, it helps other researchers replicate future studies using the same constructs and identified attributes. Secondly and more important, clearly identifying the variables and discussing their connection to the theoretical framework make it explicit how the independent and intervening variables are expected to influence the dependent variables. The Theory of Change Logic Model in *Appendix B* shows these connections clearly and explicitly.

Independent Variables

For this program, the independent variables, or constructs, are *Academic Expertise*, *Career Guidance*, *Psychosocial Support*, and *Role Modeling*. Mentees and mentors who opt into the research portion of the program will complete these assessments.

Academic Expertise consists of eight indicators with the attributes measured by a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. This assessment was developed by Nora & Crisp (2007). An example, one of the indicators is "My mentor asks probing questions so that I can explain my views regarding my academic progress." *Career Guidance* was also developed by Nora and Crisp (2007) and contains 13 indicators and the same attributes as *Academic Expertise*. One example is: "My mentor helps me carefully examine my career options." *Psychosocial Support* was developed by Tenenbaum, Crosby, and Gliner (2001).

It has ten indicators with five attributes ranging from 1 = Never to 5 = All the time. An example of one of the indicators is: "On average, how often has your mentor encouraged you to talk openly about anxiety and fears that detract from your work?". The last subjective assessment is *Role Modeling*, also developed by Nora and Crisp (2007). It contains four indicators with the same attributes as *Academic Expertise* and Career *Guidance*. An example is: "My mentor shares his or her own views and feelings when we are discussing college-related issues."

Intervening Variables

There are two intervening variables or constructs in this program: *Sense of Belonging* and *Success at Managing the Academic Environment*. As shown in the green boxes of *Appendix B*, these two variables come between the independent and dependent variables and will be completed by the mentees.

Hurtado, Han, Saenz, Espinosa, Cabrere, and Cerna (2007) developed *Sense of Belonging*. It has three indicators and five attributes like *Academic Expertise*. An example is: "How much do you agree with the following statement – I feel I have a sense of belonging to this college." *Success at Managing the Academic Environment* was also developed by Hurtato et al. (2007). It has five indicators ranging from 1 = Very Unsuccessful to 5 = Very Successful. One example is: "Since entering college, how successful have you felt at adjusting to the academic demands of college?"

Dependent Variables

Both mentors and mentees will be assessed on various dependent variables. For example, mentors will complete assessments on job satisfaction and fulfillment, while mentees will have objective assessments gathered on them.

Mentors will complete the assessment *Mentoring Benefits for Mentors* developed by Ragins and Scandura (1999). This assessment has four dimensions. The first dimension is *Rewarding Experience*, the second is *Loyal Base of Support*, the third is *Improved Job Performance*, and the fourth is *Recognition by Others*. All four dimensions have the same attributes of 1 = Strongly Disagree through 5 = Strongly Agree. Examples for each of the four dimensions are as follows: *Rewarding Experience* – "The advantages of being a mentor far outweighs the drawback"; *Loyal Base of Support* – "My mentee is a trusted ally"; *Improved Job Performance* – "Mentoring has a positive impact on my job performance"; and *Recognition by Others* – "I gain status among my peers for mentoring my mentee."

Mentees will have objective assessments gathered on them that include persistence rates, Grade Point Average, and Graduation status. These objective data will be gathered from USU's Registrar's Office and the Office of Analysis, Assessment, and Accreditation.

Extraneous Variables

In their 2009 review, Crisp and Cruz identify extraneous variables or mediating effects that may unknowingly impact the program. Specifically, they suggest institution type, mentee and mentor attitudes, and mentee and mentor characteristics such as gender and race.

Institution Type

Gershenfeld's recommendation for methodological rigor requires clearly identifying the type of institution performing the research. Utah State is Utah's land-grant university. It is a thriving research-oriented university that is student-centered. Mentors in the statewide system have teaching as their primary role.

Mentee and Mentor Attitudes

Both mentors and mentees will complete four different assessments that gauge attitudes. All four assessments were developed by Allen and Eby (2003), and each has five attributes ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The first assessment is *Satisfaction with the Mentoring Relationship* and has five indicators. An example is "I am very satisfied with the mentoring relationship I developed with my mentor (mentee)." The second assessment is *Perceived Effectiveness of the Mentoring Program* and has four indicators. One example of the indicators is "The USU statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program is well designed and administered." The third assessment *is Satisfaction with the Mentoring Program*. This assessment has three indicators. One indicator is: "I am very satisfied with USU's statewide mentoring program." Finally, the fourth assessment *Mentoring Program Understanding* has four indicators. An example is "I understood what was expected of me as a mentor (mentee)."

Characteristics of Mentors and Mentees

The last extraneous variable identified by Crisp and Cruz (2009) was the characteristics of mentors and mentees. As suggested, the USU program will account for gender and race. Additionally, first-generation status will also be collected.

Time Points for Data Collection

All significant reviews (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Gershenfeld, 2014; Jacobi, 2019) stress the need to collect data at multiple time points. The USU statewide program collects the pre-assessments for mentees who enroll in the program's research portion at the beginning of that semester. Post-assessments are collected by both mentor and mentee who enroll in the program's research portion at the end of each semester, resulting in multiple time points for data collection.

In addition to the pre-and post-assessments, all participants, including those who did not opt into the research component, are encouraged to complete a short monthly reflections survey that assesses overall satisfaction with the mentoring relationship, how often and how long mentees interacted with their mentor, and if there are any concerns.

Threats to External Validity

In the latest review by Gershenfeld (2014), the author admonishes future researchers to address small sample size, single geographic location, and too narrow of a focused program, as these contribute to low external validity and difficulty generalizing the findings to other settings. These issues are addressed by the USU program in the following sections.

Small Sample Size

With nearly 4,000 students in the statewide campus system, it is anticipated that approximately 10% of the students will eventually enroll in the program, resulting in about 400 students. About half of those will opt into the research component, resulting in about 200 mentees, a large enough sample for statistical analysis. In addition, about half of the faculty are anticipated to participate, with most of them opting into the research component, resulting in about 60-65 mentors. This will be large enough for statistical analysis.

Single Geographical Location

As noted in *Appendix A*, this program will be offered at all eight of the USU statewide campuses. These campuses are in both rural and metropolitan communities. In addition, two of the campuses are residential, while the other six are commuter campuses. This rich diversity of campuses will increase the generalization of findings to other settings and universities.

Narrowly Focused Program

While the statewide steering committee directs the overall focus and plan for the program, each campus has the latitude to carry out the plan in the way that works best for their campus. Each campus has its own mentoring committee, and that committee is responsible for the recruitment, training, and implementation of the program at each respective site.

Operational Features

Gershenfeld's (2014) final contribution from her review was that future programs clearly delineate their operational features. The Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program seeks to address these issues in the following ways.

Number of Students Who Had Access to Mentors

All students enrolled at one of the statewide campuses had access to the Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program. During the fall semester of 2019, there were 3,884 students enrolled in the statewide campus system. Students were recruited into the program through marketing materials such as flyers, rack cards, email and calling campaigns, faculty posting details of the program on Canvas pages and syllabi, campus Canvas page, and advisors describing the program to students.

Recruiting and Selecting Mentors

Mentors were recruited through an email sent to all faculty from the Vice-Provost encouraging interested faculty members to attend a virtual workshop in August of 2020. In this workshop, it was emphasized that the program wanted faculty to serve as mentors who possessed the personality characteristics of warmth, empathy, self-awareness, integrity, and honesty. Behavioral characteristics included: respected by colleagues, effective communication, availability, and mentoring history (Johnson & Huwe, 2003).

Matching Mentor and Mentee

As in any effective relationship, shared interests, shared expectations, and similarities are important in sustaining a relationship (Campbell, 2010). The Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Committee at each of the eight campuses identified in *Appendix A* matched mentors and mentees at their respective campuses. These committees had access to the declared major of each mentee. When possible, mentees were matched with mentors in the same department. If mentors were not available in the specific department, mentees were matched with a mentor in a closely related department. For undeclared students, the committee reviewed their course history, and particularly an advisor, to make recommendations about the best match for that particular mentee.

