Mentorship for New Faculty Members: A Qualitative Follow-up to Prior Canadian Research

by

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Abstract

Faculty members play a critical role in upholding the academic mission of institutions of higher education and are integral in supporting student success. It is widely understood that new faculty struggle and as incoming cohorts of new faculty become increasingly diverse, their unique challenges are beginning to be studied. This requires that new faculty receive appropriate support as they transition into academia. Mentorship, originally examined through the traditional dyad model has long been seen as the solution that benefits the mentee, the mentor and the institution: the benefit triad. That said, recent research has begun to question the benefit triad and alternative mentorship models are being studied. The gap in the Canadian higher education literature, particularly of cross discipline mentorship initiatives and their long-term implications, led to this study. Thus, the purpose of this study is to build upon prior research to contribute to a qualitative retrospective exploration of mentorship. This qualitative study interviewed 46 faculty members (new faculty and chairs of departments) to gauge their reactions to prior research findings and explore their perspectives to see what if anything has shifted over time regarding mentorship practices. Overwhelmingly participants were not surprised by the summary of previous findings, suggesting that not much has changed. The implications of this research, as viewed through the conceptual framework of this study ethics of care/caring democracy, are that faculty members need to be cared with via mentorship and other initiatives throughout their transition especially amidst the rising pressures of the neoliberal institution.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the faculty members who agreed to participate in this study. They were open and honest, welcomed me into their offices and facilitated my critical reflection of what mentorship is and can be. Their passion for their work, even amidst challenges was inspiring and it was an honor to share their stories.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Heather Kanuka, first for hiring me as a Research Assistant to work on the project that later became this thesis and second for her ongoing support. I am eternally grateful for her encouragement and patience as I chipped away at this thesis while also juggling many other commitments. Because of Dr. Kanuka I now believe myself to be a researcher and am eager to pursue more. I must also thank my partner, Jeff, for riding the rollercoaster that is graduate school with me (even though he did not sign up for it) while also keeping me grounded, focused and fed. Thank you to my parents, family, friends and co-workers who believed in me and provided a listening ear when I was both inspired and frustrated by my topic and at times overwhelmed with this experience. My gratitude to my current supervisor, Dr. Johanna Pagonis who helped me to the finish line and inspired me to embrace the experience, as well as the excitement and curiosity that comes with the research process.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Institutions of higher education play a significant role in society and are increasingly being called to act as change agents in responding to global issues threatening humanity (Re-Code, 2021). Faculty members are critically important to this endeavor and in enacting the overall mission of the institution. They are necessary in determining research, teaching and service initiatives (Kanuka, 2012), play a crucial role in the student experience (Marken, 2021) and contribute to institutional reputation (MacPherson, 2022). By way of example, at my own institution (University of Alberta), faculty members have the responsibility to act *for the public good* as outlined in the strategic plan, by tackling local and national challenges, by educating citizens, asking the big questions, pushing the limits of human knowledge, and leading positive change (University of Alberta, 2016). This is a lot to ask of faculty, and it comes at a cost to the institution. Faculty are an expensive resource (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012), with 75% of the University of Alberta's operating expenses going towards salaries and benefits (University of Alberta, 2022). It also comes at a cost to the well-being of faculty members who are reporting increasing workload demands and overall stress and anxiety (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2020). These costs can be extra burdensome for new faculty members. Decades of research underline the challenges that many new faculty face as they struggle to transition into academia. For example, research has shown that many new faculty have reported the need for additional supports in preparing for teaching and research, understanding tenure and promotion, developing professional networks and achieving work life balance (Austin et al., 2007). For over a decade now, research has reported the need to

understand how to best support incoming faculty, as retirements of aging faculty continue to intensify hiring demands (Brownlee, 2015) and the next generation of incoming faculty become more diverse (Austin, Sorcinelli, McDaniels, 2007; Johannessen et al, 2012), thus requiring intentional and equitable supports. While preparation for this change should have begun years ago, most Canadian universities are now at this critical juncture, as many senior faculty are entering retirement age. While it was difficult to find data specific to University of Alberta faculty retirement numbers and trends, I did find general Canadian data:

> Canada's working-age population has never been older. More than 1 in 5 persons (21.8%) are close to retirement age (between 55 and 64 years), an all-time high in the history of Canadian censuses. Over the next decade, persons aged 55 to 64 are expected to carry less demographic weight within the working-age population. This is because the last cohorts of the large baby boom generation will have turned 65 by 2030. (Statistics Canada, 2022)

Mentorship has long been promoted as the solution to these challenges. Early literature reinforced the benefit triad of mentorship, claiming advantages to the institution, the mentor and the mentee (Boice, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Lannkau & Scandura, 2002; Reich, 1995; Otto, 1994; Luna & Cullen, 1995). However, two decades of Canada wide and University of Alberta research have uncovered barriers to and challenges with traditional mentorship models. The increasing pressure placed upon diverse new faculty members, alongside the tension that exists in the mentorship literature, presents a challenge to institutions that ought to be addressed.

This thesis explores early faculty member experiences with mentorship during their transition into academia and seeks to compare with research findings from the past two decades. I have organized my thesis into five chapters. The introductory chapter presents the statement of

the problem, purpose, research questions and key definitions. I also introduce my personal connection to the topic and positionality as the researcher. The second chapter analyzes literature on the topic and presents the theoretical framework: caring democracy (Tronto, 2013). The third chapter outlines the methodology used and chapter four provides the qualitative analysis of the data. The final chapter discusses the study's results, implications and future recommendations for research.

Statement of the Problem

As a $38 billion enterprise in direct expenditures, universities are significant drivers of economic prosperity and provide employment for close to 310,000 people (Universities Canada, n.d). This reflects the steady increase in enrollment trends at Canadian institutions; with enrollments 79% higher than they were in 2000, with 1.4 million students enrolled at Canadian universities in 2019 (Universities Canada, n.d) and growth of approximately 2.1% between 2018-19 and 2021-21 alone (Usher, 2021). Faculty become increasingly necessary to respond to the growing enrollment trends as outlined in policy and strategic directives at the governmental and institutional level. For instance, the Government of Canada (2019) intends to allocate nearly $150 million dollars over a five-year period to enact the International Education Strategy and one of the objectives outlined in Alberta Education's 10-year strategy for post-secondary education is to "attract and nurture world-class faculty" (Advanced Education, 2021, p.25). The University of Alberta (2016) aims to "build a diverse, inclusive community of exceptional students, faculty, and staff from Alberta, Canada, and the world" (p.5) through "the development of strategic recruitment, retention, and renewal plans" (p.7) of its faculty, with a focus on "increasing the proportion of assistant professors" (p.9).

It is clear that the goal is not to simply acquire faculty members, but to attract and hire the best. Faculty hiring processes are onerous and time consuming. One informal estimate averaged the time it takes a faculty member to sit on a hiring committee at 60 hours per faculty member, multiplied by 6 committee members is 360 hours, or 9 full working weeks of total faculty time (Birch, 2021). The hiring process for new faculty is a significant investment of resources and trust and does not automatically result in the success of new faculty; an understanding of their needs will lead to success (Austin et al., 2007). As institutions strive for excellence, consideration should be given for how to support new faculty throughout the hiring and onboarding process, given how costly and important it is. While faculty development activities such as mentorship may provide such support, they have traditionally been seen as unnecessary as evidenced by a lag in the literature compared to other fields such as management. As hypothesized in the literature, reasons for this include the assumption that newly hired academics have acquired many degrees, are adequately prepared and do not require a mentor, alongside the belief that new faculty will figure it out, and that a sink or swim approach is sufficient (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). Regardless of these mindsets, research has consistently shown that new faculty members need support to navigate the transition into the academe (Austin at al., 2007) with new faculty requiring competencies in the following areas: knowledge and skills, professional attitudes, interpersonal skills, and conceptual understandings (Austin & McDaniels, 2006). The literature has pointed to tensions within modern academic work such as tension between the discipline of the academic and the department or institution, the tension of the competing demands placed on their time and resources and tension between the visible and invisible often unwritten rules which operate in academia (Adcroft & Taylor, 2013).

Even though many, often those who have been in the academe for some time, feel that mentorship is unnecessary for faculty, the literature has generally concluded that mentorship is the solution as evidenced in its significant positive impact on career outcomes, performance and satisfaction (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). A 2013 interdisciplinary meta-analysis of mentoring found a range of consequences of mentoring: attitudinal outcomes, behavioral outcomes, career related outcomes, health related outcomes (Eby et. Al., 2013). Additionally, the benefit triad has outlined the benefits to the institution, mentors and mentees as follows. The benefits for new faculty (mentee) include grasping organizational culture, accessing informal networks and professional information, receiving more competitive grants, increasing publishing, increasing job satisfaction, enhanced understanding of the tacit rules within the institution. The benefits for senior faculty (mentor) include gaining satisfaction from assisting new colleagues, improving managerial skills, keeping abreast of new knowledge and techniques, enhancing status and self-esteem. The benefits for the institution include increasing general stability and health of the organization, new and senior faculty develop a sense of commitment to both their profession and institution, contributing to future organizational leadership (Boice, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Greying & Rhodes, 2004; Lannkau & Scandura, 2002; Luna & Cullen, 1995; Reich, 1995; Otto, 1994; Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). While there is a substantial body of research and opinion literature spanning decades that present the various benefits of mentorship, there are data that reveals the opposite; its challenges, barriers and ineffectiveness. Previous research that this project draws upon, as collected from a Canada-wide survey and U of A follow up interviews, reveals the following barriers to mentoring. A lack of reward system, lack of time and resources, lack of or limited training, mixed data on structured versus unstructured mentorship initiatives. Mentors report a need for resources, guidelines and

training to prepare for mentoring, university-wide orientation, peer-peer support, recognition and reward. New faculty report a need to have expectations around tenure and promotion demystified, need support and feedback in all areas (teaching, research, service), they note that mentoring relationships are typically problematic, discrimination is experienced, good faculty are too busy to help, lack of sense of institutional belongingness, struggle with work-life balance and a need to examine collegial relationships (versus competition and incivility; advice versus surveillance) (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012).

While mentorship can be applied to all new faculty, attention must be paid to the changing demographics of the academe, particularly of incoming faculty. Increased student enrollment, retirements both due to aging faculty and those leaving the profession have led to the increased need to hire new faculty (Austin et al., 2007). Faculty are becoming more diverse in gender, race, ethnicity and appointment type as increasing numbers earn doctorate degrees (Austin et al., 2007; Johannessen et al., 2012). Recent data from the survey of Postsecondary Faculty and Researchers, reveals that one third of Canadian academic faculty and researchers identify with at least two diversity groups and Postdoctoral fellows and PhD students are younger and more diverse (e.g., gender, visible minority, indigenous identity, self-reported disability, sexual orientation, first official language spoken). Postdoctoral and PhD students should be viewed as prospective faculty and components such as mentorship may entice them to enter a professor role. The representation of women in faculty positions has risen over the past 50 years (Statistics Canada, 2019) but with that has come some challenges. Women are more likely than men to report unfair treatment or discrimination, are less likely to receive research funding and typically tenured faculty at universities tend to be less diverse and more likely male (Statistics Canada, 2022). These statistics demonstrate the changing landscape of new faculty

members thus requiring updated and appropriate mentorship practices. As institutions face increasing challenges, it is imperative that they prioritize the creation of safe, inclusive and respectful cultures (Nowell, 2022). Inclusivity must focus on all faculty, particularly those who have historically been excluded or equity denied, such as women and minorities (Johannessen et al., 2012). Mentorship can equip faculty to respond to the changing landscape and challenges of higher education (Beane-Katner, 2014).

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to provide a retrospective examination of mentorship practices for new faculty members and explore changes in descriptions of experiences across 20 years. To achieve this, the study draws on qualitative interview data collected at the University of Alberta in 2012, as well as survey data collected from and across Canadian G15 institutions collected in 2007 and qualitative interview data collected in 2002 at the University of Calgary. To achieve this purpose, the following research questions were developed.

Research Questions

The central research questions of this thesis are:

- How, if at all, have perceptions of and/or experiences with mentorship changed over time for new and early faculty?
    - What remains the same, and what has changed in comparing data from the previous 20 years with data collected in 2018?
    - Has decades of research on mentorship been integrated? If so, has it resulted in successful mentoring for new faculty?

Definitions

Mentorship has been described in many ways. The literature agrees that inconsistent definitions are part of the challenge in studying the topic. As I am building upon prior research on mentorship, I will pull from definitions used in those studies. I also referenced the University of Alberta's Academic Teaching Staff Collective Agreement (2017) for some of the following definitions.

The robust definition below, touches on the core tenants of mentorship; a relationship, a process, a form of learning:

> At the core of the mentoring process is an interpersonal relationship between an experienced employee and a new employee – or individuals who are at different stages in their professional development – whereby the experienced person takes an active role in the career development of the new faculty member. The experienced faculty member may serve as a role model, adviser, and/or guide in various formats that range from highly structured and planned interactions to ad hoc and informal interactions. The underpinning assumption of mentoring as a form of learning and professional development originates from the belief that learning occurs through observing, role modeling and/or apprenticeship, and questioning. (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012, p.10)

As chapter two elaborates upon, there are multiple definitions and models for mentorship. There has been a surge in various peer and alternative mentorship models over the last decade that challenge the traditional dyad model that pairs an experienced mentor and a novice mentee.

Higher education: the post-secondary education systems that leads to an academic degree. For this paper, this will refer primarily to Universities as oppose to Colleges or Polytechnics.

Academia: the community of academics that work in higher education. I also refer to the *academe* to mean the same thing.

Faculty: means the academic unit of the University established as such by the Board of Governors pursuant to Section 19(e) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act (Alberta).

Department: means the academic unit of a Faculty, established as such by the Board.

New and early faculty: recently hired academics at the Assistant Professor level and pre-tenure. I use new and early faculty interchangeably throughout this paper.

Senior and experienced faculty: faculty who have been in their roles for 10+ years. The literature defines senior faculty in a variety of ways but for the purposes of this study, we prioritized chairs or department heads. They are all tenured faculty members in leadership positions as chairs within their department or faculty.

Neoliberalism: A term that emerged in the 1970s and 80s introduced by Reagan and Thatcher (Brown et al., 2011) which were founded on stripping away public safety nets, and focus on privatization, deregulation, and social spending cuts, with emphasis on free market and individual responsibility (Mintz, 2021).

Caring Democracy: the theoretical lens for this paper, which argues the need to put care, not economics, at the center of democratic political life (Tronto, 2013).

Unique Contributions

As the next chapter demonstrates, the literature reveals several significant gaps in the research. Firstly, poor evaluation metrics of mentorship initiatives have led to anecdotal

conclusions, and secondly, a lack of cross/multi faculty analysis (limited faculties represented in the literature e.g., nursing and education). Thirdly, while there is emerging research examining the needs of diverse faculty members (e.g., gender, race) it remains unclear what mentorship models best address their needs. All these gaps exist under a limited amount of Canadian research examining mentorship in academia and have led to tension in the existing research findings as outlined earlier in this chapter. This retrospective qualitative study aims to gain insight into these gaps by interviewing both early and senior faculty members from multiple disciplines, to gauge their reactions to findings of previous research data. The findings shed light on the experiences with mentorship of faculty at various stages of their career and how it compares to decades of earlier research.

As a theoretical framework, I drew from Tronto's caring democracy. Through this lens, the priority of care (for ourselves and others) is the highest value of society and at the very center of our institutions (Tronto, 2013). This lens will allow a focus on the individual faculty needs, as situated amongst the neoliberal and capitalistic shifts within the Canadian higher education systems.

Study Significance

The findings of this study addressed gaps in how mentorship efforts are evaluated and how research and effective practice on the topic are integrated to support new faculty. By better understanding mentorship and how it has been experienced by new faculty over the decades, across multiple research projects, a bigger picture has emerged. This has practical implications that can provide institution administrators, faculty and department leadership with the evidence needed to design mentorship initiatives that effectively support the diverse needs of incoming faculty.

Also, I will note the limitations of this study. Firstly, data for this thesis were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but I have acknowledged the current socio-political landscape and stressors impacting faculty (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2020) at the time of my data analysis (2020-2022). It provides further urgency to examine mentorship and will have implications for future research. Secondly, while this study has the potential to contribute to future, longitudinal research, it is not itself longitudinal in design since I did not interview the same participants at two different points in time. Rather, the study is retrospective, enabling me to build upon prior research to understand trends, themes, and emerging challenges regarding mentorship for early faculty.

Position of the Researcher

In 2018 I was hired as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) to work with Professor Heather Kanuka on a project that later became this thesis. I had spent nearly a decade working on the non-academic side of the institution managing Student Services. The prospect of deviating from a student lens to examine faculty mentorship as a thesis topic, did not initially appeal. As I delved into the research with Professor Kanuka and facilitated dozens of interviews with new faculty members, I became intrigued by the complexity of mentorship and its applicability beyond the realm of faculty development. It became clear that the impacts of mentorship, or lack thereof, for new faculty members ultimately impacted students, aligning with research that faculty engagement is highly predictive of a high-quality student experience (Marken, 2021).

To date, I have worked in higher education for over a decade in progressive management positions in Student Affairs at the University of Alberta and McGill University. My early years were focused in the mental health realm doing crisis intervention, peer support and mental health advocacy. My curiosity switched from the individual crisis response to the organizational aspects

of supporting students as I noticed that if the structures, systems and policies were not in place, the individual interventions rarely, if ever, tended to the root of the issue. Ingrained in me from this time, is a person-centered approach with the belief that individuals know what is best for them, alongside skills in active listening. I value collaboration and have worked at various levels to break down silos be it through committee work, policy implementation or student crisis response. My pragmatic and solution focused approach has permeated my research project which is evidenced by my frequent integration of institutional policy. The research practice gap is noticeable in the non-academic world of higher education, inspiring me to seek research and evidence in my solutions focused approach, not by reinventing the wheel. I recall chairing a subcommittee of the University of Alberta's Suicide Prevention Framework Implementation Committee and was challenged by how best to engage faculty members to support student mental health in the classroom. After conducting interviews with faculty members for this research project, it became clear that they are not adequately supported themselves and are therefore not always able to assist students in the way I had envisioned. Over the last few years working in higher level management positions, I have become more acquainted with the neoliberal tensions of the institutions, risk management, reputation and liability. Utilizing caring democracy as a conceptual framework allowed me to situate care for the individual, while acknowledging the neoliberal influences at play.

I must acknowledge the fact that I am a white, cisgendered, able bodied, female identifying person. This identity mattered when I showed up in participant offices to conduct interviews on mentorship particularly when topics such as gender, discrimination, and racism surfaced. As a twenty something master's student with no positional authority, I developed a different rapport and level of trust than interviews conducted for example by my supervisor,

Professor Kanuka. Additionally, participants fell into a different narrative discourse when I interviewed them, almost as if to impart wisdom on me, a young scholar. I integrated reflexive practices throughout my research which enabled me to identify preconceptions, personal and professional experiences, beliefs and assumptions (Holmes, 2020). This will be elaborated upon in later chapters of this thesis.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the topic of mentorship in academia, the importance of supporting new faculty members, and the current research gaps that exist within the Canadian higher education context.

I emphasized the important role that faculty members play in supporting the institution and the challenges they face as they transition into academia. Given the amount of time and resources that are spent on recruiting, hiring and employing faculty members, it is critical that institutions consider how best to support them, for instance through mentorship as they enter the academe. This chapter provided a snapshot into the benefit triad of mentorship and how traditional mentorship models have been researched. Given the lack of research conducted on cross faculty mentorship initiatives or the longitudinal implications of such programs, the aim of this study was presented.

In the next chapter, I will review the literature as it pertains to mentorship for new faculty members.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this study is to build upon prior research to contribute to a qualitative retrospective exploration of mentorship. To achieve this objective, I examine how perceptions and experiences of mentorship have changed over time for new faculty. As articulated in the first chapter, there is an abundance of articles on mentorship within academia, but a lack of published evidence-based literature that pertains to the Canadian higher education context. Furthermore, critiques that were highlighted in a 2012 University of Alberta study persist, in that much of what is available relies on anecdotal remarks, small sample sizes and American studies (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). Additionally, I observed a lack of multi-faculty campus wide mentorship initiatives or studies, poor or non-existing program evaluation frameworks, and a lack of or superficial inclusion of the needs of diverse faculty members.

In this chapter I describe and analyze the theory and literature pertaining to mentorship for new faculty members as they transition into academia. To outline the complexities of mentorship as aligned with the context of this study, this chapter will be organized in the following sections: conceptual framework, mentorship: what is it?, role of the mentor, needs of new faculty members, benefits and challenges of mentorship, gaps and opportunities for mentorship within academia. In each of these sections I will articulate the ways in which my study responds to gaps in the literature.

Conceptual Framework

Neoliberalism

Before introducing the conceptual framework used for this study, it is necessary to provide context by articulating the impacts of neoliberalism on higher education. Neoliberalism has influenced the design and application of mentorship initiatives and conversely may explain why mentoring is not always prioritized within academia. Neoliberalism is a philosophy said to be inspired by early economists Hayek and Friedman and is a modern version of liberalism that exploded in the 1980s by Thatcher and Reagan politics (Tight, 2019). Neoliberalism prioritizes the self-interested individual, free market economics (Tight, 2019) and has been described not just as a description of economic life but as an ethical system placing responsibility on the individual, therefore reshaping people's roles as workers (Tronto, 2013). Under this context, faculty success may be seen as an individual responsibility and therefore mentorship activities become unnecessary. In higher education, neoliberalism has become synonymous with terms such as corporatization of higher education, corporate university industrial complex, students as consumers, faculty as service providers (Cannella & Koro-Ljungberg, 2017). The neoliberal university and related crisis of care undoubtedly impacted faculty members in various ways, including the failure to adequately receive mentorship. For instance, Lawless and Chen's (2017) research found that immigrant female faculty experience unique pressure to function and produce in a certain way that is above and beyond what non-immigrant faculty experience. These findings are a reminder that the expectations under the neoliberal university are not only unrealistic but can be detrimental to marginalized faculty members. Under these conditions, it appears that institutions are more concerned with what faculty members can produce (e.g., in funds, prestige or optics) rather than spending time and resources on mentorship. Furthermore,

neoliberalism posits care as an individual responsibility, not a collective issue (Brugère, 2020). Oftentimes practices of care rely on hierarchy which inevitably reinforces the disconnect between those with authority over care and those directly providing care (Brugère, 2020). In the context of academia this may translate to higher level administrators such as faculty Chairs or Deans making decisions about how faculty will be mentored even though they may not be doing the mentorship themselves.

Tight (2019) notes that the neoliberal agenda is "the only game in town for running our universities" (p. 280) so leadership and policy makers have no choice but to follow suit in order to play the game. This creates significant tension for workers in higher education who do not hold neoliberal viewpoints. This tension is captured in The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations statement in response to the Government of Alberta's Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs Report (Advanced Education, 2021):

> It is not to impart skills of the moment, for a job today, that by some metric is purported to meet current market/industry needs, which is gone tomorrow. A university education develops and nurtures curiosity, critical thinking, higher order problem solving, and a quest to discover. These qualities and more, provide university graduates with durable, transferable, and versatile skills, allowing them to adapt and thrive in any environment. Furthermore, university education benefits society well beyond industry and labour markets, facilitating an informed citizenry to make important societal decisions. (Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations, 2021)

So, what can those working in higher education do about this tension? Tight (2019) proposes resistance and privatization as alternatives to academics who do not buy into neoliberalism, which may include various work around policy and practices. For this study, I

suggest that Ethics of Care/Caring Democracy provides an ideal conceptual lens to consider resistance tactics that may be used to counteract or cope with the neoliberal agenda and assist in caring for faculty through mentorship activities.

Ethics of Care/Caring Democracy

Mentorship, as seen through an ethics of care/caring democracy lens, prioritizes the act of caring for new faculty members as they transition into academia. Given the neoliberal influences and current political landscape, faculty members need care now more than ever and mentorship can be a vehicle to provide such care. In Tronto's 2013 book titled Caring Democracy, both care and democracy are described as facing a crisis; it is proposed that the two can be ameliorated through reprioritizing care by placing it at the center of democratic political life. Tronto's notion of caring democracy emerged from the broader theory of ethics of care originating from Gilligan's work in the 80s (Edwards, 2009). Gilligan defined ethics of care as "an ethic grounded in voice and relationships, in the importance of everyone having a voice, being listened to carefully and heard with respect. Its logic is inductive, contextual, psychological, rather than deductive or mathematical" (Webteam, 2011). Gilligan's feminist framing of an ethics of care emerged from the critique of Kohlberg's psychology of moral development (Tronto, 1993) and since then, many scholars have developed their own definitions and frameworks rooted in an ethics of care philosophy. Tronto is one of them and defines an ethic of care as "an approach to personal, social, moral, and political life that starts from the reality that all human beings need and receive care and give care to others" (Webteam, 2009). Under this explanation, mentorship as a care activity would be viewed as an essential part of the transitional period that all faculty members receive. Tronto writes about the need for care in both the private and personal sphere, stating that, "politically, the feminist democratic ethic of care seeks to expose how social and

political institutions permit some to bear the burdens (and joys) of care and allow others to escape them" (Tronto, 2013, p. 32). This begs us to consider who bears the burdens of mentorship and other care activities within institutions of higher education. This will be explored later in this chapter when looking at what the literature reveals about the roles that diverse faculty are implicitly or explicitly expected to fill (e.g., faculty of color occupy more service/committee work). To conceptualize ethics of care, a definition of care must be provided. The literature features a multitude of definitions of care. Tronto and Fisher's definition of care includes four phases of care: *caring about, caring for, caregiving, care-receiving* (Tronto, 1993). In Tronto's 2013 book, *caring with* was added as the fifth and final phase. Rather than to *care about* or *care for*; both of which reproduce unjust systems of oppression, Tronto's (2013) definition of care ethics centers on *caring with* (Goerisch et al., 2019). It is also in alignment with the suggestions outlined in the work of Goerisch et. al (2019) that "universities should approach mentoring from a mentoring *with* standpoint, rather than emphasizing the objective or function of mentoring" (p. 1744) to create reciprocal systems that value existing knowledge and experience within mentoring relationships which is of particular benefit to historically underrepresented faculty members. As this study aims to understand the experiences of all faculty, but particularly to fill a gap in the literature surrounding the needs of diverse faculty members when it comes to mentorship, the notion of *caring with* serves as a helpful lens to examine such experiences.

One of the critiques of ethics of care and of caring democracy is the ambiguity and subjectivity in its definition and application (Edwards, 2009). Tronto (2013) outlines the critiques of a concept of care as lacking a description of what constitutes good care. Tronto states that we should not seek to define all care as good care "for to do so is to allow ourselves to be

misled by the ways in which care can function discursively to obscure injustices" (Tronto, 2013, p. 24). Gilligan's original inception of ethics of care has been critiqued for reinforcing the public-private split of care, and thus focusing on care solely in terms of personal relationships (Tronto, 1993). Another scholar, Noddings, developed an ethic of care model that divides a duty to care into natural caring and ethical caring which has been critiqued for reinforcing traditional gender roles (Hassan, 2008). I selected Tronto's notion of democracy of care because it encapsulates the intersectionality of gender, race, and class across all spheres (public, private, political). This was particularly important when recognizing the impacts that the neoliberal university has had on new faculty members and the opportunity for mentorship to assist.

Mentorship: What is it?

To define mentorship, I will begin by providing a brief history of the term, challenges in defining it, delay in its application to academia and finally the working definition used in this study.

The term mentor dates back to ancient Greece as depicted as a character in Homer's The Odyssey. Odysseus enlists the help of his friend Mentor to look after his son Telemachus while away fighting in the Trojan War (Merriam, 1983). The example of mentorship portrayed in The Odyssey illustrated a mentor as a supporter, an advisor, and nurturer, which are still present in the current characterization of mentors, as outlined in the literature (Osborn et al., 1999). The word mentor has been used as a noun indicating an experienced and trusted guide for centuries, with the Oxford English dictionary citing the term beginning in 1750 (Siskin & Davis, 2000).

Many scholars have acknowledged the lack of agreed-upon definition of mentorship and mentoring (Healy & Welchert, 1990; Kartje, 1996) making it difficult to know what is being measured or offered (Merriam, 1983). Crisp and Cruz (2009) found over 50 definitions of

mentorship in their review of the literature from 1990-2007. Part of the challenge lies in the fact that the mentorship literature has emerged from multiple fields such as adult development, business and education, with each field holding its own definition, vision and purpose, thus resulting in a lack of unified definition (Kartje, 1996).

The literature points to a lag in the early uptake and research on mentoring programs in higher education compared to the management world. De Janasz and Sullivan (2004) note that 60% of fortune 100 companies in the U.S have mentoring programs, yet relatively few universities have such programs for professors. Why is that? To respond to this question, it is useful to trace the history of mentorship in academia. The 1970s saw the emergence of mentoring programs across various industries, and in the 1980s programs were developed to enhance the quality of faculty and administrators in post-secondary (Healy & Welchert, 1990). At this time, academia identified problems with how new faculty were being integrated into their role which contributed to the explosion of research on academic development in the late 20th century (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). Hypothesized reasons that the research on mentorship lagged in academia are said to be due to assumptions that newly hired faculty are sufficiently prepared, and to succeed in the professoriate one must be independent (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004).

Many early definitions of mentorship focused on the importance of a strong interpersonal connection, trusted relationship (Merriam, 1983) and outlined phases of the mentor relationship (Kram, 1983). In addition to the relational aspect of mentorship, the process and context that mentorship occurs in are critical in grasping the complexity of mentorship (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). The definition that will be used for this study provides a robust explanation of mentorship that includes all three: relationship, process and context.