Mentor-Mentee Ratio

The data managers of the program are tracking the number of mentees each mentor has.

Volunteer Status

Each mentor and mentee who participates in the program does so on a volunteer basis. Therefore, there are no negative repercussions to mentors or mentees who choose not to participate, and it is not a requirement for employment.

Financial Compensation

Mentors and mentees receive no financial compensation for participating in the program.

Frequency/Intensity of Mentor/Mentee Meetings

As mentioned in the previous *Time points for data collection* section, both mentor and mentees are encouraged to complete a monthly survey that tracks the mentor/mentee meetings' frequency and intensity. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to have monthly interactions, with half of these interactions being done face-to-face. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these face-to-face meetings have been done remotely during the program's first year. Frequency is the number of interactions during the semester. Intensity is the total amount of time mentors and mentees met. The data managers of the program manage this data.

Duration of Mentor/Mentee Relationship

The duration of the mentor/mentee relationship is recorded and tracked by the data managers.

Training Resources for Mentor/Appropriate Boundaries

The last operational feature suggested by Gershenfeld (2014) has to do with training. After the mentors were recruited in August of 2020, individual training sessions were arranged at each campus. In coordination with each campus's chair, those overseeing the program provided training at each respective site. These training sessions were recorded to be viewed later by those unable to attend. In addition to this training, mentors were given access to the statewide mentoring program guidebook. In this guidebook, mentors are given suggestions on making the initial meeting and all follow-up meetings successful. The guidebook describes what to do and what not to do. It educates mentors about FERPA requirements, the benefits of graduating from college, and how to assist distressed students. The guidebook also provides academic, health and wellness, crisis, financial, and career resources.

Conclusion

The first section of this manuscript describes a regional Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program's evolution into a Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring program. The statewide steering committee used two reference points in their creation of the statewide program. The first point was lessons learned from the Uintah Basin program. The second point was a review of the mentoring literature to understand the mentoring field's current limits and recommendations. Using these two reference points, the steering committee had both practical knowledge and academic knowledge to use in the development of the statewide program.

Having described the evolution of the statewide program, the rest of this manuscript identifies how the three major limitations in the field of mentoring are each addressed. These limitations are (1) lack of theoretical guidance, (2) lack of operational definition of mentoring, and (3) lack of methodological rigor. To explain, the theoretical framework aligns with the operational definition of mentoring. The theoretical framework and operational definition both influence and guide this program's methodology by clarifying what independent, intervening, and dependent variables will be focused on.

Lastly, the Theory of Change Logic Model in *Appendix B* captures the steering committee's understanding of how this mentoring program helps students in achieving their educational goals. Through a series of "IF/THEN" statements on the top row of the model, the committee explicitly states how mentoring helps retain and graduate students. In the process, it provides mentors with greater job satisfaction. The boxes below the top row illustrate the intimate connections between theory, operational definitions, and sound methodology. By explicitly stating and diagraming these connections, the statewide steering committee has identified and addressed shortcomings of previous mentoring programs.

Program designers should consider the practical implications of this article. Connections between theoretical framework, variables under consideration, and how these will inform the design are often overlooked in a rush to gather and analyze data. It is imperative that Faculty-to-Student Mentoring programs consider theoretical framework, operational definition, and methodological rigor as the foundation for mentoring programs designed to improve enrollment or attrition rates. By identifying weaknesses in design and strategically addressing them in the earliest phases of mentoring, programs can be designed to capture multiple data points for longitudinal analysis.

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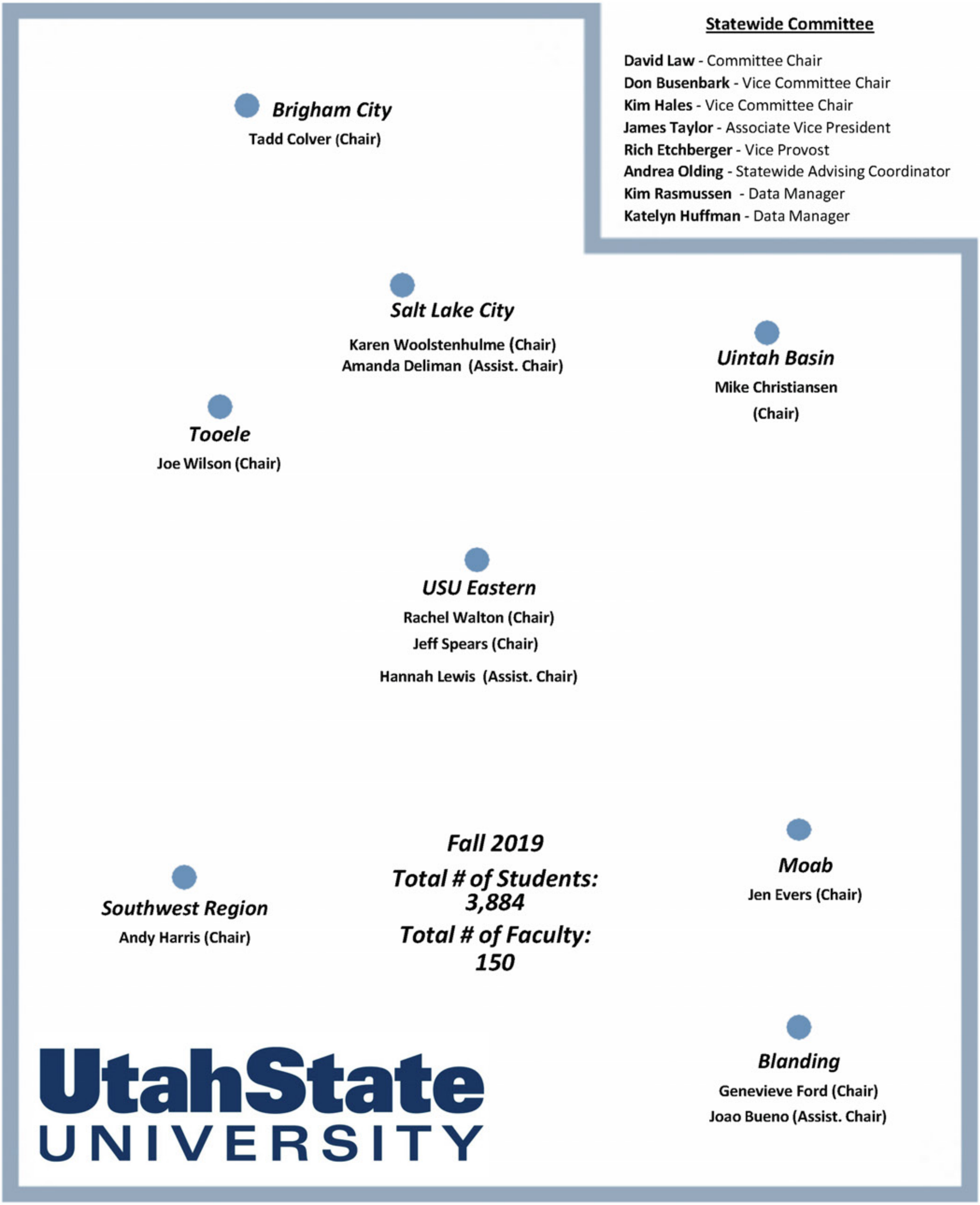
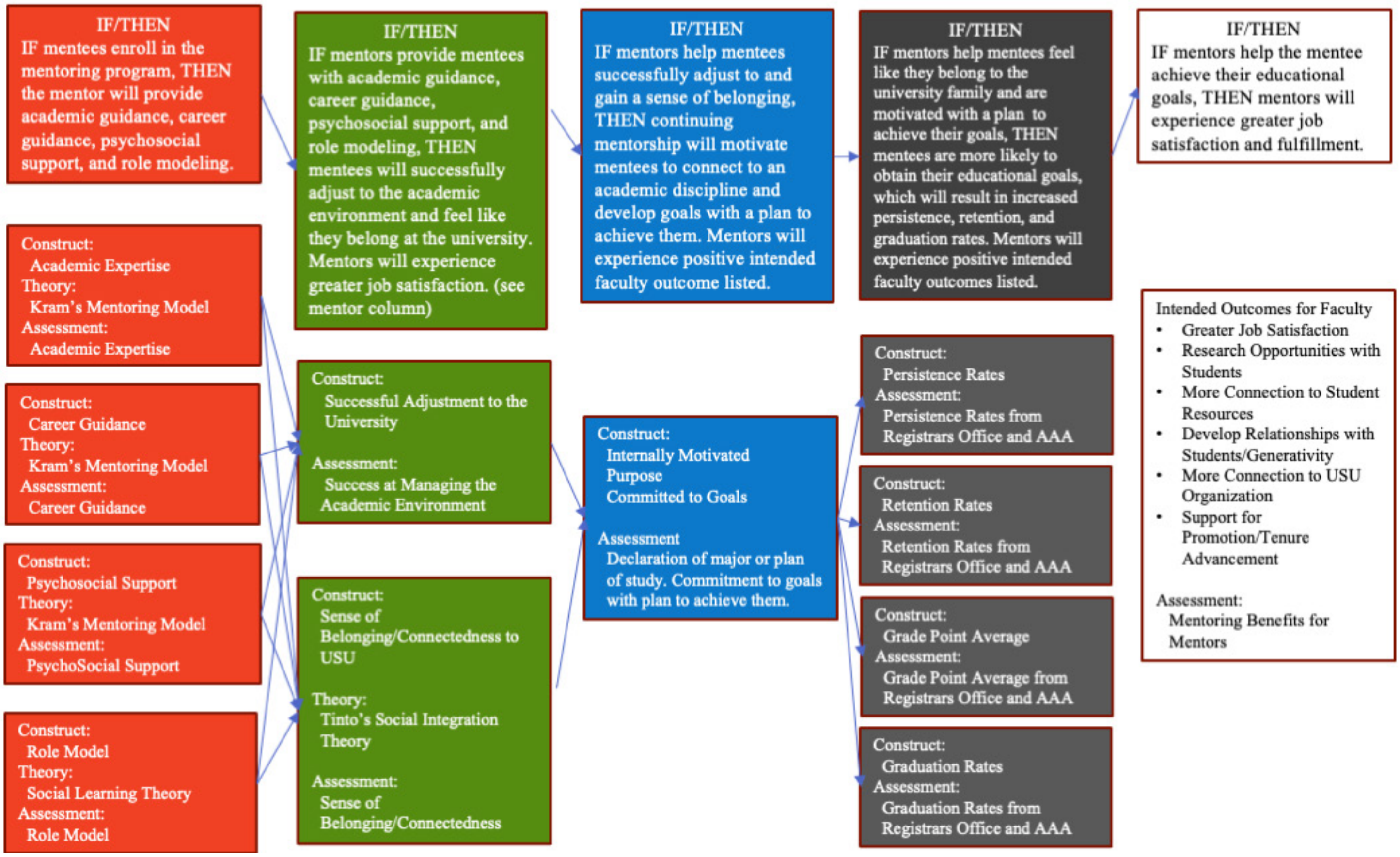
Appendix A: USU Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Steering Committee