As presented in chapter 1, I will be using the following definition of mentorship that was used in previous studies at the University of Alberta:

> At the core of the mentoring process is an interpersonal relationship between an experienced employee and a new employee – or individuals who are at different stages in their professional development – whereby the experienced person takes an active role in the career development of the new faculty member. The experienced faculty member may serve as a role model, adviser, and/or guide in various formats that range from highly structured and planned interactions to ad hoc and informal interactions. The underpinning assumption of mentoring as a form of learning and professional development originates from the belief that learning occurs through observing, role modeling and/or apprenticeship, and questioning. (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012. p. 10)

Guiding Theories

While the conceptual lens of this study is an ethics of care paradigm, there are several theories that have guided the development of the mentorship scholarship. Following is a brief summary of the most prevalent theoretical foundations underpinning workplace mentorship and faculty development.

In Dominguez and Hager's 2013 review of the literature, they presented that mentoring research is organized around three primary theoretical frameworks: developmental, learning and, social. There are also developmental learning theories tied to the formal and informal mentoring relationships (Kram 1985). For instance, Erickson's theory of psychosocial development, specifically the notion of generativity, has been noted as critical to intrinsically motivate mentor participation in mentorship by appealing to their desire to help the future generation (Ragins et

al., 2000; Doerwald et al., 2021). Generativity has been defined as "making a contribution to future generations" (Ragins et al., 2000, p. 1179) and relates to the motivation of mentors, which is felt by mentees. As this study examines participant experiences with their mentor, the role of motivation and interest is important. Researchers examining mentorship in learning organizations have stated that mentorship pulls on transformational learning theory, principles of adult learning theory and experiential learning theory (Merriam, 1983). "Transformational learning is fundamentally concerned with construing meaning from experience a guide to action" (Clark & Wilson, 1991). Merriam (1983) states that Mezirow's transformational learning theory presents a blueprint for how to navigate various life transitions and that "learning may result in a change of great magnitude – what Mezirow calls a perspective transformation" (p. 9). Transformational learning may occur through critical reflection and collaborative discussions between mentee and mentor, ultimately leading to an examination of underlying assumptions that can foster change (Klinge, 2015).

While this is not an exhaustive list, nor is it necessary to delve into for the purposes of this study, it provides insight into the theories that influenced the development of numerous mentorship models. Reviewing the various theoretical foundations of mentorship models will assist in understanding the experience of participants in my study, given that they participated in a range of models; some that are underpinned by developmental, learning and social theory.

Lastly, Dominguez and Hager (2013) stated, "early theories construed the mentee as a somewhat passive participant, receptive to the formation of the mentor and the hierarchy. Additionally, these approaches have failed to adequately represent women and minorities, in part because those individuals had not yet broken through historic social and organizational barriers to participate in sufficient numbers" (p.182). This quotation captures the gaps that my study aims

to address: how has mentorship evolved as experienced by new faculty members? Are the current mentorship models incorporate the diverse needs of incoming faculty members? My overarching research questions encompass these considerations.

Mentorship Models

The literature is saturated with various definitions, frameworks, and models of mentorship. The following section analyzes models that align with the research goals of this thesis. As inspired by the structure Nowell (2022) utilizes, I have organized the literature by the most common types of mentorship models: dyad mentorship model, peer mentorship model, group mentorship model, constellation mentorship model. All of these models can be applied in the following ways: formal or informal, self-selected or assigned, in person or virtual. I analyzed mentorship literature from the faculty development field as much as possible, but chose to include articles from the management and development realm to ensure a robust presentation. It is important to have a foundational understanding of the common mentorship models, as my participants discussed many of them. Furthermore, there is an opportunity for my study to examine non-traditional mentorship models that are less present in the literature.

Dyad Mentorship Model

The dyad model is the most traditional mentorship arrangement that pairs a mentee, sometimes referred to as a protege, with a more experienced mentor (Higgins & Kram, 2001). This has also been described in the literature as hierarchical mentorship where a senior mentor is paired with a junior mentee (Hundey et al., 2020). In the academic setting, the dyad model has typically paired an older more experienced faculty member to facilitate a learning experience with the new hire (Merriam, 1983). Under relational mentorship, the dyad model has the potential for mutual influence, learning and growth (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012) however it is

being increasingly criticized in the literature. Sandler (1995) critiqued the dyad model because of the potential for collegial discord and professional disruption. It has also been cautioned that this type of mentorship may inadvertently cause more issues with mentors steeped in tradition, thus perpetuating outdated practices (Haring-Hidore et al., 1999). As the traditional dyad model has become progressively questioned in the literature, many are moving away from it to become more collaborative and supportive (Higgins & Kram, 2001; Waddell et al., 2016; Webber et al., 2020). In my study, the dyad model was the most reported model amongst my participants, so it is critical to understand the literature.

Peer Mentorship Model

The peer mentorship model connects peers at a similar level or rank, with the aim of providing reciprocal support, sometimes across disciplines and career stages (Nowell, 2022). While the peer mentor model can be applied with or without structured guidelines, it is often described informally in the literature, for example in the format of peer support groups, or information lunches (Nowell, 2022). Peer review of classroom teaching appeared in the literature to be a popular technique used particularly by new and mid-career faculty with benefits spanning improved self-confidence to tenure preparation (Webber et al., 2020). Peer mentoring has been described as a horizontal mentor relationship often connecting peers through shared experiences and can provide space for vulnerable and open feedback (Cole et al., 2020). Cole et al. (2020) studied the impact of a cohort-based role reversal mentoring program in a nursing faculty. They found the model to be successful at increasing job satisfaction through planned, purposeful networking (as peers and with experienced faculty) to vent, receive encouragement and mutual learning (Cole et al., 2020). After analyzing the literature, potential challenges to peer mentorship may be that new hires are dealing with similar struggles and may be similarly

unaware of how to navigate. While this may provide validation and general peer support it may not help them learn certain aspects of their role (e.g., how to achieve tenure or navigating faculty politics). Conversely, some new faculty may be in direct competition (real or perceived) with each other, rendering it difficult to form meaningful peer relationships. Although most participants in my study had experience with the traditional dyad model, many talked about a desire for peer mentorship.

Group Mentorship Model

This model sees one or more mentors providing support to a group of mentees who share a common learning purpose (Nowell, 2022). Group mentoring may involve individuals from different ranks and experiences who come together for discussion and socialization (Nowell, 2022). It appears that various types of group mentoring models have expanded over the past decade as the dyad model becomes questioned. Lack of time and scheduling difficulties are cited barriers for the traditional dyad mentorship model (Johns & McNamara, 2014) making group mentoring models appealing to respond to a lack of available mentors per mentees (Nowell, 2022). Multiple and diverse mentors have been stated to be advantageous for both mentor and mentee particularly in building networks (Sandler, 1995). It has been noted in the literature that group mentoring is rarely utilized for faculty career development, despite research pointing to its effectiveness (Johns & McNamara, 2014).

Here are a few types of group mentoring that were prominent in the literature. A mentoring mosaic model also referred to as co-mentoring relationship has been described as a collaborative, experiential, reflective, empowering and composed of faculty members with a variety of skills and knowledge (Mullen, 2000). It has been found that mosaic mentoring programs which view all faculty as continuing learners, has the potential to support new faculty members to feel less

dissatisfied (Kanuka & Marini, 2004). Team mentoring is sometimes used interchangeably with group mentoring (Webber et al., 2020) and has also been described as multiple mentors working with one mentee (Hundey et al., 2020). Webber et al. (2020) discuss the success of their three generation mentoring teams (comprised of a new faculty member, a mid-career faculty member and a tenured faculty member) in onboarding new nursing faculty (Webber et al., 2020). This is sometimes described in the literature as a type of constellation format, which is covered below. Communities of Practice (CoPs) are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise through regular interaction (Wenger et al., 2002). A Faculty Learning Community (FLC) is a special type of CoP developed at one institution and researchers found that early-career academics who participated in FLCs were tenured at a significantly higher rate compared to those who were not in FLCs with participation having a positive impact on their interest in the teaching process (Cox, 2013). Waddell et al., (2016) were inspired by the research of Darwin and Palmer (2009) on mentorship circles when they developed their iteration. They found that their mentorship circle (interdisciplinary mix of four mentors, nine mentees) allowed for the organic emergence of relationships and sense of belonging. They believe this model has the potential to enhance retention, foster greater commitment to the organization, increase research outcomes and publications rates, and contribute to the goals of the university (Waddell et al., 2016).

Given the challenges that exist within the neoliberal university regarding resourcing mentorship initiatives and preventing siloization, group mentorship may fill that gap.

Constellation Mentorship Model

The constellation approach to mentorship encourages multiple relationships as opposed to a synchronous group mentorship experience, and it has been found to be valuable for new faculty

(Mazerolle et al., 2018). Nowell (2022) describes constellation mentorship as a model where a mentee has multiple mentors enabling them to experience different styles, for example a mentor for teaching, another for graduate supervision and one for long term career goals; each serves a different purpose to support their development. De Janasz and Sullivan (2004) promote the idea that multiple mentors are beneficial in providing a variety of insights. Beane-Katner (2014) reports that a network approach to mentoring helps new faculty form a mutually supportive cohort, connects new faculty to important resources on campus, and promotes the idea that a dynamic, flexible mentorship model can continue to evolve throughout a career (Beane-Katner, 2014). In a study of 20 athletic training faculty who were interviewed to explore perceptions of mentorship, it was found that a constellation approach to mentorship (e.g., multiple relationships) was naturally occurring. New faculty were seeking out various mentors both internal and external to the institution to provide different insights and benefits (Mazerolle et al., 2018).

In line with the theoretical framework of this study and to truly embody a caring with mentality, a constellation network approach should be examined.

Applications of Mentorship Models

Next, I will break down how each of the above models can be applied: formal versus informal, self-selected versus assigned, in person versus remote/virtual. The literature has tended to focus on structured and formal mentorship programs. When other models were researched it tended to be with small sample sizes and anecdotal in analysis. My study aims to address these gaps.

Formal Versus Informal (Structured Versus Unstructured). Formal mentorship is where the mentor-mentee relationship is established deliberately within the confines of a structured mentorship program (Hundey et al., 2020). On the contrary, informal mentorship,

sometimes referred to as unstructured mentorship, is where the mentor-mentee relationship develops organically outside the confines of a structured mentorship program. An overview of the literature reveals that much of the studies and opinion literature favor formal structured programs that have clear expectations, regular meetings and commitment from both parties (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). For example, a qualitative study conducted at an Australian university (n=11), found that while informal support from senior colleagues was appreciated, formal arrangements were seen as more valuable, particularly in developing discipline specific expertise because those most in need of support tended to connect with others at a similar level (Clarke & Reid, 2012).

Self-Selected Versus Assigned. Mentees can either self-select their own mentor or be assigned to a mentor through a matching process (Hundey et al., 2020) sometimes by a mentorship program coordinator or higher-level administrator (e.g., faculty or department chair). Tollefson-Hall et al. (2013) suggest cross department pairings in order to minimize conflict and tension felt within the department, particularly by new faculty who may not be comfortable raising questions or concerns to their mentor. However, the downside to this approach is that these mentors cannot provide advice or mentoring with respect to the mentee's department or discipline. In a study of 282 mentors working in government supervisory positions, it was found that mentors are likely to select mentees according to their perceived ability and potential, rather than perceived need for help, leaving those most in need of mentoring, less likely to receive it (Allen et al., 2000). It is stated repeatedly in the literature that the mentor selection process can be problematic (Webber et al., 2020). For instance, Agger et al. (2017) report that the selection processes for mentors can be exploitive and power-driven, potentially excluding marginalized faculty members.

In Person Versus Remote or Virtual. Some have suggested a need for in person face to face interaction even amidst a surge of technological advances (Savage et al., 2004). Hundey et al. (2020) reviewed the literature and found a gap in online and blended models for faculty mentorship programs and recommended developing, implementing and assessing such programs. Nowell (2022) describes distance mentorship as an opportunity to connect mentees and mentors that are in different faculties or campuses and points to the emerging impacts of COVID-19 which has required mentorship to pivot to an online delivery model. In the area of medical education, Chan et al. (2018) point to inadequate mentorship and competing demands for new faculty, leading them to develop an incubator program: a longitudinal, asynchronous curriculum, focusing on education scholarship skill development in early-to mid-career clinical educators. They designed a yearlong curriculum with 12 modules, 30 participants with three in-person sessions during the year embedded within national conferences. They found a high level of online engagement from participants, yet more research is needed to assess the level of learning, quality mentorship, satisfaction and longitudinal impacts (Chan et al., 2018).

Given the diverse range of needs of the participants in my study, it is important to consider the variety of delivery models for mentorship activities. Additionally, given the recent challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there may be more of a need and interest to explore virtual mentorship initiatives. This will be further considered in the final chapter of this thesis.

Role of the Mentor

Depending on the context and specific mentee goals, mentors take on numerous roles (Ambrossetti & Dekkers, 2010). Mentors have been described as learning facilitators, advocates, role models, strategists, and collaborators to name a few (Fowler & O'Gorman, 2005). In their study, Sands et al. (1991) categorized the mentor as either the friend, the career guide, the

intellectual source, or the intellectual guide. They found that faculty who had been mentored in graduate school preferred the intellectual guide, and female faculty preferred the career guide (Sands et al., 1991). This suggests individualized preferences depending on several factors such as past experience, goals and perceived needs. The distinctions between mentorship and related concepts, such as role modeling, are often unclear which has consequences to the development of mentorship programs as they can be based on assumptions (Sambunjak et al., 2010). Coaching is another related term, and research on its practices is said to be relatively new to the field of higher education even though it may have been occurring but not labeled as such (McDowell et al., 2014). Mentoring and coaching are sometimes used interchangeably, however they are different professional development processes (McDowell et al., 2014) wherein coaching provides faculty members with just-in-time resolution to pedagogical issues in the classroom and mentorship enables reflection. Others have called for high quality relational mentorship, describing it as being authentic, empowering leading to increasing motivation, skill acquisition (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2010). Most of these descriptions are rooted in a relationship that centers around someone with experience helping someone with less experience or peers leaning on each other for support. Regardless of the exact title given to the mentor, or the specific type of mentorship model used, the overall role of the mentor is to help the mentee with their needs as they transition into academia.

As this section highlights, mentors often wear many hats and take on a variety of roles. That said, many of the studies on mentorship failed to define the role of the mentor in the outset of their research study, or for participants in their programs. This appeared to result in a misalignment of expectations between mentee and mentor. This gap has implications for

effectively measuring the success of such relationships or initiatives, which this study aims to address.

Needs of New Faculty Members

Firstly, who are new faculty members? As outlined in my first chapter, incoming cohorts of new faculty across north American institutions are increasingly more diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, appointment type (Austin et al., 2007; Johannessen et al, 2012) and Canadian data shows Postdoctoral fellows and PhD students as the youngest and most diverse cohort to date in terms of gender, visible minority, indigenous identity, self-reported disability, sexual orientation, first official language spoken (Statistics Canada, 2020). I will begin by outlining what the literature says about the general needs of all new faculty members. I will then share what the literature says about diversity regarding new faculty and mentorship. I will also present the specific political context affecting the University of Alberta, the site of my study.

It has been long understood that new faculty struggle (Webber et al., 2020) and one study found that stress tended to increase from year one to three (Menges, 1999). The literature has been consistent in stating that new faculty struggle during the transition from doctoral studies, lack support in teaching, research and service components of their role (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). More specifically, they struggle with expectations for performance, lack comprehensibility of the tenure system, they need collegiality and community, and are uncertain as to how to balance professional roles with other aspects of their life (Austin et al., 2007; Rice et al., 2000). Tenure is often valued by early career faculty because of the perceived protection of academic freedom, job security, and peer evaluation yet in practice new faculty seek explicit performance criteria, feedback, transparent review process and flexible time frame to complete work (Austin et al., 2007). New faculty hope to work in a community of respect and

collaboration but often report feeling isolated, fragmented, lonely and in competition with their colleagues (Solem & Foote, 2004). Austin et al. (2007) note that several studies have found time management to be the most significant issue for new faculty, particularly as workloads and range of tasks increase under the neoliberal institution. Teaching was another area documented to be problematic for incoming faculty. Analysis from one study found teaching as the main source of stress for new professors who step into their role with limited or no experience in course design, pedagogy or learning theory (Solem & Foote, 2004). One case study at a Canadian institution responded to the gap in teaching focused mentorship by creating a peer mentorship initiative that ultimately found an enhancement in professional identities (as teaching faculty) and a renewed commitment to teaching (Simmonds & Dicks, 2018). This case study stressed the fact that faculty are not a monolith; they are made up of diverse identities. The next section will expand on what is meant by the term diversity, and what the literature says about diverse faculty needs and the role of mentorship.

Diversity

In Universities Canada 2022 Report titled Building a Race Conscious Institution, diversity was defined as:

> A composite of several intersecting dimensions of difference across personal attributes, sociocultural group membership, and organizational status and affiliations. In the context of EDI in higher education, institutions are interested in the compositional diversity or the numeric and proportional representation of people in relation to the internal dimensions. (p.7)

Most of the literature on diverse faculty member experiences with mentorship focused on gender and race, specifically on the needs of women and people of color. There is a noticeable

gap in the literature pertaining to the mentorship needs of other minority (e.g., neuro-diverse, physically disabled) or intersecting identities (e.g., LGBTQ2+) of new faculty members. This is concerning given the increase in diverse identities of the incoming cohort of faculty members. For example, Canadian faculty demographic data from a survey of postsecondary academic faculty and researchers shows that:

> One-third of survey participants from Canada's postsecondary sector identified as members of at least two diversity groups—with postdoctoral fellows and PhD student respondents most likely to identify with multiple groups. On average, 31% of survey participants have identified with at least two of these diversity groups. About 33% of postdoctoral fellows and 43% of PhD students identified with at least two diversity groups, compared with 28% of both college and university faculty. More than twice as many PhD students (9%) identified with three to five diversity groups, compared with 4% of university faculty and postdoctoral fellows, and 3% of college faculty. In general, younger faculty and researchers were more diverse: 39% of respondents below age 35 identified with two or more diversity groups, compared with 29% of those 35 years and older. (Statistics Canada, 2020)

In terms of defining gender, much of the current understanding in the literature focuses on its' fluidity, as seen in this UNESCO definition:

> Roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures. Gender roles and expectations are learned. They can change over time and they vary within and between cultures. Systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and more, modify gender roles. The concept of gender is vital because, applied to social analysis; it

> reveals how women's subordination (or men's domination) is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it fixed forever. (UNESCO, 2023)

Most of the research papers that I reviewed for this study in relation to mentorship for new faculty members, referred to gender in a narrow way. While I acknowledge that gender falls on a continuum not a binary, for the purposes of sharing data presented in other research articles, I will refer to male and female to refer to sex and woman and man to refer to gender as a construct. When citing research papers, I will maintain the language they used.

The unique needs of female presenting and woman identifying faculty members were well documented over the decades. One study found that women early in their career find it difficult to find a mentor among senior colleagues due to discrimination or not being taken seriously by male colleagues (Rice et al., 2000). While it was not stated which faculty this pertained to, it is plausible that this is particularly pervasive in male dominated areas such as engineering. In another study, Canadian researchers found the greatest challenge for female faculty to be the child and career related time crunch resulting in the *May Baby Syndrome*, where women attempted to avoid disrupting academic calendar (Armenti, 2004). Armenti (20014) has found that women face challenges in their research (academic culture leads to teaching/service as women's work, less time for research), a higher willingness to leave the academy (guilt about not spending more time with family), and problems achieving tenure and promotion (teaching/service/childbearing interrupts research/publishing schedule). This has significant implications to the trajectory of a woman's career, attainment of tenure and places additional demands on them. Mentorship could play a critical role in supporting women as they navigate all these stressors. This particular study did not comment on the experiences of male faculty

members experience with paternity leave, however this would be an area for future research. According to 2022 Gallup research, 28% of survey respondents who self-identified as cis gender women in academia say gender limits their advancement and compared with 11% of their self-identified cis-gender male counterparts, women report feeling they were passed over for a promotion or opportunity at work because of their gender (Markern, 2022). A potential limitation of this Gallup study is the failure to define or elaborate on the differences between sex and gender. While the Gallup research focuses on the American context, similar trends have been observed in Canada. Although women make up a majority of all postsecondary enrolments (56.4% in universities and 55.8% in colleges), they make up just 44% of all university teachers (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2018). Furthermore, full-time female university teachers on average continue to earn significantly less than their male counterparts, at 90 cents on the dollar in 2018 (Statistics Canada, 2020). This tells us that while we start to see more females in faculty positions, they have unique needs and stressors that ought to be considered as areas to support, potentially through mentorship. Furthermore, as Fowler (2017) cautions, "it is not simply access to mentoring that is needed. Mentoring relationships and formal programs should not be developed on the premise that mentoring benefits women and men similarly, or equally" (p. 328).

Findings from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education at Harvard University indicate that 73% of white faculty agree that there is visible leadership support for diversity on campus versus just 55% of black faculty (Flaherty, 2021). This raises many questions: how do diverse faculty members perceive diversity initiatives? If minority faculty (e.g., women or people of color) do not feel that diversity is a priority, how does that impact them? How does this enhance or detract from their experience in academia? Of particular interest

to this study, how does this impact the needs of diverse new faculty and what role does mentorship play? The literature tells us that minority faculty tend to lack support (e.g., mentorship) are required to take on additional workloads in supporting minority students (e.g., black professors support black students) and committees (e.g., diversity committee) and thus can struggle to acquire tenure (Duntley-Matos, 2014). The findings of one qualitative study in the U.S. found that faculty of color encountered additional day to day stress as they navigated situations or environments where they were the only person of color in an all-white department or committee leading to isolation (Rice et al., 2000). Other scholars in the U.S. have noted a lack of research in the area of retention of marginalized faculty members, such as black faculty (Townsend-Johnson, 2006). Another American study found that minority faculty benefited from cultural and emotional support from their mentor (Mahoney et al., 2008) implying a specific need for cultural understanding and connection. Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004) highlighted several common issues in cross-racial relationships such as a lack of or difficulty establishing trust, acknowledged and unacknowledged racism, tokenism and pressure to serve on committees, the double-edged sword of otherness in the academy racial vision or blindness. Furthermore, American studies have shown that women and minority faculty may benefit from a mentor of similar gender and race (Mahoney et al., 2008). Culturally centered mentorship programs have the potential to support ethnic minority faculty by "a safe, collegial spaces that honors cultural issues and values, research agendas and skills" (Viets et al., 2009, p.12). Faculties are challenged with a lack of available mentors to support incoming new minority faculty even though there is benefit to gender and race similarities in pairings (Mahoney et al., 2008). Programs aimed at supporting the unique needs of underrepresented minority faculty members have been associated with increased retention (Daley et al., 2006) and institutions of higher education need to

recognize that minority faculty are necessary in meeting the demands of the global society (Johannessen et al., 2012).

Most of these studies are from American institutions, which points to a major gap in the Canadian literature as it pertains to diverse faculty experiences and need for mentorship. My study aims to understand the unique perspectives of faculty across various dimensions of identity and gender to explore the role of mentorship in supporting their transition into academia. Next, I will touch on the political context in order to situate the experience of the participants in my study, at the University of Alberta.

COVID and Funding Cuts to Alberta Post-Secondary Education Sector

The near 200-million-dollar budget cuts to postsecondary from the Government of Alberta (NASA, 2021), and the COVID-19 pandemic, have significantly impacted the needs of new faculty. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is the national voice for academic staff representing 72,000 teachers, librarians, researchers, other academic professionals at 125 universities and colleges across the country. CAUT surveyed its' members and found that the pandemic impacted faculty research, mental health and belief in their institution. For instance, two out of three academic staff were researching less or not at all, 84% of respondents reported higher stress levels due to anxiety over the pandemic, balancing work and dependent care, challenges with teaching and research, and job insecurity (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2020). Lastly, while 1 in 10 professors nationally are worried about their institution's ability to recover from the impact of COVID-19, in Alberta 27% are worried (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2020) hinting at the compounding effects of the pandemic and budget cuts. Additionally, Gallup has reported the pandemic's disproportionate strain on women who have suffered greater job loss, higher overall stress, and worry than men.

Workplace burnout is also reported higher for women and the gender gap in burnout has only widened during the pandemic (Truscott-Smith et al., 2022). The impact of both the COVID pandemic and the Alberta budget cuts place faculty members in a precarious situation and it is plausible that mentorship programs have become de-prioritized in a neoliberal climate of doing more with less. As the needs of faculty are ever changing and times are arguably getting harder, it raises many questions about the potential of mentorship that this study sought to understand.

Benefits of Mentorship

For decades, the literature has touted the benefits of mentorship. As outlined in the first chapter, the benefit triad has consistently outlined benefit to new faculty (proteges / mentees), senior faculty (mentors) and the institution (e.g., Boice, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Greying & Rhodes, 2002; Lannkau & Scandura, 2002; Reich, 1995; Otto, 1994; Luna & Cullen, 1995). The literature generally concludes that mentoring has a "significant positive impact on career patterns, performance, and satisfaction" (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012, p.4). A 2013 meta-analysis of mentoring examined attitudinal, behavioral, career and health related outcomes and found mentors key to providing development opportunities resulting in higher compensation and more expansive career prospects (Eby et al. 2013). Increased self-efficacy, stress reduction and overall resiliency are some of the noted health outcomes (Eby et al., 2013). While this meta-analysis is insightful, it is not focused on higher education which depicts another gap in the literature. Furthermore, the interaction frequency and relationship length of mentorship activities are considered potential correlates. For example, regular interactions are needed to build a solid relationship for mentorship to have its impact (Eby et al., 2013). The authors also noted that another important correlate is motivation, as those who are more highly motivated to engage with mentorship, may receive more support (Eby et al., 213).

While the meta-analysis shed light on several positive outcomes and correlates, there was a noticeable lack of data analyzing the impact of large-scale structured mentorship programs within academia. One that stood out was the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program which is an American national movement aimed at transforming the way aspiring faculty members prepare for their careers. PFF provides doctoral, master's and postdoctoral students with opportunities to observe and experience faculty responsibilities (Preparing Future Faculty, 2002; 2003). Those who received mentoring through the PFF Program were more interested in a career in academia, more willing to teach, better prepared for university governance, more likely to have multiple mentors and more likely to have positive experiences with mentorship compared to those who did not go through the program (Gaff, 2002). Research has shown that those who have a positive experience with mentorship are more likely to mentor others in the future (Bozionelos, 2004), aligning with the notion of generativity (giving back to future generations).

There appear to be clear individual benefits to those who engage with mentorship initiatives, but a lot of the correlates and findings tend to place the burden onto new faculty members to engage in the first place. This may lead to several issues as are outlined in the next section, and suggest a neoliberal tendency to individualize the problem. By building off of prior research, my study aimed to understand both the benefits and challenges of mentorship as experienced by faculty members.

Challenges of Mentorship

While the benefits of mentorship appear to be many, there are several challenges that must be considered. Firstly, one of the challenges is around a lack of perceived need for mentorship activities. It is often assumed that incoming faculty have proven their potential during graduate studies and that they do not need support, however there is ample research that disputes this

assumption (Bean et al., 2014). These assumptions also occur outside of academia. In one study, a survey of 275 executives, found that those with no prior mentoring experience would perceive higher costs (more trouble than it is worth, dysfunctional relationship, nepotism) and fewer benefits (rewarding experience, enhanced job performance, loyal base of support – protégé trusted ally, recognition) and those with prior mentoring experience would perceive higher benefits and fewer costs (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). This raises many concerns, one of which being that those who may be less experienced with mentorship may not know what it can offer, may not possess the social capital to initiate such activities and may potentially have a higher need for support given the lack of previous mentorship. Furthermore, it is plausible that minority faculty members have not engaged with mentorship due to a lack of available diverse mentors to which they would feel more comfortable.

A second challenge is the belief that any mentorship pairing will suffice, as well as the tendency for many to accept mediocre mentorship relationships. Results from a national American survey of over 1000 employees across various industries found "that the presence of a mentor alone does not automatically lead to positive work outcomes; the outcomes may depend on the quality of the mentoring relationship" (Ragins et al., p. 1190, 2000). The quality of the mentorship relationship is important to consider. It will likely vary depending on the needs of the new faculty member, but a challenge lies in the subjectivity in what makes a good mentor. Additionally, the hierarchical assignment of care puts those potentially least connected (e.g., Deans) to what new faculty need, in charge of making decisions on who gets mentorship. Furthermore, they define what constitutes *good* or *good enough* mentorship. One study revealed that bad mentoring may be worse than no mentoring at all (Ragins et al., 2000). Bad mentoring could mean many things. On the one end of the spectrum, it could be unhelpful and on the other

end of the spectrum, it could be harmful. This signals a need to carefully foster the mentorship relationship and equip mentors with the appropriate expectations, skills and incentives. This poses a challenge given the lack of time, resources and general lack of value towards care activities, under the neoliberal university.

A third challenge to mentorship activities are the problematic interpersonal dynamics and power imbalance often present between mentor and mentee. Research has shown that poor mentorship relationships may persist perhaps because mentees are concerned about the negative effects of ending the mentoring relationship (Ragins et al., 2000). Departmental politics and varying degrees of individual power and privilege mean that new faculty are in a vulnerable situation. They are unaware of the politics and norms, have less power and privilege which can be indirectly or directly taken advantage of. So much so, that some programs have paired new faculty with senior faculty from different disciplines in order to avoid the competitive nature of colleagues working in the same area (Simmonds & Dicks, 2018).