Appendix B

Theory of Change Logic Model of How Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Contributes to Culture of Student Success and Faculty Engagement: Constructs, Theoretical Frameworks, and Assessments

USU Statewide Faculty-to-Student Mentoring Program – Revised 12-11-2019



A Study of Incarcerated Youth: The Effect of Student Interest on Reading Comprehension and Engagement

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Abstract

Motivating adolescents to read can be a challenge, but motivating incarcerated adolescents to read may be even more of a challenge. Developing readers in residential facilities are often overlooked by traditional classroom teachers, but much can be learned from incarcerated youth and their motivation and engagement. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of research on effective instructional reading practices that motivate and engage incarcerated youth. The existing research primarily examines the impact of literacy on recidivism instead of strategies for motivating and engaging students who are incarcerated. Numerous studies exist that focus on motivation and engagement of reading in traditional classrooms, but these studies are limited when focused on students from the classrooms in juvenile residential centers. This qualitative study examines the influence of high-interest materials on the comprehension of incarcerated youth and the effect of student dispositions on reading engagement. While there was no obvious correlation between high-interest materials and student comprehension scores, the results of the study suggest that mentor/student rapport, vulnerability, high-interest materials, self-efficacy, and value placed on reading all factor into student motivation and engagement.

Keywords: student interest, reading engagement, reading motivation, incarcerated youth, at-risk youth, reflective practice, SOAP notes, rapport, vulnerability

1. Introduction

Developing readers in residential facilities are often overlooked by traditional classroom teachers, but much can be learned from incarcerated youth and their motivation and engagement. Although there is a shortage of research on effective instructional reading practices for incarcerated youth (Weaver et al., 2020) and limited research focusing on students in the classrooms of juvenile residential centers (Brunner, 1993; Foley, 2001; Gentler, 2012), numerous studies exist that focus on motivation and engagement of reading in traditional classrooms (Clark & Teravainen, 2017; Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017). Therefore, this qualitative study examines the influence of high-interest reading materials on the comprehension of incarcerated youth and the effect of student dispositions on reading engagement.

2. Literature Review

Researchers have studied a variety of factors that affect student engagement with reading achievement (Applegate & Applegate, 2010; Kasper, Uibu, & Mikk, 2018), including interest in reading materials, self-efficacy, and the value students attribute to reading. These factors affect the way students engage with the material and their degree of comprehension (Applegate & Applegate, 2010; Kasper, Uibu, & Mikk, 2018). Educators examined student engagement and understanding through the use of reflective practice. According to Dell'olio (1998), "reflection facilitates deeper understanding of theory, richer conceptualization of new ideas, and a keener sense of the possibilities of innovation in professional practice" (p. 184).

2.1 Repeated Reading and Vocabulary Strengthen Comprehension

One area to utilize reflective practice is the examination of the tools to build comprehension that include repeated reading and vocabulary instruction. According to Penner-Wilgner (2008), both repeated reading and vocabulary instruction improve students' decoding and automaticity which also enhances reading comprehension. Research asserts that repeated reading is an effective strategy for developing reading fluency, comprehension, sight recognition, and automaticity in lower-level processing (Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2010; Penner-Wilger, 2008). As automaticity and fluency improve, vocabulary knowledge plays a stronger role and is integral to passage comprehension (Ahmed et al., 2016; Elleman et al., 2009; Joshi, 2005; Oslund et al., 2018; Protopapas et al., 2007; Swanson et al., 2017; Yovanoff et al., 2005). Research suggests a strong correlation between vocabulary, reading, listening comprehension, writing, and speaking skills (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Penner-Wilgner, 2008). Research underscores the importance of explicit instruction on vocabulary acquisition (Elleman et al., 2009; Harmon et al., 2005).

2.2 Factors That Impact Reading Motivation

In addition to vocabulary knowledge, student interest is essential to text comprehension because it is tied to reading motivation and learning (Eidswick, 2009). When students are interested, they exhibit persistence, engagement, and positive dispositions toward tasks (Ainley et al., 2002, Hidi, 1990, 2000; Renninger, 1998, 2000). However, other studies suggest that student motivation to read is driven by more than just interest (Kasper et al., 2018). For example, Applegate and Applegate (2010) found that the motivation to read is affected by the expectancy-value theory, stating that motivation is affected by two key factors: (a) self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to succeed in a task (in this case, reading) and (b) the value an individual attributes to the completion of the task.