The backdrop to all of this is the challenge of time, and not enough of it. The neoliberal university constantly demands that faculty members do more with less which inevitably impacts the actual and perceived availability of time to dedicate to mentorship activities. This raises several gaps and opportunities for mentorship in academia that this study seeks to explore.

Gaps and Opportunities for Mentorship within Academia

So far, this chapter has presented the conceptual framework for my study, the various definitions, guiding theories, models and applications of mentorship. Based on the literature, I examined the role of mentors, the needs of new faculty members and I provided the overall benefits and challenges associated with mentorship initiatives. Throughout all these sections, I highlighted the gaps that exist in the literature and opportunities for my study to address them. In

this last section, I will provide the final three gaps present in the literature that have not yet been covered. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the mentorship literature has been critiqued for being anecdotal, small in sample size, atheoretical and focused on the U.S. context (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). These critiques have persisted over the past decade and as a result have created several gaps and opportunities that this study intends to address.

Firstly, there remains a gap in the literature on studies that prioritize and focus on mentorship for new faculty members as oppose to other populations within higher education. Even over the last decade, mentoring schemes are absent from many campuses and most of the literature focuses on mentorship between faculty and students (Goerisch et al., 2019). For example, of the five times that the term *mentor* is mentioned in the 32-page University of Alberta Strategic Plan, only one of those is dedicated to faculty mentorship, while the rest are focused to student initiatives which is seen here: “establish mentorship programs at the institutional, faculty, and unit levels to nurture and support staff, faculty, and post-doctoral fellows throughout their professional careers” (p. 21). This illustrates where the focus has resided and who has been deemed most in need of mentorship. This perpetuates outdated assumptions that faculty members are academically equipped to step into the role, as outlined earlier in this paper. It is almost as if once the faculty member graduates from student status, it is no longer acceptable to be the *student*, in a mentee capacity. This fixed mindset around the need to be supported and unwillingness to step into the learner seat, alongside the pressures of neoliberalism in higher education appear to be the perfect recipe for individual struggle and isolation. This presents a prime and dire opportunity to evaluate how to normalize the need for support and care for our colleagues in order to strengthen communities. Imagine what this would do to the benefit triad, if

care were prioritized. By interviewing both new faculty members and chairs of departments, this study collected a robust snapshot into the experiences of care that faculty members have or have not received through mentorship.

A second glaring gap that emerged in the literature was the imbalance of faculties represented in the mentorship literature and lack of coherent campus wide mentorship activities. Generally, there was an abundance of articles outlining mentorship initiatives and active research in the medical and health sciences, specifically nursing, medicine and physical therapy with a lack of work being conducted in engineering, education, humanities and sciences. Of the faculties that were present in the literature most research was descriptive rather than empirical (Morin & Ashton, 2004). Solem and Foote (2004) point out the disjointedness in the literature, in that there is useful practical advice for new faculty, but it is disconnected from theory and discipline specific context. This has led some researchers to ponder, how can foundation programs work across structural divides of university departmentalism? (Clarke & Reid, 2013). In a survey of college administrators from over 125 institutions, researchers found a clear need for more support from the top, overall commitment, and the development of more unified, focused mentorship programs (Murray, 1999). In the competitive, rigorous, traditional setting of the academy, it is hard to imagine anyone working outside of their silo, but there is an opportunity for collaboration across disciplines and faculties through mentorship. In interviewing faculty from various faculties and disciplines, this study aimed to gain insight into these areas.

Thirdly, there is a gap in longitudinal research examining the implications of mentorship practices as well as inadequate and often nonexistent assessment or evaluation component to mentorship initiatives. Schechtel et al. (2022) summarized three challenges in the current evaluation frameworks of mentorship partnerships. First, there is an overwhelming focus on the

mentees voice and the mentee perspective is prioritized which may reinforce expert/non expert dynamic. Second, metrics used in mentorship evaluation have been developed for formal programs, prioritize institutional outcomes and rely on readily quantifiable metrics collected through surveys failing to capture quality of the experience. Third, the timing of evaluation tends to be at the beginning or end of the mentoring relationship, and these snapshot evaluations fail to capture formative feedback as the relationship changes over time. What happens to the mentoring networks over time for individual faculty members? Do the networks persist beyond the structured opportunities afforded by the yearlong new faculty development program? If persistence happens, what form do the networks take over the longer term? What can explain this persistence? What administrative structure and support is necessary so that the mentoring networks persist? (Beane-Katner, 2014). This raises questions not only around who does the care required in mentorship work, but who evaluates it? Furthermore, if there is hardly enough time to do the mentoring, it is reasonable to see that evaluation will not be prioritized. Building off the previous opportunity, if departments and faculties collaborated on mentorship initiatives, so too could they share resources to evaluate programs and share learnings. This study responds to these limitations by providing a retrospective examination of faculty member experiences with mentorship and how it is evaluated.

Summary

This chapter provided a review of the literature related to mentorship for new faculty members. The reviewed literature highlights the complexity of mentorship and the various theories, models and applications that exist. I presented what the literature provided in terms of the role of the mentor, the needs of new faculty members as well as the benefits and challenges associated with mentorship. Regarding the needs of new faculty members, I presented the needs

of diverse faculty and the focus on gender and race that exists in the literature. The impacts of the COVID pandemic and budget cuts to the education sector were shared as a critical piece to understanding the context of new faculty and how it influences their overall needs as they transition into academia. Based on the literature reviews, I articulated that we do not yet know enough about the Canadian higher education context. Specifically, there is a lack of multi-faculty campus wide mentorship initiatives or studies, poor or non-existing program evaluation frameworks, and a lack of or superficial inclusion of the needs of diverse faculty members.

The following chapter discusses the methods used to conduct the study and analysis of data. Generic qualitative data was selected and guided the development of semi-structured interview format used to explore both new faculty member and chairs of departments experience with mentorship.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter will outline the research design used in this study. As the aim of my thesis was to examine early faculty member experiences with mentorship during their transition into academia, qualitative methods were utilized to explore the depths of their experience. Given the lack of alignment with typical qualitative methodologies, generic qualitative research design was implemented. Forty-six interviews across multiple faculties were conducted with new faculty members and senior faculty (Chairs of Departments) at the University of Alberta to answer the central research question: how, if at all, have perceptions of and/or experiences with mentorship changed over time for new and early faculty?

This chapter will review the methodology, research questions, research design, and sampling procedures. The following chapter will describe the data collection, data analysis and credibility procedures.

Methodology

The methodology selected for this study was qualitative research design because it "provides useful insights into the multiple perspectives, experiences, and contexts that occur in the individuals' lives" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 57). The goal of my study was to gain insight into the multiple perspectives, experiences and contexts of faculty members regarding mentorship. Qualitative research focuses on thematic analysis to explore phenomena (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014) which was critical when participants engaged in a retrospective examination of mentorship. I use the term retrospective to refer to the fact that participants are using data previously collected and are also reflecting back on their own experiences. While this

is not a longitudinal design it is contributing to an examination of changing perspectives and practices over time.

While the literature is inconsistent with its account of how many qualitative research designs exist (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014), some of the common designs that I considered using for this study are: case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative research and phenomenology. As I reviewed the literature, I realized that the central phenomenon, intent and key procedures of my study did not fit neatly within one particular research design. This led me to select a generic qualitative research approach, also referred to basic or interpretive qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). First, I will explain why my study did not align with the aforementioned qualitative research designs (case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative research, phenomenology). Then I will define generic qualitative research and the associated benefits and potential challenges as outlined in the literature.

Firstly, case study's central phenomenon is a "system of people (a case) bounded by space and time" (p. 289) with the intent to describe what is happening (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014). My participants do not represent a specific enough system of people to be considered a case, nor is their experience transitioning into academia bound by a particular time. I interviewed a range of early faculty members, from a few months to a few years in the Associate Professor role and who were hired at various points over the last few years. Furthermore, they do not share the same department, faculty or discipline in terms of onboarding experience, culture, expectations. For these reasons, case study was not appropriate.

Secondly, ethnography's central focus is the language, behaviors, and beliefs, for example, the *culture* of a group of people with the intent to "describe cultural patterns" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 289). The aim of my study was not to observe a particular culture,

per say, nor to describe cultural patterns, but rather to understand the experiences of a diverse group of professionals with mentorship. Additionally, while there was a component of observation (e.g., of their office space during the interviews), my key procedures were to analyze data from the interview discussion, thus removing ethnography as an option for my research methodology.

Thirdly, grounded theory's central phenomenon is "a process, action, or interaction" (p.289) and the intent is to "generate a theory" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 289). I was studying the process of mentorship and the interactions involved with it, but I was not intending to generate a theory. Furthermore, the data that I collected was descriptive, not explanatory (Percy et al., 2015) as participants were describing their reactions to previous findings and comparing to their own experiences with mentorship. As presented in chapter two, there are many theories pertaining to mentorship that already exist, and my study's aim was to gather data from participants to compare with existing data and theories. This made grounded theory a poor fit for my research intentions.

Fourthly, narrative research is focused on "the experiences of one or more individuals" (p.289) and intends to "describe the meaning of experiences through stories" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014. p.289). During the interview process I asked participants to share their experience with mentorship, which could be viewed as asking them to tell me their story. However, I was not strictly focused on the narrative of one or a few participants. Rather, I was seeking reactions to findings from a previous study from diverse participants to ultimately explore if perceptions and experiences have shifted over time. Furthermore, I did not analyze the data for story elements (e.g., plot, characters) nor did I include a chronology of participant stories. Therefore, narrative was not the best choice.

Finally, phenomenology's central phenomenon is "an experience" with the intent to "describe the meaning" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 289). This simplistic definition may initially seem appropriate for my exploration of new faculty member experiences with mentorship. However, what I was exploring was more complex and nuanced. Firstly, mentorship is more than one single experience. As described in chapter two, mentorship is a relationship, a process and a learning experience that can happen formally and informally in various models and applications over time. Secondly, in my study, participants shared their experiences with mentorship while comparing it to their reactions to data from a previous study. For these reasons, phenomenology would not have helped me reach the depth of analysis I was intending. Percy et al. (2015) note that one of the most challenging distinctions is that of phenomenology and generic qualitative methods, prompting me to take a closer look at the differences between the two. "Phenomenology studies the inner essence of cognitive processing – what structures (temporality, spatiality) and textures (what are the felt qualities of the thoughts?) are found across the reports of many persons' similar experiences?" (Percy et al., 2015, p.77). Perhaps if I were interviewing faculty members to explore the phenomenon of mentorship, by asking them to describe what it feels like and looks like, it may be appropriate to use a phenomenological approach. Given that my study is interested in a retrospective examination of mentorship and its evolution over time, phenomenology does not fit. Furthermore, "the phenomenological interest is in the internal subjective structures of the experiencing itself" (Percy et al., 2015, p.77) versus the content of the experiences (e.g., thoughts on an issue). My study was less concerned about the phenomenon of mentorship, but rather the content of faculty experiences.

For these reasons, I was drawn to generic qualitative research design. Caelli et al., (2003) define generic qualitative studies as "those that exhibit some or all of the characteristics of

qualitative endeavor but rather than focusing the study through the lens of a known methodology they seek to do one of two things: either they combine several methodologies or approaches, or claim no particular methodological viewpoint at all" (p. 2). In many ways my study combines several approaches. For example, this study draws on the techniques of grounded theory for data analysis, the experiences of the participants used in phenomenology, as well as the stories of those experiences shared by participants that one might find in narrative inquiry. Finally, the study is bounded through the mentoring experiences. This noted, as Merriam and Tisdell (2014) highlight, "all qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The primary goal of a basic qualitative study is to uncover and interpret these meanings" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2014, p. 25). This quote is exactly what my study sought to do: to seek meaning from participant reactions to findings and elaborations on their own experience. Percy et al. (2015) encourages generic qualitative research to be used when "the researcher has a body of pre-knowledge/pre-understandings about the topic that he or she wants to be able to more fully describe from the participants' perspective" (p. 78) which was the case for my study. As outlined in earlier chapters, this study builds upon qualitative interview data and survey data collected over the past 20 years at various Canadian G15 institutions. This Canadian data is not perfectly aligned with the prior literature and my study aimed to check in and explore this mismatch further (e.g., benefits of mentorship versus challenges). Kahlke (2014) noted that "generic studies offer an opportunity for researchers to play with boundaries, use the tools that established methodologies offer, and develop research designs that fit their epistemological stance, discipline, and particular research questions." My retrospective examination of mentorship embedded within a constructivist epistemology as aligned with the

feminist roots of the ethics of care conceptual lens of this study, were best realized through generic qualitative research.

While the generic qualitative approach addresses the lack of alignment to other methodologies, there are some critiques to be mindful of. Some of the critiques against generic qualitative approaches are that: it is atheoretical, it lacks clear guidelines for researchers due to the limited literature available, and mixing components from various methodologies can lead to contradictions (Kahlke, 2014). Counter arguments to these critiques are that generic qualitative research requires the researcher to make intentional connections between the research question and the appropriate theoretical framework that aligns with the context of the research question as there is no "pre-packaged theoretical perspective that comes with these methodological approaches" (Kahlke, 2014, p. 43). Furthermore, the "insistence on the use of a single established methodology rests on an assumption that there can be an original, essential, or true methodology" (Kahlke, 2014, p. 43). In regard to the issue of perceived lack of literature on generic approaches, Kahlke (2014) counters that researchers implementing generic approaches are required to study an extensive range of literature to "think broadly about their work" (p.44) and pull on literature from many methodologies to make informed decisions on what to integrate. Kahlke also writes about the value in novice researchers working with a supervisor to develop generic qualitative approaches and that its potential to the development of new methodologies. Working with Professor Heather Kanuka enabled me to learn about the various methodologies and intentional design the methodology of this study. Regarding the final critique of generic approaches, "method slurring" (Kahlke, 2014, p. 44), Kahlke outlines the challenges that can arise when researchers attempt hybrid or mixed methods resulting in incongruent methodologies. In contrast, generic approaches do not force various methodologies together by "intentionally

building a new generic research framework" (Kahlke, 2014, p. 46). "The researcher then selects approaches that will work together to answer the research questions, rather than starting with an attempt to reconcile different methodologies already in existence" (p. 46) which is exactly what I did after reflecting on how to answer the central research question of this study as outlined in the next section.

Research Questions

As previously stated, following are the research questions guiding this study:

- How, if at all, have perceptions of and/or experiences with mentorship changed over time for new and early faculty?
    - What remains the same, and what has changed in comparing data from the previous 20 years with data collected in 2018?
    - Has decades of research on mentorship been integrated? If so, has it resulted in successful mentoring for new faculty?

Research Design

Generic qualitative research design was selected for this study as it enabled me to align with both the purpose of the research study and the conceptual framework. The former being the exploration of mentorship and how its' application and perception may have shifted over time and the latter being caring democracy/ethics of care which is rooted in feminist theory. The caring democracy/ethics of care theoretical framework used in this study views mentorship as a necessary activity of care that must be prioritized. Doing so requires an examination of intersectionality of gender, race, and other components of identity that inevitably influences such care activities. While there are other factors in academia than gender and race that influence care activities such as mentoring, these were more prevalently covered in the literature and commonly

discussed amongst my participants. Semi structured interviews were used to prompt participants to construct meaning by reviewing previous research findings and compare with their own experiences of mentorship. This aligns with the constructivist roots of generic qualitative research as it is about how individuals construct their reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2014).

Before delving into the specific components of this study's research design, I will provide a brief overview of how this project came to be. The aim of this research is to provide a retrospective examination of mentorship practices for new faculty members and explore changes in descriptions of experiences across 20 years. To do so, this study draws on qualitative interview data collected at the University of Alberta in 2012, as well as survey data collected from and across Canadian G15 institutions collected in 2007 and qualitative interview data collected in 2002 at the University of Calgary (prior studies and reports available here). My project involved meeting primarily with new faculty members, defined as recently hired academics at the Assistant Professor level and pre-tenure. I also interviewed senior faculty members who were defined as faculty who have been in their roles for 10 years or more and were in the position of Department Chair or head. Participants were invited to an interview where I reviewed a summary of key findings from the earlier mentioned studies and asked for their reactions.

The plan for this research study was reviewed by the human Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. This included approval of the participation and consent letter (see Appendix A), email invitation for both chairs and new faculty (see Appendix B), guided interview questions which includes summary of findings from prior research on mentoring (see Appendix C).

The remainder of this chapter will describe the research design used for this study in more detail, including sampling procedures, data collection, data analysis, credibility procedures.

Sampling Procedures

Percy et al. (2015) note that "generic qualitative data collection typically uses *larger* samples than other qualitative approaches use, because large samples tend to be more widely representative" (p. 79). This was true for my study as one of the aims is to address the gap in large scale Canadian studies examining mentorship. Purposeful sampling was utilized to intentionally select a specific number of faculty members from a select cohort of faculties to participate in the study. Another gap, outlined in the previous chapter, is that a narrow representation of faculties is present in the mentorship literature, so my study intentionally selected faculty from a range of disciplines. The initial goal was to collect data across four faculties (Arts, Science, Engineering, Medicine & Dentistry), through ten interviews with new faculty and five senior faculty interviews who were Department Chairs in each of the four faculties. I reviewed faculty directories though the University of Alberta website and selected faculty members based on the following criteria to ensure a representative sample: mix of male and female genders by examining visual representation of gender expression in photos and use of specific gender pronouns in their biographies, mix of faculty who completed their graduate studies at the University of Alberta and other institutions, mix of years of experience in the role, and I searched for a variety of departments within each faculty. I wanted to ensure diverse experiences and perspectives were captured. In the 2018 fall term, over 60 faculty members were contacted and invited to participate in the study. Given low response rates from certain disciplines to the initial round of email invitations, the plan shifted to focus on three clusters of

faculties rather than the original four faculties. These clusters are based on the Canada tri-Council and are, Arts and Humanities, Science and Engineering, and Medicine/Dentistry, Nursing and Rehabilitative Medicine. Thirty-one new faculty and 15 chairs of departments, for a total of 46 interviews were conducted. This included eight new faculty and five senior faculty in Arts and Humanities, 13 new faculty and five senior faculty in Science and Engineering, 10 new faculty and five senior faculty in Medicine/Dentistry, Nursing and Rehabilitative Medicine. Participant characteristics are provided below, in Table 1. The interviews were shared between myself and my supervisor Dr. Kanuka. I conducted 22 interviews with new faculty (five Arts, nine Engineering/Sciences, seven Health Sciences) and nine interviews with chairs of departments (one Arts, three Engineering/Sciences, five Health Sciences). Dr. Kanuka conducted the rest; 10 interviews with new faculty (three Arts, four Engineering/Sciences, three Health Sciences) and six interviews with chairs of departments (four Arts, two Engineering/Sciences). We followed the same protocols for the interviews and debriefed with each other to ensure consistency with questions and prompts.

Table 1

Participant Characteristics: Gender and Position Type per Faculty

Faculty Cluster	Arts and Humanities		Science and Engineering		Health Sciences		Total:
	New Faculty	Chairs	New Faculty	Chairs	New Faculty	Chairs	
Gender							
Female	5	3	5	0	6	1	20
Male	3	2	8	5	4	4	26
Total:	8	5	13	5	10	5	46

Data Collection

When faculty members responded to my email invitation expressing interest in participating in the study, I emailed them with two attachments; a formal invitation to participate (see Appendix B) and the consent form that they were required to sign prior to the interview (see Appendix A). I also encouraged them to review the report and findings from the previous study conducted in 2012 (see Appendix C and here to access previous research documents). Interviews occurred between December 2018 and March 2019. They were conducted in person, in the faculty members' office based on their availability and were approximately 30-45 minutes in duration. Semi structured oral interviews are one of the common types of data collection methods used in generic qualitative studies (Percy et al., 2015), and was used in this study. In

"qualitative interviews, the questions are pre-structured based on the pre-knowledge of the researcher, although there may be opportunities for *tell me more* kinds of questions" (Percy et al., 2015, p.79). In the interviews, participants were asked one structured question: what are your reactions to the findings from the previous studies (see Appendix C for the interview guide). The rest of the interview questions were in response to what participants chose to focus on after reading the findings. Using follow up prompts, I asked participants to expand on their own experiences (e.g., tell me more) with mentorship. With participant consent, I audio recorded each interview so that I could refer back when reviewing my interview notes. I typed my interview notes on my laptop during the interview, making sure to summarize content and check in for understanding throughout. This served as the first step in my member check process by asking at the end of the interview if my notes authentically captured their responses. I also reached out via email after the interview with a copy of my notes to ensure accuracy and validity in my interpretation.

One final note that I would like to make in this section is related to the physical space (participant offices), where the interviews were conducted. May and Lewis (2020) found that the *in situ* nature of the sit-down interview allows participants to easily talk about place in embodied terms. They urge researchers to pay attention not only to what people are saying but with the material and sensory qualities they describe or interact with. This somewhat echoed my experience meeting with faculty members in their office. Their offices were extensions of their story and a snapshot into the department culture, norms, values. Many of them spoke openly about the space and how it interacted with their experience and level of support in their role (e.g., lacking material, space or physical connection to others). Given the conceptual framework of this

study, I felt it necessary to include the observations and comments on space, as it often tied back to how they were mentored and cared for. This will be explored further in the next chapters.

Data Analysis

As outlined above, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. I followed the five general steps for qualitative data analysis as outlined by Plano Clark and Creswell (2014): preparing the data, exploring the data, coding the data, developing descriptions and themes and validating the findings. I will expand on what I did in each of the five steps below.

Firstly, to prepare the data, I reviewed the interview notes and listened back to the audio recording to ensure the transcription was accurate. I labeled folders and documents with a similar naming convention to ensure a clear system was in place to store and retrieve the data. Spreadsheets were created that would be used later in the analysis process to store coded data and eventually themed findings.

In the second step, exploring the data, I took the time to read through each set of interview notes multiple times to become familiar with the data and patterns. This helped me to begin thinking about the specific codes and themes that I needed to develop. During my preliminary exploratory analysis, I captured my memos, notes, observations, and reactions to the interview transcriptions. While manual transcription and coding is an "arduous and time-consuming process it's an excellent way to become familiar with the data" (p. 74) and assists the researcher in becoming "familiar with the 'voices' of the participants" (Bolderston, 2012, p. 74). Familiarity with participant voices was of high importance to me, especially as I had a large number of interviews to review (over 40). I explored data analysis software (e.g., Quirkos) but

decided it would be worthwhile to manually review the interview notes to become familiar with what the participants were saying, and to iteratively determine codes and themes.

For the third step, coding the data, I started with open coding, where I read through the first few sets of interview notes and started highlighting and noting similar responses across interviews. This ended up informing the creation of my codes. Codes are "labels used to describe the meaning of a segment of text in relation to the study's central phenomenon" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 359) and are a "sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of the data" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 199). After my open coding process, I identified 30 codes which fit within Plano Clark and Creswell (2014) recommendations to keep the number of codes to 20 or 30 to be manageable. I first coded the data in each individual word document that corresponded with each interview, and then copied the data into a spreadsheet. As part of my coding process, I assigned "descriptive notations" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 200) to each interview such as pseudonym (e.g., Eng/Sci NF1) department, faculty, identified gender pronoun, years in their faculty role, reactions to the findings, formal versus informal experience with mentorship. This allowed me to easily access certain types of data or sort according to specific categories/factors (e.g., new female faculty members). Consistent application of codes to capture themes is a procedure that can ensure reliability (Bolderston, 2012). See Appendix D for a list of codes and corresponding themes that emerged from my analysis.

The fourth step was to develop descriptions and themes. Patterns identified in the coded data became the themes which are defined as "conceptual elements that cover or span many individual examples of the category" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 206), referred to as themes. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) note, the development of themes is an inductive process, where

data from each interview are analyzed individually and the patterns that emerged inform the themes. After combining and grouping similar codes during the coding process, I was able to group codes into themes to ultimately answer my overarching research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I initially struggled to capture the essence of the themes that emerged in a way that corresponded to my research question. This prompted me to review one of the earlier studies that my thesis was drawing upon. In this earlier study, there were five themes that emerged from the collected data and they perfectly captured the essence of the codes I was trying to categorize. Also, as my study has the aim of studying changes in experiences and perceptions of mentorship, and to examine what remains the same and has changed from research conducted over the past few decades, it was ideal to draw inspiration from these categories in a way that facilitated the comparative analysis necessary for a retrospective view. I identified seven thematic categories: overall reactions to previous findings, experience with mentoring/forms of mentoring, mentorship considerations, characteristics of good mentors/purpose of mentoring, facets of academic work and life, discrimination and belongingness, barriers to or issues with mentoring. This follows Plano Clark and Creswell (2014) suggestion to have no less than five themes so that "the results include a sufficient number of major ideas to adequately convey the complexity of the central phenomenon under study" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 363)

Lastly, the fifth step required that I validate the findings. This encompasses credibility and trustworthiness, which will be expanded upon in the next section.

Credibility Procedures

Caelli et al., (2003) outline four components that must be addressed for generic qualitative research to be credible: theoretical positioning of the researcher, the congruence

between methodology and methods, strategies to establish rigor, and the analytic lens through which the data are examined.

Firstly, the theoretical positioning of the researcher must be acknowledged, which includes assumptions, personal history, motives and disciplinary affiliations that are connected to the research question and approach (Caelli et al., 2003). This was captured in chapter one where I outlined the positionality of myself as the researcher. Throughout the process of this study, I bracketed my own experiences, beliefs and assumptions and put them aside to remain unbiased. Plano Clark and Creswell (2014) describe bracketing as a strategy to validate the findings to ensure accuracy and credibility.

Secondly, the congruence between methodology (beliefs and theoretical frameworks) and methods (tools or techniques) must be articulated to provide the reader with clarity on the intention of the study (Caelli et al., 2003). For this study, that required me to seek a methodology that upheld the values of the conceptual framework of this study; caring democracy/ethics of care, and its roots in feminist theory. I was drawn to qualitative methodologies arising from the ability to delve into my topic and semi-structured interviews served as an ideal method to align to this exploration. With constructionism embedded in generic qualitative research, it was a suitable research design to examine how my participants constructed meaning out of the provided summary data and reflect on their own experiences. Given my conceptual framework, alternative methods such as a survey may not have fostered the level of rapport, safety or *care* for them to construct meaning around their experiences with mentorship.

Thirdly, strategies to establish rigor must be stated (Caelli et al., 2003). Questions surrounding what constitutes rigor in qualitative research appear to have been debated over the past few decades. Rigor may include “notions of moral soundness” (Caelli et al., 2003, p.7),

representation, power and privilege, credibility, and the role of member checks, positionality (Caelli et al., 2003). The use of theory and conceptual framework enhances the rigor as does coding, because "the researcher considers all the ideas in the data by coding all of the gathered information; because the codes represent the researcher's interpretations of the data, these interpretations are necessarily linked to and build from the data" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, p. 359). The use of theory and conceptual framework were outlined in the section above and helped enhance the rigor of this study. As did member checks, with were conducted at the end of each interview. I reviewed the interview notes with each participant and highlighted the most important themes or topics that were discussed. This enabled them to verify my perception of the most salient points. Additionally, after reviewing the interview notes, and listening to the audio recordings to edit my transcriptions. I emailed participants and provided them with a deadline to provide notes or edits in the format of track changes in the word document that I shared. This process enabled participants to check the accuracy of my notes to ensure they were complete and representative of our conversation.

Finally, the analytic lens through which the data are examined must be addressed (Caelli et al., 2003). Caelli et al. (2003) define analytic lens as "the methodologic and interpretive presuppositions that a researcher brings to bear on his or her data" (p. 5) whereas theoretical positioning is "about the researcher and his or her motives for pursuing a particular area of inquiry, the analytic lens is about how the researcher engages with his or her data" (p. 5). The analytical lens is critical for readers to be able to understand the intention behind the data collection and analysis (e.g., there is a need to explicitly explain the meaning behind the thematic analysis). In chapter one, I provided my positionality as the researcher, which included my professional background and reasons for selecting this topic. Furthermore, the analytic lens,

which I have been referring to as my conceptual framework, caring democracy, has been discussed in all chapters of this thesis thus far.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the generic qualitative methodology and research design used in my project. I articulated the reasons why a generic qualitative methodology was selected over other qualitative methods in order to best capture the experiences and perspectives of faculty members on the topic of mentorship. I presented a detailed explanation of my sampling procedures, how I collected and analyzed the data as well as credibility procedures. In the next chapter, I share my qualitative data analysis and will expand on the seven thematic categories that emerged.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview

This chapter will provide a review of the results collected in my qualitative research study. The purpose of this study was to examine changes in perceptions and experiences of new faculty members with mentorship over the past two decades. A general qualitative research design was used to collect data from faculty members regarding their reaction to previous research findings and how it compares with their own experience. Semi-structured interviews were used to interview 31 new faculty members and 15 chairs of departments.

Exploring Perceptions and Experience with Mentorship

Qualitative data analysis for this study focused on capturing insight into new faculty and senior faculty (department chairs) perspectives on mentorship, relating to my overarching research question: how, if at all, have perceptions of and/or experiences with mentorship changed over time for new and early faculty? As well as my follow up questions: what remains the same, and what has changed in comparing data from the previous 20 years with data collected in 2018? Have decades of research on mentorship been integrated? If so, has it resulted in successful mentoring for new faculty?

This chapter will focus on presenting the analysis captured from participants' reactions to previous findings. The next chapter, the discussion, will compare my findings to those collected over the past two decades to ultimately answer the question surrounding what if anything has shifted during this time regarding new faculty experiences with mentorship.