Guthrie et al. (2013) adopt a more complex view of the relationship between instruction, motivation, engagement, and achievement that combines and builds on aspects of Applegate and Applegate (2010) and Kasper et al. (2018) research. According to Guthrie et al. (2013), motivation is driven by intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, valuing reading, and prosocial goals. In this particular study, intrinsic motivation is defined as interest and enjoyment in reading, self-efficacy as confidence, valuing reading as the perception that reading is important, and prosocial goals as intentions to interact socially in reading (Guthrie et al., 2013). Based on this research, instruction that builds student motivation leads to higher achieving students, sometimes through the process of increasing engagement, and other times, directly through motivation itself (Applegate & Applegate, 2010; Guthrie et al., 2013; Kasper et al., 2018).

Furthermore, higher literacy and academic abilities are known to reduce the likelihood of recidivism among incarcerated youth (Brunner, 1993; Wexler et al., 2014), verifying the importance of motivating developing readers and generating interest in reading among incarcerated youth confined in rehabilitation facilities. By generating interest in reading and building self-esteem among developing readers, dispositions may improve (Kasper et al., 2018).

Motivation and engagement in children and young adults may impact academic performance, frequency in reading, and background knowledge. For example, Wilson and Michaels (2007) stated, "the ability to read, write, and access information directly affects students' self-confidence, motivation, and school performance" (p. 206). These connections are particularly informative because, in research, incarcerated youth are characterized as students with challenging background experiences, low self-efficacy, difficulties with intellectual and academic performance, and emotional and behavioral disorders (Foley, 2001; Gentler, 2012; Harris et al., 2009; Houchins et al., 2018; Pyle et al., 2016).

2.3 Vulnerability Impacts Academic Performance

Incarcerated youths' background may impact their willingness to be vulnerable. According to Brown (2012; 2017), while vulnerability requires emotional risk, exposure, and uncertainty, it is also the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change. Incarcerated youth struggle with vulnerability in their learning because of their challenging background situations, low self-efficacy, difficulties with intellectual and academic performance, and emotional and behavioral disorders (Foley, 2001; Gentler, 2012; Harris et al., 2009; Houchins et al., 2018; Pyle et al., 2016).

Improving the literacy of incarcerated youth helps them meet short term goals such as building self-efficacy and improving academic performance (Foley, 2001; Gentler, 2012; Harris et al., 2009; Houchins et al., 2018; Pyle et al., 2016; Wilson & Michaels, 2007), but more research is needed on how to engage incarcerated students, especially in terms of reading instruction because many of these students hesitate to be vulnerable with learning and instructors, and they have been classified as struggling readers (Foley, 2001; Gentler, 2012; Harris et al., 2009; Houchins et al., 2018; Pyle et al., 2016).

2.4 SOAP Notes Promote Reflective Practice

Reflection on student interest, engagement, and comprehension is important to instructional practice and students' academic performance. An example of a reflective framework is Subjective, Observation, Assessing, and Planning (SOAP) Notes. This "is a framework used to organize records and thinking" (Mills et al., 2020) and offers guidelines for instructors to reflect on student engagement, dispositions, and interests (Mills et al., 2020; Weaver et al., 2020). SOAP Notes used in education extend the seminal work of Schön's (1983, 1987, 1991) research on reflective practice that promoted further research on critical reflection in teacher education (Many & Many, 2014; Hofer, 2017). When educators develop their own narratives based on professional practice, critical reflection occurs (Greene et al., 2016; Hoffer, 2017). SOAP Notes promote reflection while assisting educators in compiling data regarding student engagement and interests and identifying and resolving learning obstacles for students in the classroom (Many & Many, 2014; Mills et al., 2020).

Incarcerated youth stand to benefit from literacy instruction and the reflective practice of instructors. Literacy instruction leads to improved self-esteem and academic abilities, the connection between higher literacy skills, and a wider range of employment opportunities. Furthermore, the reduction of recidivism indicates that literacy skills would have both short-term and long-term benefits for incarcerated youth (Brunner, 1993; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Wexler et al., 2014; Wilson & Michaels, 2007). These benefits become evident when teachers engage in reflective practice using SOAP Notes (Weaver et al., 2021). SOAP Notes promote awareness of student behaviors, engagement, and achievement through intentional notetaking.

3. Methodology

A reading-partnership program at a Midwestern public university was created to build instructional self-efficacy and skills and extends the work of Murnen et al. (2018) and Weaver et al. (2020) that highlighted a reading partnership with a juvenile residential center (JRC) titled Mentoring in Literacy Enhancement (MILE) (Weaver et al., 2020). The MILE program aimed to benefit both the developing readers and the university's population of pre-service teachers. The volunteer mentors not only applied instructional reading strategies but mentors were also challenged to critically reflect on their instruction and student learning each week.

This study examined five case studies of reading mentors working with developing readers at the residential center. To mentor at the JRC, pre-service teacher candidates were required to attend two instructional reading workshops called Promoting Reading Achievement Across Content Areas (PRAACA). Each session lasted approximately three hours. During this training, pre-service teacher candidates practiced administering an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) (Roe & Burns, 2011), assessed the reading level of a text using the Fry (1977) Graph Readability Formula, and practiced using interest surveys, as well as various vocabulary and comprehension strategies.

Following the initial training, volunteers participated in an additional workshop regarding the implementation of Learning A-Z (2021) instructional practices in addition to an overview of procedures and protocols within the JRC. This extra training was designed to equip mentors with guided instructional strategies that would enable them to address the learning needs of the students while also helping mentors adjust to the unique context of the JRC. Once mentors completed both training sessions, they became eligible to participate in the MILE program. With the establishment of MILE, freshmen and sophomore teacher candidates were offered the opportunity to design and implement reading lessons each week and mentor developing readers (Weaver et al., 2020).

In this study, mentors utilized SOAP Notes as a framework to reflect on students' engagement, dispositions, and academic performance. For each reading session, mentors completed a lesson plan template outlining the student's progress in the previous lesson, the plan for that day, and a description of the student's progress that day. In addition to documenting lesson procedures, mentors were also asked to complete a SOAP Notes template (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: *SOAP Notes Template*

Evaluation of Instruction (SOAP)		**By:**		**Date:**	
S	**Subjective:** Student's willingness to participate, demeanor, body language, and attitude Teacher's perceptions and reflections				
O	**Observation** of student learning: Anecdotal notes				
A	**Assessing** student learning: Progress monitoring, running records, and oral or written comprehension				
P	**Planning** for next lesson: Use bullet points				
Challenges: What challenges did you encounter while working with your student?					
Further Learning: What else do you need to know how to do?					

Weaver, J.C., Hartzog, M., Murnen, T., & Bertelsen, C.D. (2019). Bowling Green State University.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to contribute to educational research focused on readers in juvenile correctional facilities and to inform reading instruction at other facilities as well as traditional schools serving at-risk students. It examined the impact of juvenile residential students' dispositions on engagement with reading within a constructed culture of reading. The partnership at the JRC led to the following research question: How do students' dispositions affect their motivation and engagement with reading?

3.1 Participants

Five volunteer mentors — Aelin, Aaron, Ari, Cleo, and Margaret — were introduced to the MILE program upon completion of the university's PRAACA workshops and the additional Reading A-Z Training (see Figure 1). Five adolescents who identified as white males — David, Red, Bronson, Jacob, and Flash —were selected for reading mentoring by the JRC administration based on reading ability and willingness to participate. It is important to note that all mentors and students have chosen pseudonyms, and those will be used throughout the study.

Mentors and residents met for one hour every Saturday for a total of ten weeks of reading instruction. A diverse range of instructional materials and strategies were used depending on the individual interests and needs of students; however, central activities consistent across all mentors included repeated readings and vocabulary practice modeled at the A-Z Training session and explained previously in the Materials and Procedures section. In addition, mentors administered biweekly comprehension assessments that were also outlined in that same section.