Participant Details

My research project was conducted at the University of Alberta, a large research-intensive university in Western Canada. This university was selected as it was also the site of one of the previous research studies that my project built upon. Additionally, it was selected due to the accessibility of the participants. Faculty members were recruited from various faculties and departments and grouped into the following categories: Arts and Humanities, Engineering and Science and Engineering, Health Sciences (Medicine/Dentistry, Nursing and Rehabilitative Medicine). The 31 new faculty members that were interviewed were all hired within the last 10 years and during the interview were prompted to reflect on their pre-tenure experiences as assistant professors. Additionally, 15 senior faculty members were interviewed, who were all department chairs or in positions of leadership and in tenured positions. I applied the same semi-structured interview approach and questions in all interviews, regardless of whether they were new faculty or chairs of departments with the aim of capturing their reactions to previous research findings. For the remainder of this chapter, I will reference my participants with the following shorthand, Arts NF#, Eng/Sci NF#, Health Sci NF#, Arts C#, Eng/Sci C#, Health Sci C#.

Interviews

As outlined in the previous chapter, participants were provided with a two-page summary (see Appendix C) of findings from prior research on mentoring and asked the following question: based on the findings of a Canada-wide survey, and follow up interviews, what are your reactions?

The document provided the following overview of findings: new faculty have difficulty transitioning from doctoral studies to academia, do not have sufficient support when they start as

a faculty member and tend not to find mentoring helpful. The document noted that while the reasons for these findings are varied, they are consistent with prior literature. The document then listed several difficulties that new faculty face, as emerged from the Canada-wide survey and follow up interviews: lack of collegial relationships, lack of integrated personal and professional lives, little or no feedback, lack of clarity surrounding tenure process and unrealistic expectations and insufficient resources. Some of the reasons for the above findings were noted as: lack of reward system, time, resources, training for mentoring and uncertainty between types of mentoring program (e.g., structured or unstructured, self-selected or unstructured). Lastly, the document listed what mentors and new faculty need, based on the previous research findings: mentors need resources, guidelines, university wide orientation, peer to peer support, access to experts, recognition, training and autonomy. New faculty need tenure to be demystified, unproblematic mentoring relationships, lack of discrimination, help and feedback in all areas (service, teaching, research), sense of institutional belongingness, work-life balance and collegial relationships (rather than competition or incivility).

Through the data analysis phase of this study, I identified seven thematic categories: overall reactions to previous findings, experience with mentoring/forms of mentoring, mentorship considerations, characteristics of good mentors/purpose of mentoring, facets of academic work and life, discrimination and belongingness, barriers to or issues with mentoring. These seven thematic categories align with the categories that emerged from the earlier research that this study is building upon, as outlined in the previous chapter. This will facilitate the comparison of findings that will be captured in the next chapter.

The rest of this chapter will compare the findings that emerged from new faculty and chairs of departments for each of the seven thematic categories.

Thematic Category 1 - Overall Reactions to Previous Findings

As the only structured question of the interview was "based on the findings of a Canada-wide survey, and follow up interviews, what are your reactions?" I will begin by summarizing the types of responses received. Initial reactions from both new faculty and chairs overwhelmingly agreed with the summary of previous findings. I will expand on this as well as the most common topics that participants reacted to. Lastly, I will present another theme that new faculty brought up repeatedly; their *unique hire* status and how that lens impacted how they interpreted the summary of findings provided.

Regardless of position (new faculty versus department chairs) most faculty members interviewed for this study were not surprised by the summary of findings that were provided. Specifically, new faculty either directly agreed with the findings as it aligned with their own experience, or recognized how it might apply to others, as seen in these comments: "overall, not at all surprised by the findings in the study" (Arts NF 2) or another participant who after agreeing with much of the previous research findings stated "I have none of these problems, but others do" (Eng/Sci NF 4). A small number of new faculty disagreed with the findings. "I find it weird that people struggled with the transition, most would have a postdoc that should have helped" (Health Sci NF 7) or another who said:

> No, I did not have trouble transitioning into my current faculty position. In my doctoral studies I participated in several committees as a grad student rep; I was also the grad student rep on hiring committees. I published a lot and went to important academic conferences. I assumed responsibility for learning what I had to know to be well prepared for academia. I was also a TA so was also well prepared for teaching. I didn't need

> support when I started – which was one of the main reasons I was hired over other candidates. (Health Sci NF 9)

Of those who disagreed with the findings, the individualization of responsibility for managing one's own transition was a theme they shared.

Overall, the chairs that were interviewed generally agreed, at first glance, with the summary of findings, as these statements reveal: "nothing surprises me here" (Eng/Sci C1), and "I'm not surprised to see these findings" (Health Sci C4) and "yes, I observe many of the findings and consider most of it to be true" (Arts C3).

A couple of chairs noted that things are not as bad as they used to be, and efforts have been made to ensure that there is more support for incoming faculty. For example, as Eng/Sci C3 shared "this (data) was 5-10 years ago, we've been changing" and Health Sci C1 "it depends on the lens through which one is looking. We've started to enhance early career support including mentorship as a focus in this department". Furthermore, Health Sci C1 went on to share:

> I'm at the end of my 9th year, I have been working on this (mentorship) and I think the Department is doing well. There has been an increase in resources, supports around mentorship (not tied to this study) but in FoMD and as chair in this department - it is really important to pay attention, otherwise it can slip very quickly.

That said, some disagreed with the findings as articulated in this quotation:

> Well, I would have to say that with few notable exceptions, in my department it is the opposite. New faculty transition from doctoral studies to academia with very little difficulty. We make sure we do not hire tenure track faculty who do not have teaching experience with exemplary evaluations. (Arts C5)

As participants initially reacted to the findings, there were a few specific items from the summary document that were mentioned more than others. A *lack of comprehensive understanding of the tenure and promotion process* was brought up the most across all new faculty regardless of faculty or department that they were a part of. Next was *feedback and help in all areas (research, teaching, service)* followed by *lack of institutional belonging and incivility and competition*. These will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

An unexpected theme that emerged from the new faculty interview data was their self-assessment and declaration of being a unique or unusual hire. This was stated by many as a way of prefacing their reactions to the findings. The variety of reasons that faculty self-reported as unique hires included: they completed their PhD at the University of Alberta, they were an internal hire (worked in the department previously), they completed one or many post docs, or worked in industry for a significant amount of time. For instance, as Eng/Sci NF 2 stated "I did a post doc so not all of this is true for me" or Health Sci NF 4 who said, "my transition from doctoral studies was a bit different, I did post doc for 5 years and I generally agree with how they described difficulties transitioning into the role". Eng/Sci NF1 shared their unique trajectory, "most of this does not apply to me. I'm a bit odd, even though I'm a new hire in engineering, I worked in industry for 10-15 years, then did school, then came here for my first tenure track job". Participants had a range of explanations for how their unique status helped or hindered their ability to transition into their role as a new faculty member and thus the impacts on mentorship. As Arts NF 3 shared:

> I'm an unusual hire because I did my PhD here. I had pre-existing relationships. I agree with the findings, that it is exceptionally true that some struggle transferring from their doctoral program, especially external hires. Being an internal hire, I knew people a bit,

> and knew the ins and outs. But it also makes it more complicated; they don't see you as a new person.

Others explained that while their previous experience in academia helped to prepare them in some ways, it was not able to prepare them for all aspects. Arts NF 5 shared:

> I did 5 years of post docs (3 of them), so yes I received more information throughout that time to help the transition into academia, but each level of academia presents new challenges; things that I didn't think would happen, in terms of how university works at various levels.

Some participants noted that one or multiple postdocs helped them understand what they were getting into, however those who completed post docs at different institutions still encountered challenges moving cities, provinces or countries and adapting to a new culture. Some expressed that postdoc work helped prepare them for research but not teaching, service or the politics of the department.

The number of times that participants referred to their situation as unique was significant. The data revealed a lack of understanding as to what a typical new faculty profile is or experience entails. Within this data emerged a sub-theme around participants' feeling normalized or validated in the previous research summary as depicted by this participant "I'm not surprised by anything in here, it all resonated very strongly with me, nice to see that I'm not the only one" (Health Sci NF1).

Thematic Category 2 - Experience with Mentoring/Forms of Mentoring.

As participants reviewed the summary data from earlier research, they tended to reflect on their own experience with mentorship. This section will present that data. New faculty members categorized their own experience with being mentored in one of four ways: formal,

informal self-directed, informal matched, or no mentorship at all. I defined formal mentorship as a relationship that was arranged by the department and structured in some way (e.g., number of meetings, topics to cover). Alternatively, I defined informal mentoring as either self-directed in that new faculty sought out their own mentor and organized their own mentorship activities or as matched, meaning that the department had some involvement with pairing mentees and mentors, but did not structure mentorship activities beyond the pairing (e.g., no resources, structure etc.).

The new faculty members interviewed for this study reported formal mentorship as the most common experience (n=15), next was informal self-directed mentoring (n=10), followed by no mentorship whatsoever (n=4) and lastly informal matched (n=2). Beyond these categories, my thematic analysis uncovered additional elements of their experience, which are shared below. The chairs interviewed for this study shared what their department currently has in place; formal or informal mentorship initiatives. Most of the interviewed chairs indicated that they generally encouraged some form of mentorship, or that their department has a mix of formal and informal mentorship initiatives. It was split between department chairs in terms of those who supported formal mentorship and those who favored informal mentorship.

Formal Mentorship. Of the new faculty who did get paired formally with a mentor, their experiences ranged in structure, process and perceived benefit. A couple of participants revealed that they were provided with the "Transition Guide for New Faculty" that was developed by Dr. Kanuka based on the prior research that this study builds upon (Kanuka, 2012) and here is what one participant had to say:

> I was sent (from my chair), the document (the one from the last mentorship study, that we sent out with invitations for this study!). From the document, I had expectations regarding what to expect (for mentoring). I meet with them once every 2 months. She

> told me I could initiate whatever else. She's a very helpful senior professor. I feel that I can tell her anything, and it won't be used against me. I feel she has my best interest in mind, and she wants me to have a collegial relationship with everyone. (Arts NF4)

Another participant shared how their formal mentor supported them as shown in this statement "I was given a mentor. I met with them twice over the past 6 months. They were good for giving me a sense of what would happen from an administrative end." (Eng/Sci NF5). Another faculty member was given an assigned mentor in the year prior to when they started in the department and others noted the helpfulness when paired with someone who shared similar experiences, particularly research interests.

On the other hand, the data revealed that most of those who received formal mentorship were dissatisfied, as this quote shows "I was assigned a mentor. I would agree with the first point – the mentor was well meaning but not helpful" (Health Sci NF10). Or another participant who shared "I have found mentoring helpful, but not in my official named/paired mentor, but other mentors I have sought out" (Health Sci NF6). The following participant provided more detail around what made their formal pairing unhelpful:

> I have been assigned a mentor. Not helpful. He tries and is a very nice man. I've been told he is an accomplished academic – but a bit past his prime now. It looks to me like he is winding down in his career, looking toward retirement. He's in my department but a different area of research so he cannot advise on where to publish, conferences, assist in finding good RAs and where I could and should be securing funding. He's also (and has told me this several times) not great at teaching and would not feel comfortable giving me advice in this area. (Eng/Sci NF13)

Given the lack of positive experiences with formal mentorship, there were several suggestions that participants provided on how to improve formal and structured mentorship initiatives. One participant said, “structured mentorship could be like what we have for grad students. Mentorship assigned at the beginning, meet once a semester to discuss these X,Y,Z” (Health Sci NF1). Another participant stated that “mentorship should help in ensuring that I’m seeking out the right things at the right time. Sometimes new faculty are blind sighted” (Health Sci NF5). Another participant suggested “there should be mentorship with the person one step ahead of you. They know enough about what just happened, not 20 years outdated. Peer mentorship is one of the best” (Health Sci NF6). A couple of participants touched on the dynamics of their pairing, and some expressed a desire for more information surrounding why they were paired with a particular person. "I don’t find mentoring helpful. I was given an assigned mentor; I already knew mine. The Indian guy gets the Indian guy, and the white guy gets the white guy” (Eng/Sci NF4).

While some found their formal mentor pairing unhelpful, others found it toxic, as evidenced in the following comment by Arts NF8:

> My mentor decided in my third year that she no longer wanted to mentor me. She felt that I was not listening to her advice because I was taking on too many service commitments. As she was a senior member of my department, I found this to be a difficult experience. Our relationship subsequently deteriorated. She now advocates against me. Not a good scenario. I tried to repair the situation … no luck.

Along these lines, many new faculty members reported that their organically formed mentorship relationships were more helpful, or that they relied on existing mentors from grad school with whom they trusted. Some participants shared the benefits to self-selecting a mentor,

such as this comment, “self-selecting your mentor is important. When I came, they gave me someone in a different area and I didn’t get what I needed. Maybe the chair could give you options to select from depending on what you need” (Eng/Sci NF3). Another participant shared “if I self-select and it works for me, why not! If I start struggling, and obviously not thriving, then I should be matched with someone….if it’s successful why make it mandatory. Then it creates problems to deal with” (Health Sci NF2). Some participants chose to seek mentorship outside of the University, as seen in this comment by Arts NF7:

> My organic relationships have been quite productive. As to mentoring more generally in the profession, there are cultural/sub-disciplinary/generational gaps that mean I’ve chosen mentors from outside the university for my non-teaching, non-university “professional” needs. Colleagues in my own discipline are who I seek advice from, not from this department, for sure.

Some chairs favored a structured approach, and were quite hands on in developing mentorship pairs, as exemplified by one participant: “I find a pairing for new faculty based in part with area of expertise but also in terms of mentoring style, and complimenting what they work on, to integrate them to department” (Arts C1) and another participant who shared “we instituted a mandatory mentorship process, everyone pre-tenure is matched to mentor and also instituted workshop system that is mandatory for all new faculty members” (Health Sci C1). Another participant presented their approach in terms of involvement directly from the chair:

> I meet informally with all new faculty several times in the first year and every fall I have a formal meeting with them, letter written to them (part of their file), a record that the chair has done their job. Summarizes our conversation, talks about areas of strength, things to work on for FEC etc. It’s nerve-wracking, but people seem to like it. (Arts C1)

A few chairs expressed the danger with structured mentorship. As one chair said "I do the support. I would never consider, even for one second, assigning a mentor to any new faculty in this department. That would be deadly – it would be like passing on intergenerational trauma" (Arts C4). Along the same lines, another said "as department chair, I do not make my new faculty get mentoring. I strongly believe I am doing the best I can for them when I keep them as far away as possible from senior faculty in this department" (Arts C3).