Figure 1: *Groupings of Mentor-Student Pairs*

Mentors	Aelin	Aaron	Ari	Cleo	Margaret
Students	David	Red	Bronson	Jacob	Flash

3.2 Context

The interest survey and IRI were used to provide each mentor with knowledge about the student's background with reading, interests, and current reading strengths and weaknesses to inform and guide mentor and student decisions. Some readers came into the MILE program with stronger background experiences in reading and could provide mentors with titles of materials or topics they were interested in reading. These students did not need much help from the mentor in terms of selecting reading material, so the mentors were primarily responsible for making sure the material was accessible and that the material was brought to weekly sessions.

Other readers were still exploring their interests and were not familiar with materials they would enjoy reading. The mentor then played a larger role in the selection process by making suggestions that might have been of interest to the student given his reading level and interests. It is important to note that when matching texts to each student, at times, mentors brought in reading materials above their students' reading levels because the students were motivated to read materials that were of interest despite a more challenging reading level.

3.3 Instructional Practices

Repeated reading, vocabulary practice, and comprehension questions were areas of focus for all participants. Each reader struggled significantly in at least one of these areas, and mentors adapted their instructional focus to target students' weaknesses while using students' strengths to build self-efficacy. Repeated reading began during the second week of the study and was incorporated into every session from that point forward. Vocabulary practice was more flexible and depended on the level of text being read. Each mentor conducted comprehension assessments every other week that included questions within the following categories: main idea, detail, cause and effect, inference, sequence of events, and vocabulary.

3.4 Data Collection

For this study, the data sources included pre- and post-surveys, mentor lesson plans, and SOAP notes (Mills et al., 2020). Surveys were used to serve multiple purposes. During the first mentoring session, readers were provided with an interest survey that focused on their interests, reading habits, and background reading experiences. At the very end of the study, they were given a post-survey to examine possible changes in their view of reading and/or perceptions of their progress. Furthermore, they were asked to rate their interest in the materials that were used during the sessions and to describe the challenges they experienced while reading.

In addition to surveys, SOAP notes were integral to this study. The mentors' lesson plans and SOAP notes were used to record observations about students' attitudes, engagement, and learning during each lesson to provide qualitative data to inform instruction for the following sessions. All data were de-identified to protect participants.

3.5 Data Analysis

To analyze the data in this study, the primary tool utilized was the constant comparative method (CCM) using open-coding (Kelle, 2005) within grounded theory (GT) (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). CCM is an inductive process that allows for the re-coding of data as they are compared to other data and incidents (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Open coding allows for core categories to emerge as data are re-coded and reduced (Charmaz, 2001; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). Because the essence of the study surrounds the dispositions and engagement of incarcerated youth, it made sense to extrapolate the data using Strauss and

Corbin's (1998) definitions of the GT methodology: "a way of thinking about and studying social reality" (p. 3).

The analysis of the surveys and SOAP notes written by the mentors were critical to the study and researchers aimed to closely examine the dispositions and behaviors of the readers to analyze the impact on reading engagement and learning while noting the emerging themes. The five case studies describe and reflect the mentors' thought processes as they utilized the SOAP notes framework to inform instructional decision-making for their weekly sessions based on student dispositions and engagement.

4. Findings

To understand the impact of this study on the group as a whole, it was necessary to look at each mentor/student pair individually to track individual progress and development. Each case study describes the materials used during the sessions, interests expressed by the students, the determined IRI reading levels, the levels of the texts being read, the students' comprehension scores, students' reflections on their learning, mentor observations' and any additional information pertaining to each mentor/student pair.

4.1 Aelin and David

Before the fall mentoring sessions began, Aelin reported in her SOAP notes that she taught David in a class at the JRC over the summer. She stated that the strong rapport clearly carried into their reading sessions together in the fall. She wrote, "He mentioned that he enjoyed learning and wanted to inform me of all the topics he had learned since I had last seen him" (personal communication, September 21, 2020).

On his first day, David mentioned that he was currently reading the *Divergent* series, but expressed interest in reading the *U.S. Constitution,* which reads at the 1540 Lexile level and equates to above the 12th grade reading level. Aelin and David spent their ten weeks reading a pocketbook Constitution along with sections of the book *Love and War,* songs from *Hamilton*, and several other short articles related to the Constitution. David worked with reading material above his tested reading instructional level (9th grade), but his interest in the material was a high point of the sessions, according to one of his post-reading surveys in which he reported, "It's hard because the story is written in older language. It's easy because I am interested in the material."

According to his mentor and his reflection, despite the challenge that the older rhetoric presented, David's interest in the material appears to have motivated him to continue reading and persist through difficulties. Throughout the SOAP notes, Aelin often described David as a "willing participant" and "engaged learner." Aelin also took note of several behaviors that illustrate David's engagement, including furrowing his brow and rubbing his chin (personal communication, September 28, 2019). Aelin also reported in the SOAP notes that these behavioral and attitude descriptions indicated that despite the challenges David faced with the language in the *Constitution*, he was willing to continue working and persisting through those challenges because of his interest in the material.

David's scores on his comprehension assessments were inconsistent throughout the study, often taking significant leaps and dives, but according to Aelin, his fluency, expression, and vocabulary abilities significantly improved. In week three, David was able to read 115 words per minute and by week ten, David was able to read 150 words per minute with expression, demonstrating improvement in both his reading speed and prosody. Aelin also reported that David began adding new vocabulary words to his word wall without being told and even made a word wall for his own independent reading. Aelin noted in the SOAP notes that David stated "[he was] gaining vocabulary knowledge that has helped him understand the meaning behind the texts he [was] reading" (personal communication, October 20, 2019). David also shared with Aelin that after working with the word "wall," he became more comfortable asking questions when he didn't know something.

According to Aelin, the act of sharing his feelings and observations about his own learning first and foremost alludes to the strong rapport they established. The time together before the beginning of the fall session was a huge advantage that seemed to have allowed them to progress faster than other groups.

When David shared with Aelin that he created his own word wall to improve his vocabulary and admitted that the word wall helped him feel more comfortable asking questions, Aelin noted that David was revealing a perceived "weakness" or area that needed improvement. According to Aelin, comfort with his mentor, a willingness to be vulnerable, and metacognitive awareness contributed to David's engagement with his own learning, as did David's positive attitude and the value he placed on reading.

4.2 Aaron and Red

Aaron and Red had a very unique situation in this study that is necessary to explain before any additional information is shared. For the first three sessions of this ten-week study, the second author, Grace, worked with Red because his original mentor did not show up to the sessions. Aaron was recruited and received his training during that three-week time period, and Grace told Red that until Aaron was able to step in, she would be working with him. Grace gave Red the Interest Survey and conducted the IRI, during which time she learned that Red had several negative reading experiences that impacted his view of reading in addition to a struggle with violent thoughts. While Red expressed his disinterest in reading long texts, he did share that he enjoyed picture books and artwork and was very good at using the pictures to make predictions. Grace brought in the book *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds for the last session together in the hope of providing Red with a positive reading experience from a larger text and with the goal of showing Red the danger and pain that come with violent actions.

When Aaron began working with Red the following week, Red was extremely upset. In his SOAP Notes, Aaron shared that Red refused to work with him until Grace joined them at their table. At first, Red only addressed Grace and she tried to help Aaron establish a rapport with Red; however, Red gradually became comfortable with Aaron, and Grace was able to leave to observe other groups. These details illustrate the unique situation and the reason it took an exceptionally long time for Red and Aaron to develop the rapport and expectations that would guide their sessions. Initially, this negatively impacted Red's ability to progress in the study compared to other groups.

In the third session, Aaron learned that he and Red shared an interest in video games. With this shared interest in mind, Aaron brought in short articles about video games for part of the study and shifted to the novel *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline when Red expressed disinterest in continuing to work with video game articles. On the IRI, Red tested at a 5th grade instructional reading level which matched the reading level of the articles; however, *Ready Player One* tests at the 8th grade reading level which is interesting considering the drastic change in Red's engagement with the book when compared with the articles.

In the beginning sessions, Aaron reported that although Red did not struggle with comprehension and seemed to be able to quote the text directly, Red struggled significantly with fluency while reading the articles and often resisted Aaron's attempts to model fluent reading. Aaron said that the sessions were challenging because Red's attention span was so short and he became quickly irritated with the reading. After shifting from the articles to *Ready Player One,* Aaron reported notable changes in Red's behavior, saying that he listened more than before, allowed Aaron to help him with fluency, admitted that reading character dialogue was uncomfortable for him, and looked to Aaron for confirmation of words he didn't understand. Aaron also said that in one session, Red was so captivated by the story that he didn't even realize he hadn't colored until fifteen minutes before the session ended. This was significant because coloring was the incentive Aaron put in place to encourage participation, and Red was so engaged with his reading that he completely forgot about the incentive.

4.3 Ari and Bronson

On her first day working with Bronson, Ari learned from the interest survey that Bronson was extremely interested in Greek mythology. After conducting the IRI and identifying his instructional reading level (6th grade), Ari began with a few short articles on Greek mythology followed by a shift to *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan, all of which read at the 6th grade level.

Ari and Bronson's sessions were structured differently than the rest of the sessions as they met two days a week instead of one; however, Ari and Bronson still met the same amount of time each week as other mentors. Another interesting point in their sessions was that Bronson wanted to read *The Lightning Thief* in spite of already having read it. Ari said that Bronson wanted to revisit the text to make sure that he did not miss anything the first time around, but according to Ari's SOAP notes, another factor in Bronson's request to reread the text could have been his discomfort with reading out loud.

From the very beginning, Ari noted that Bronson seemed very uncomfortable reading out loud. In their third session together, Ari mentioned in her SOAP notes that Bronson expressed discomfort reading out loud despite his strong background knowledge in Greek mythology and his ability to comprehend the text. The same day, Ari also noted that while Bronson was passive, indifferent, and sometimes inattentive while reading and answering questions about the IRI passages, he often challenged what he read in the Greek articles, making statements such as "that simply would not happen in the Greek world" (personal communication, October 8, 2019). According to Ari, this shift from passivity to discontentment with the reading indicates a positive shift in Bronson's interest and engagement with the material. Although resistance to the reading presented a new challenge for Ari, she states in her SOAP notes that Bronson's interest in the topic contributed to his focus on the reading and motivated him to engage with the text.

Ari was pleased with Bronson's improving engagement and desire to discuss the text, but Ari also wrote in the "Challenges" section of her SOAP notes that she needed to find a way to create "a ready-to-learn, comfortable environment" (personal communication, October 8, 2019). In addition, Ari indicated that she wanted to create a comfortable learning session, but part of the problem might have been Bronson's discomfort with reading out loud. According to Ari, Bronson's low self-efficacy and low confidence in his ability to read out loud caused him to become defensive when Ari tried to work with him on his fluency and prosody. Ari also wrote that when she tried to incorporate a drawing activity into the day's lesson, Bronson was reluctant to participate. In response to Bronson's behavior, Ari noted, "[He] doesn't think he's good at it so he doesn't want to try" (personal communication, October 17, 2019).

While Bronson expressed his discomfort with reading aloud frequently during the first four weeks, Ari wrote that, although reluctant, he eventually began to warm up to the idea. She notes in the SOAP reflections that he is warming up to reading out loud after describing new developments in their relationship the past two sessions. Ari explained that Bronson talked to her about his future plans, and he inquired about hers. In her SOAP notes that day, she wrote, "Today I got [Bronson] to smile and laugh...He's kind of shy but we are still building a good bond" (personal communication, October 22, 2019). The following day, Ari reported that Bronson did not seem to be interested in reading because he wanted to share information about his life back home and his reason for coming to the facility. She wrote, "I don't think he was having a bad/sad day. Our conversation was very calm and easy going. He was simply opening up - kind of like building rapport" (personal communication, October 24, 2019). According to Ari, her consistent practice and encouragement played a role in Bronson's growing tolerance for reading out loud.

Ari observed a huge shift in Bronson's attitude toward the sessions once he began reading materials that interested him. In her SOAP notes, Ari quoted Bronson as he directly acknowledged interest as a motivator. He said that he is "very passionate about reading and learning if it is intriguing" (personal communication, October 3, 2019). According to Ari, this insight was reflected in his changing behaviors as he shifted from an unfocused and passive listener to a talkative and engaged participant. Although Bronson was initially resistant to the idea of practicing fluency, Ari reported improvement in Bronson's attitude toward reading out loud and his fluency skills near the end of the study.

4.4 Cleo and Jacob

Cleo and Jacob spent their ten weeks reading *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline. According to Cleo, after giving Jacob the interest survey on the first day, she learned that Jacob wasn't very interested in reading, rarely read outside of class, and hated school despite having decent grades. Cleo also learned that Jacob preferred video games, so when she asked if Jacob would be interested in reading *Ready Player One*, a book about video games, Jacob got really excited. Jacob tested at a 6th grade instructional reading level on his IRI, but like Red, he was still willing to read *Ready Player One* (8th grade reading level) because he found it interesting.

As Cleo and Jacob worked through the book, Cleo noted that Jacob was capable of reading very quickly and took pride in how fast he could read despite comprehending very little of the text. Cleo reported this challenge in her SOAP Notes: "...he reads super fast with no regard to punctuation" (personal communication, September 28, 2019). Cleo explained that his reading pace interfered with his ability to comprehend the text, but he slowed down significantly after watching her read. Reading pace was something that Cleo and Jacob worked on consistently throughout the sessions because it took a long time to help Jacob understand that while speed does factor into "good reading" as he mentioned on his interest survey, it is not good when it impedes comprehension.

Another interesting observation Cleo shared in her SOAP notes was that Jacob hated reading short stories and only liked reading longer texts. Jacob was motivated to read *Ready Player One* not only because he found the topic interesting, but also because he enjoyed the length of the text. According to Cleo, both the topic and perceived difficulty of the text played a role in his engagement.

While Jacob definitely struggled to slow down his reading and shift his focus to comprehending the text, Cleo noted gradual improvement and eventually, Jacob began sharing his excitement with Cleo about his success in English class. Cleo noted that Jacob's participation in the sessions was impacted by his performance in his other classes and his progress in the facility's rehabilitation program.

On the other hand, this also applied to Jacob's bad days. Cleo described several occasions where Jacob entered the session visibly upset, rushed through their session, and/or resisted participating in the day's reading because he had received a bad grade in a class or gotten in trouble with the guards. According to Cleo in the SOAP notes, these mood swings and behavior changes are important obstacles to note as they interfered with Jacob's ability to participate.

Cleo noted in the SOAP notes that Jacob's comments provided valuable insights into his developing reading habits and takeaways from the text. Jacob's emotional state and shifts in his medicine often affected his ability to focus and engage with the lesson, but Cleo stated that Jacob's interest in the material, his self-efficacy, and the value he placed on reading shaped his motivation to read and engage with lessons over the course of the study.

4.5 Margaret and Flash

After the beginning sessions, Margaret noted in her SOAP Notes that Flash went into his mentoring sessions with a great attitude because they had already worked together prior to the sessions. Margaret reported that they had already established a rapport by the time the study began, so upon completing the interest survey and IRI (Flash tested at a 6th grade instructional reading level), they were able to immediately begin reading parables from the Bible and poems with biblical messages. Some of the materials covered in their sessions together included the parables *The Good Samaritan* and *The Mustard Seed,* in addition to a short poem called "Footprints in the Sand."

Although Margaret initially stated that Flash had a positive attitude, she quickly observed that Flash was easily distracted, temperamental, and easily affected by his emotions. She associated this frustration with low self-efficacy. She wrote in one of her SOAP notes that Flash "has a very low-efficacy self-concept of himself as a reader, but also strives to show me how much he can do" (personal communication, September 20, 2019). She reported that when she worked with him over the summer, Flash went back and forth between feeling challenged and bored, and often used going to the bathroom as an avoidance strategy.

Flash expressed in his interest survey that he had many good reading experiences with family, but not with friends. According to Margaret, Flash had a lot of difficulty with being separated from his family. This is relevant to the study because Margaret noticed that this challenge affected both his participation in the JRC rehabilitation program and his engagement in reading sessions. She reported that this happened a few times in their sessions together, but for the most part, he put forth effort to remain engaged in their sessions, demonstrating motivation to participate because of interest in the material and/or a strong relationship with his mentor.

On his last day at the JRC, Margaret observed that Flash was in a horrible mood because he had recently had a bad phone call with his family. When he came out, he didn't have his glasses (because he broke them), and he told Margaret that he did not want to read that day. Margaret convinced him to participate for a little bit, but she said that every time he made a small mistake, he punched himself in the head, so she let him go back to his unit.

Margaret stated that although she encountered some difficulties with Flash's behavior and emotional reactions, over the course of their time together, Flash developed the ability to observe and engage in strategies that good readers have. She noted that his attention to punctuation and expression improved, he began to self-correct while reading (which he took a lot of pride in), and he made clear efforts to take the perspective of the characters he read about. According to Margaret, these improvements increased confidence levels that helped with his self-efficacy, as did Margaret's compliments on his progress.

5. Implications

This study was centered around five mentor/student pairs that allowed for close monitoring and detailed observations of reading sessions. In addition, there was an opportunity for one-on-one instruction as it allowed for individualized instruction tailored to the needs of each student. Furthermore, because the mentors had a wide variety of educational teaching opportunities and experiences, this allowed them to work together and learn from each other.

According to the data, the research question was answered conclusively. Interest does have an impact on student engagement and dispositions, aligning with Applegate and Applegate's

(2010) expectancy-value theory and Brown's (2017) research on dispositions. In addition, consistency and rapport contribute to the reader's confidence in their reading abilities, the willingness to be vulnerable with their mentors, the motivation to read, and engagement in the sessions (Brown, 2017).

The findings also revealed that the mentors who had a strong rapport with their students created an environment that allowed students to be more vulnerable in the learning process that showed a positive effect on their motivation and engagement. Student engagement and progress depended on a willingness to expose weaknesses in order to improve, promoting the importance of vulnerability in student engagement and progress.

One of the most notable findings revealed that without a strong mentor/student rapport, limited learning takes place. Mentors who gained the students' trust progressed in learning and engagement with reading, while those mentors who were unable to gain the trust of their students struggled during their reading sessions. Once a bond had been established between a mentor and a student, interest and self-efficacy began to play a larger role in student reading motivation and engagement. By noting shifts in student behaviors and responses to high-interest reading material, in addition to observing physical and verbal signifiers of student confidence levels, it is evident that both interest and self-efficacy play a role in student reading motivation and engagement.

There were a couple of limitations in this study. For example, the JRC was willing to accommodate only five mentor/student pairs, all of whom were represented in the data collected in this study, and the demographics were limited to five white, male students. The sample size and demographics are limitations, but because there is a limited amount of research available on educational instructional strategies for incarcerated youth and educational resources and strategies implemented with incarcerated youth, the findings are noteworthy. Another limitation of the study is the timeframe. The study only lasted for ten weeks without additional follow-up with the resident readers due to the pandemic. Although a limitation, the SOAP notes reflection superseded the limitation because of the depth of critical analyses of the mentors.

The effects of this study opened up opportunities and questions for further research. For example, we would like to examine the degree to which the students capitalized on their work in the JRC and if their reading engagement and motivation transferred to their classroom work. We would also like to address some additional questions focused on the mentors' experiences: What were the long-term effects on the mentors? and To what degree did the mentors' experiences benefit or contribute to their instructional development?

6. Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate that mentor-student rapport, a willingness to be vulnerable, high-interest reading material, self-efficacy, and value placed on reading all play a role in students' reading motivation and engagement in the learning process. These conclusions suggest that instruction centered around developing these attitudes and dispositions in students in addition to using high-interest materials is likely to increase the reading motivation and engagement of incarcerated youth.

This study contributes to the research highlighting the importance of student interest on dispositions and engagement in reading. In addition, student self-efficacy and instructor's consistency and rapport play a role in student engagement and motivation to read. In schools where reaching at-risk youth is a challenge, creating curriculum and materials of interest to students is an asset to their learning, engagement, and motivation. While interest is directly connected with motivation to read and engagement with the text, we suggest that practice, rapport, and feelings of trust be established prior to learning in order to maximize student success.

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The Missing Course: An Introduction to College Teaching for Graduate Instructors

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Abstract

Book review of Gooblar, D. (2019). The missing course: Everything they never taught you about college teaching. Harvard University Press.

Keywords: college teaching, graduate instructor

Introduction

Dr. David Gooblar's book *The Missing Course: Everything They Never Taught You About College Teaching* is a crash course in becoming a more effective classroom instructor, covering broad teaching topics which make the book especially beneficial for novice instructors. Gooblar not only presents fundamental pedagogical theories but also includes extensive research support for those theories and actionable strategies to improve the course and instruction. The authors of the following book review participated in a multidisciplinary reading group for early career and graduate instructors where each chapter's content was analyzed in a group setting to discuss practical applications and feasibility of the techniques Gooblar puts forth. However, the text would be a beneficial standalone read for any instructor looking to improve their teaching.

The opening topic focused on the constructivist theory of learning, which was appropriate for Gooblar's broad, fundamental presentation of pedagogical practice. Constructivism focuses on students constructing their own knowledge while building upon previous learning and experience (Hein, 1991). In practice, constructivism means that in order to learn students cannot be the focus of passive transmission of content, but must actively revise their existing knowledge, based on their experiences, with novel information (Narayan et al., 2013). So while disseminating content is an important part of any college course, the book separates that goal from the objective of students constructing their knowledge of that content. Gooblar compels his readers to use the theory of constructivism in a college course through three basic areas: active learning, appropriate assessment and student-focused instruction, and emphasizing process.

Active Learning

Active learning has become a buzzword in teaching, and with good reason. Gooblar advocates for a shift away from traditional lecture-centered courses to a more student-centered structure where students work with peers to co-construct knowledge. However, to convince students to step beyond passively receiving information, a partnership between student and instructor is required to challenge the student to become an active collaborator in their own learning. Gooblar recommends beginning each course with an explanation of the science supporting active learning in order to build the expectation of active participation (Gooblar, pg. 22). Instructors must motivate students to collaborate and take more responsibility for their learning and, while grades are a strong motivator, they are extrinsic motivators that are not conducive to long-term interest. Gooblar suggests ceding control of the course, which can serve as a powerful tool for ensuring student investment in their own learning. These practices create an interactive, constructivist-based classroom where both the instructor and the student are collaborating to revise the students' knowledge base and create a better understanding of concepts.

The literature supports Gooblar's claims, as one of the basic characteristics of constructivist learning environments includes that both authority and knowledge will be shared between teachers and students. Additionally, these environments focus on the pedagogical goals of encouraging student ownership and voice in their learning process (Olusegun, 2015). Research has shown that active learning does indeed benefit students' learning and achievement, thus benefitting the learners in the classroom (Freeman et al., 2014).

Gooblar's suggested strategies begin at the development of the syllabus, where leaving blank sections can allow students to help shape course content and assignments, allowing them to argue for the material they want to study (Gooblar, pg. 54). The syllabus can also be treated as a sales pitch, where the major interesting questions the course will cover and the connection to the students' lives are outlined. Research supports that using similar learner-centered principles in the syllabus can increase student motivation and student-instructor rapport

(Richmond et al., 2018). Gooblar's recommendations for ceding control continue throughout the course, including speaking less and allowing students to drive discussions, asking students to teach pieces of content to each other, and requiring participation with a reflection on the students' contributions in the course. The literature supports Gooblar's approach to collaborative ownership as a path to increased student motivation and learning as increased student ownership has been shown to enable lifelong learning (Pawson & Poskitt, 2019), increase student motivation (Mikalayeva, 2016), and increase overall active participation and student engagement (Bandura, 1997).

Many of the learning circle members are graduate instructors and did not feel that they had the power or autonomy to change the course syllabus, or cede control to students. However, the discussion on active learning focused on increasing participation and activities during class, which all members felt were important and achievable steps in the right direction. These small changes included embedding case studies, pre- and post-quizzes, hands-on activity, and discussion into any lecture period. Several instructors had great luck utilizing specific activities from *Hitting Pause: 65 Lecture breaks to refresh and reinforce learning* (Rice, 2018) to break up lectures to include more active participation. Many members of the group had struggled with increasing participation in online student discussions, where strategies from Gooblar would need to be altered from a face-to-face context.

Appropriate Assessment and Feedback

A second area that Gooblar emphasizes throughout the text is the evaluation and assessment process in a course. Gooblar discusses two types of assessment in his book: formative and summative assessment. Summative assessments are used to measure students' progress to determine if they have mastered the learning objectives for the course. Formative assessment allows the instructor to gauge where students are at in their learning and is then used to influence students' future performance. In many courses, instructors implement a summative assessment that provides students with a judgment on how they have grasped a concept. In a formative assessment, students will attempt to respond to an instructor's questions or complete tasks (Gooblar, pg.131). The instructor provides students with feedback by identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that the students understand where they have failed. The students are then allowed to make adjustments and make another attempt. The value of this approach is that learning occurs from repeated practice and information about failures. Gooblar discusses a variety of strategies to help instructors provide students with productive feedback. These strategies include: reviewing tests with students, going over the commonly missed questions and giving a follow-up quiz on those concepts, and incorporating a two-stage exam where students first take the test individually, then immediately retake it in groups.

One of the biggest challenges, especially for new graduate instructors, with assessment feedback is that instructors want to provide detailed, specific feedback to students, but it takes time, which is often lacking (Henderson et al., 2019b). Another challenge with assessment feedback is it is often given to support the grade given by the instructor (Carless & Boud, 2018), and doesn't support students' agency in how to improve their work (Boud & Molloy, 2013).

Henderson et al. (2019a) conducted research that led them to identify 12 conditions that enable effective feedback. Four of these conditions relate to the design of feedback and are most relevant for Gooblar's suggestions to be effective. First, the feedback given to students needs to be usable and students need to know how to use the feedback given (Henderson et al., 2019a). At the beginning of a course, instructors need to teach students why feedback is given, how they will receive feedback in the course, and what is expected of them in regards to the feedback that has been provided. Second, feedback is given to meet the varied and different needs of students. Using Gooblar's suggestion of reviewing tests with students, especially if done individually, is a great way to provide feedback that addresses individual students' learning gaps. Third, feedback should come from not only the instructor but others (students, online communities, etc.) and in a variety of modes (text, audio recordings, in-person, etc.; Henderson et al., 2019a). This helps students have an active role in the feedback process by reaching out to others for feedback and evaluating how to implement the feedback received (Boud & Molloy, 2013). Lastly, the feedback should occur frequently and be aligned to the learning outcomes for the course (Henderson et al., 2019a).

Members of the learning circle had struggled with the best way to implement formative feedback using methods where the feedback from the instructor was not overly time intensive. Learning Management System tools that allow instructors to record audio or visual feedback were found to be valuable for giving in-depth feedback quickly. Other LMS-specific tools included Atomic Assessments and EdPuzzle to provide weekly formative assessments for students, and the group had found that low-stakes assignments, those with unlimited attempts, or even completely ungraded quizzes helped to encourage our students to focus on their learning rather than their grade. Rubrics were also discussed as a valuable tool to give specific feedback to students in a more time-sensitive manner. Perhaps most impactful to members of the learning circle was the discussion on the importance of reaching out to students who were failing the course, which resulted in multiple students being contacted and making additional progress in members' respective courses.

Emphasizing Process

The third area Gooblar focuses on is emphasizing process to students. "Focus on the process, not the outcome" is a common piece of advice given to learners of new skills that serve as a reminder to direct attention away from the result and toward the steps or techniques involved in order to learn information or acquire skills faster, easier, and with better results.

Learning largely occurs by watching others model behaviors or processes and, consequently, instructors need to model processes for their students to improve their success (Bandura et al., 1961). Gooblar suggests instructors start with modeling confidence, showing students they believe their course is designed to be an impactful learning experience that will benefit students' lives (Gooblar, pg. 158). Next, instructors can model stupidity by finding opportunities to model gaps in their knowledge and admitting to mistakes they have made (Gooblar, pg. 160). Instructors can model to their students how to be comfortable when they don't know the answer to a question by demonstrating their process of finding answers to difficult questions as they come up for students (Fleenor, 2010). Likewise, looking for opportunities to discuss scholarly work during class will further model academic behavior, demonstrating the processes that have benefitted the instructor as an expert in the field (Glass, 2013). Using these opportunities to reveal thought processes will model scholarly behavior to students.

Gooblar also suggests that, in addition to teaching students the rules of the discipline, instructors teach the function and history of the rules so students can consider what the rule was intended to govern and make their own decisions regarding the rules. Once the rule is understood, Gooblar suggests making students break those rules because by "inviting students to write badly, or perform an experiment incorrectly, or botch an equation's solution and then share their mistakes, we can get students to think about their processes of writing or performing experiments or solving equations. Once they start thinking about those processes, we can start helping them do them right" (Gooblar, pg. 176).

Members of the learning circle had a few strategies that mirrored Gooblar's suggestions, including synchronously walking through the steps of a problem and demonstrating their own processes to students through thinking out loud as they solve a mathematical equation or write an essay. Additionally, members agreed to have an assignment in which students break the rules would shift students' focus to the process and stimulate creativity. While the individual examples of how graduate instructors can use this concept differed by teaching discipline, the existing literature supports the importance of modeling central process to students as the act of 'stupidity' and outright failure is an integral part of the scientific process (Schwartz, 2008). The practice of teaching productive failure, where students are set up to fail by being asked to solve challenging problems before receiving explicit instructions, has been one method of approaching this idea. Modeling productive failure for students involves showing students the method of approaching the problem, then asking students to do the same, and research has shown that this can improve student understanding overall (Chowrira et al., 2019). Overall, modeling the process of learning appears vital to improving skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving in our students (Snyder & Snyder, 2008). Instructors modeling the processes they find most important can give their students skills they can take outside of the classroom.

Conclusion

Higher education saw a dramatic and sudden shift to online learning as the COVID-19 pandemic swept through the world in 2020. While the authors found Gooblar's strategies helpful in a face-to-face classroom, they found his examples lacking in online learning contexts. Additionally, many of the suggestions provided are overwhelming and time-intensive to implement all at once. For example, many of the strategies to give students ownership of the course require changing the fundamental structure of the course, something that isn't necessarily feasible for a graduate instructor. Based on the experience of those present in the learning circle, novice instructors may find it easier to use strategies to improve student discussion and the syllabus. While it may be intimidating to implement active learning by completely shifting a course to a flipped learning structure, or by allowing students to decide on course topics, assignments, or grading, each suggestion could be implemented over time to slowly modify a course to apply these concepts and teaching strategies. Several authors found success in implementing a strategy or idea from the book. For example, one author created a video example for his students of the process they use to write a summary for a journal article. Several of the authors also implemented a peer review process where students were able to give and receive feedback on major assignments in the course.

The authors of this review highly recommend Gooblar's book *The Missing Course*. The book is a wealth of actionable suggestions made by Gooblar for both novice and experienced instructors to create a more collaborative learning environment in many different disciplines. The book is a wealth of practical information based on theory and embedded with actionable strategies to improve course instruction.

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