A small minority of chair participants commented on the need for a varied approach as one reflected:

> I'm always hopeful that informal things will work. To get it off the ground, a formal system would have to be in place, so that people could learn. Some would need guidance around how to be a mentor and what is expected. Over time, perhaps devolve into something more informal. (Eng/Sci C1)

Informal Mentorship. Faculty members who did not receive formal mentorship from the department also had a range of experiences given their lack of structured pairings. One participant noted "I wasn't given a mentor, was recommended to seek out senior faculty. I did, but she declined, which was awkward" (Arts NF1). Some shared a general lack of support altogether, with one participant saying they were just told "here are your keys" (Arts NF6) and that was it. Some were told to select mentors and then required approval by their chair. One new faculty member approached their chair after receiving documents for this interview, asking to receive mentorship and the chair encouraged them to find their own mentor.

The new faculty data revealed a tension between those who felt that some structure from the chair or the dean would be beneficial to get the ball rolling, and others who strongly valued the independent approach to self-selecting what they need. One participant said "it comes back to

hiring good colleagues. Now that I've been involved in hiring a few, it's something that I look for. Select people who want to be a part of the community" (Health Sci NF7).

Most chairs expressed a preference for informal mentorship initiatives. For example, one participant said, "faculty would not respond to things that are too prescriptive" (Arts C1) and another chair who said:

> There is a concern about being too structured. We are all adults, and it seems to work well when faculty set the meetings themselves. So, sure, new faculty sometimes meet with a senior faculty, but it is all informal. They must learn on their own how to fight their own battles. (Arts C2)

Another said:

> We don't have official mentors, we all help each other, my door is open, I walk around. We believe in a more informal process and find 100% success. I also mentor them personally; I'll drop in and see how research is going. We aren't as forceful with directed mentoring; we feel people need to find a connection. A lot of people I suspect in my department don't realize they are being mentored; all done organically. (Eng/Sci C2)

The same participant, Eng/Sci C2 went on to say:

> My view on mentoring is that I really don't like the top-down approach. If you have to force people to mentor, it's so destructive in my books. We tried to have faculty wide forced mentorship….we had meetings, I showed up but it's an artificial scenario. If they have questions about teaching, I'll sit in on teaching if they want feedback or colleagues. We've had programs before, triad teaching….never worked.

The data also revealed uncertainty around what new faculty need and whose responsibility it is to ensure mentorship occurs, which seemed to hinder the development of

structured mentorship initiatives. As one said, “we do not have resources for helping new faculty once they are hired. Nor do I know what they need. Supporting new faculty? Yes. Mentoring? Not so sure about this as my role as department chair” (Arts C3). There was also disagreement in the data around resources; what resources are needed and what level of resourcing equates adequate support. For example, one chair said “I don’t believe the expectations are unrealistic. New faculty are provided with good resources and support systems. They are provided with funding and access to teaching and research support. On this front, new faculty are well supported” (Arts C4).

No Mentorship. Lastly, a couple of chairs stated that their new faculty rarely need mentors at all. Not surprisingly, these chairs did not offer formal structured mentoring initiatives, nor did they encourage new faculty to find informal mentorship on their own. For example, one said “they enter the academy well prepared. This ties into the rigor of our hiring practice” (Arts C5). Another articulated “they don’t need mentors. They learn the role of the professor by experience and maturity. Structuring of mentoring programs – this notion is the antithesis of our faculty. We do not ‘train’ for anything” (Arts C2). It is worth noting that the health sciences departments seemed to be doing much more in the way of formal, structured mentorship, followed by sciences and engineering, then arts.

Thematic Category 3 - Mentorship Considerations

As participants reviewed the previous findings and reflected on their own experiences with mentorship, they began to share considerations for mentorship. For new faculty members, these considerations included three sub-categories: suggested improvement to current mentoring practices, reward and training for mentors, and the role of peer mentorship.

Suggested Improvement to Current Mentoring Practices. Most new faculty members who were interviewed, provided suggestions around what would improve the overall mentoring experience for new faculty. Many suggested mentorship specific to teaching such as how to develop curriculum, how to teach, how many assignments to implement, and a need to share resources such as syllabuses and exams. As one participant said, "Teaching...left on your own. Mentorship focuses less on teaching on service (very little on teaching, none on service). Maybe having a mentor for each" (Health Sci NF3) and another who said, "advice on teaching strategies: what to teach, how to teach, saying know" (Health Sci NF4). Arts NF1 shared:

> I needed mentoring around teaching. Teaching is 40% of workload yet they are pretty hands off. Senior faculty sit in once a year to evaluate. First graduate seminar was challenging. They are really smart, invested, might even resent you. Mentorship would have been helpful as the second year was most stressful with teaching expectations; no guidelines. They assumed we learned it in grad school.

Another common suggestion was the need for multiple mentors, as one participant put it, "I think people should have multiple mentors because one person can't be it all" (Health Sci NF6). Many commented on the need for mentors with varying levels of seniority that can offer diverse perspectives. Many new faculty recommended that guidelines and best practices be created to frame what mentorship could look like both for the mentor and the mentee. As one participant stated, "new faculty should be given a manual, or a rule book, to follow about how to manage an academic career, balance teaching, service and research, review and assist funding proposals, where to publish, etc." (Health Sci NF9). Similarly, many participants suggested an onboarding document or up to date web page for new faculty with FAQs and links to relevant resources and tips. Along those lines, other tangible resources were suggested, such as

information on timelines and deadlines (department and university level) and a research checklist of milestones for the first year would be helpful. Others commented on the need for mentorship beyond their first year in the faculty position as the transition is not complete after one year.

The chairs did not provide much in the way of tangible suggestions for improvement. Rather, they tended to focus on the following categories: reward and training, and peer mentorship. Their comments will be captured in those sections, below.

Reward and Training for Mentors. Both new faculty and chairs grappled with the idea of reward for mentors and were ultimately divided on what should be in place. Many new faculty felt that even a small token of recognition and appreciation for mentors would go a long way and enable mentors to continue doing it. One participant noted, “there are not a lot of incentives for mentors. When they are busy, it becomes transactional, so yes there is a need for them to get something out of it; recognition for mentoring, or a reward for the mentor” (Eng/Sci NF4). Some participants noted that recognition could take many forms, perhaps in resources to be used for more social connections as seen in this comment: “something like a coffee hour would be a good and rewarding opportunity to connect, but not happening” (Eng/Sci NF5). This was thought to be important particularly to encourage the use of informal spaces (e.g., go for coffee or lunch) as it can be conducive to building trusting relationships. Others noted “if I was asked down the road to mentor a junior colleague, I would assume I must be recognized for providing my time to this” (Health Sci NF9). Another said, “a reward system to incentivize people in the right way is a good idea” (Eng/Sci NF6).

On the other hand, many new faculty felt that mentors engage with mentorship because they want to and are intrinsically motivated to help the future generation. As Eng/Sci NF6 said, “certain colleagues will go out of their way to help you, because they want to help you, they will

take time out of their day, even though they are super busy". Some felt rewards were unnecessary and even at odds with the purpose of mentorship, as one said "good mentors don't look for reward. For those who don't want to mentor, it won't change" (Eng/Sci NF8). Another new faculty said "philosophically, I don't agree with rewards. Mentorship is done as part of the job; it doesn't need reward" (Health Sci NF3). A new faculty participant shared the following, "controversial topic: teaching itself is not rewarded enough, can't see how mentorship could be" (Arts NF1).

As for chairs, one participant stated, "the act of mentorship is the reward itself. Should not need compensation or reward to incentivize. We owe it to the younger generation; I have an obligation to pass the baton down to the next" (Health Sci C3). One chair said "I work 70 hours a week on average, but I still manage to carve out time for new faculty. I don't expect special consideration" (Health Sci C4).

Overall, chairs tended to acknowledge that a lack of reward and resourcing exists across many facets of the university, mentorship included. As one chair stated "the reward system stinks in all areas, not just mentoring. Time on everything is an issue – not just mentoring new faculty (who should not need this anyway)" (Arts C3). Even though people are busy, almost all interviewed chairs felt that mentorship does not need a reward. Their reasons varied from the fact that mentoring new faculty is less time consuming than supporting grad students, and it's about creating a culture of setting faculty up for success and wanting them to succeed which does not require a reward, it is simply part of the job.

Some chairs talked about the need for a cultural shift around mentorship and its rewards. One chair noted:

> It's about creating the conditions for a culture of mentorship and support. This should be important in the hiring of chairs and set by the Dean. Set tone from the top. If I signal this in evaluation, then it's a signal for them to do this. (Health Sci C4)

So, although many felt no reward was needed, a couple brought up that it should be valued in FEC, and acknowledged in their annual review.

In terms of training for mentors, new faculty noted that some training could be beneficial to help develop good mentors. "Nobody is trained in mentoring, can see why nobody feels supported in it" (Arts NF1). And another, "as for training, faculty don't have much guidance for what good mentorship is" (Eng/Sci NF1). That said, a few participants disagreed, noting that each new faculty has different needs and questioned how generic mentor training would address this. Others questioned if you can effectively become trained as a good mentor as they felt it was based on the mentor's internal drive, personality and success of career.

Chairs were also split when it came to the idea of training for mentors. Some felt that guidance for mentors could be useful, such as a breakdown of what new faculty need at different times of their transition. Some departments noted that they have workshops for mentors, or peer mentoring groups for mentors but that they tended to be informal and voluntary so perhaps not achieving intended results across the board for all mentors. Health Sci C1 noted:

> Training for mentors - we can still do better. We have done workshops for mentors and dinners where we discuss mentoring. We find there is not a lot of interest in formal mentorship training. People who are too busy don't always come.

Others questioned the need for training, or were unsure if it would help as mentorship is something you develop skills in over time, and you learn by doing. As one perplexed chair exclaimed "training – ok all I can say here is *are you kidding* – who needs training to help new

faculty? This is ridiculous" (Arts C3). As a summary of all the faculties, it is noteworthy that arts chairs were more skeptical of training, engineering did not really bring up training, and health sciences already had training resources on this and a general openness to improving.

Peer Mentorship. Lastly, there was a lot of interest in considering how peer mentoring could fill identified gaps for new faculty. This spanned both informal (socializing over drinks) to formal (structured networking) to share everything from how to support grad students, tips for grant application, and opportunities to discuss work life balance and department politics. As one shared "there is a pretty good group here right now. About 12 of us started around the same time, and we hangout" (Health Sci NF4). A few existing or formerly offered women's groups were highlighted as helpful and successful. As Health Sci NF7 shared "there is a wonderful group, Women in STEM, once a week we meet for coffee. Have witnessed senior faculty women act as mentors in real time". Some new faculty expressed positive experiences with peer groups and a few commented that these groups were often created by a champion senior leader to bring peers together, but sometimes dissipated as people moved positions. Others expressed a need for it as one participant put it "us untenured people, we have to keep together" (Arts NF3) and another "it would be cool if there were other ways to connect with other new faculty to vent and learn from each other, without implicating political pieces" (Arts NF4). Others talked about the value that peer mentorship and support has looked like, for instance "peer mentorship - without those guys I wouldn't be doing well. Nice to interact with other new faculty, after hours, to just get it all out. Things I can't say to senior faculty as my career is under their control" (Health Sci NF4). Also, another who shared "what has been useful, is peer-to-peer mentorship. I can easily see how the administration could facilitate interactions between new faculty that would be immensely helpful" (Health Sci NF2). Many noted that these initiatives had been self-organized and

previously implemented, and others expressed a desire for these peer connections to be created for them.

As for the chairs, peer mentorship was not mentioned as much. A couple of participants noted that it has its value, and some noted it could be useful for certain demographics, as noted by Eng/Sci C4 “peer mentoring might be better for women. A group of girls can get together – and works well because it is unofficial”. Overall, the data reveals that peer mentorship is underappreciated and underutilized. Some of the challenges that were noted by chairs are illustrated through examples such as this one:

> One mentor in our area suggested group mentoring. (3-4 pre-tenured faculty members met with one mentor 4X per year over dinner), but the feedback was that these meetings were useless, because more private issues could not be discussed. With a trusted mentor this is less of a problem. (Health Sci C1)

Another chair stated: “often, someone in their department has similar research areas, so becomes competitive” (Health Sci C2).

Thematic Category 4 - Characteristics of Good Mentors/Purpose of Mentoring

As participants reviewed the previous data, I prompted them to define their ideal version of mentorship. Answers varied considerably. Most new faculty members defined their ideal mentor by providing specific characteristics that mentors possess or roles that mentors occupy whereas the chairs tended to talk about the broader systems around mentorship. This section will first elaborate on the new faculty responses, and then will review the data that emerged from the chair interviews.

Data from new faculty members focused on their desire for a mentor to train them on specific components of the job and to provide advice and information in key areas where they

lacked knowledge. One participant said, “I want a mentor to provide guidance, because it’s a highly complex work setting, and you don’t know what you don’t know” (Health Sci NF6) and another who shared “it would be useful to have somebody loosely showing you the ropes, who is there if you have questions, and can show you how the institution operates” (Arts NF1). Others talked about the need for a mentor to support progress around professional goals and skill development. Many new faculty felt they needed to be mentored around institutional culture and politics. Participants noted that these pieces are rarely found in traditional onboarding or existing resources (e.g., policies and procedures). In terms of specific topics that new faculty would like to see covered in mentorship activities, the following emerged most frequently in the data: support in writing grants, understanding how funding works, how to support student learning and teaching particularly at the graduate level (e.g., how graduate teaching differs from undergraduate), and the nuts and bolts of how their department and faculty works.

In terms of specific characteristics that participants are looking for in a mentor or a mentorship relationship, the following were noted: open, trust-based relationship, ad hoc/shouldn’t be forced, collegial, confidential, respectful, supports psychological need for autonomy, competent. That data from new faculty revealed an interest in their mentor being intrinsically motivated to do mentorship, and that they have the mentee’s best interest at heart. Additionally, many participants discussed the necessity of likeability, approachability and relatability. Generally, good mentors were defined as someone with good experience, who is competent in their field and occupies a leadership role. Some new faculty wanted a mentor who shared their specific research interests. Whereas others felt that was not necessary, preferring someone with proven experience and reputation. That said, several participants cautioned that just because someone shares research experience or has a proven track record as a faculty

member, it does not guarantee them to be a good mentor. For instance, one new faculty member said, “maybe it would be better if my mentor received some training, but it would not solve the problem of me not liking them” (Eng/Sci NF10). Another female participant said:

> There has to be a personality connection. My mentor needs to be respectful or acknowledge the fact that I’m a young woman who just gave birth to a baby. Senior mentors in my area are typically old men who don’t get what I’m going through. They can provide advice on research but not work-life balance or dealing with discrimination. (Health Sci NF1)

Lastly, a small group of participants touched on the desire for advocacy in mentorship. As one participant stated, “a good mentor would have advocated to the chair on my behalf” (Arts NF8) or another who shared “mentors can also be advocates for new faculties, for example, if in a situation that isn’t going well, they can intervene because sometimes going directly to the chair is uncomfortable” (Eng/Sci NF5).

When chairs elaborated on their ideal definition of mentorship, they tended to talk at the broader systemic level, as opposed to the new faculty who talked about individual characteristics of good mentors. Some chairs talked about the need for mentorship to be ongoing and not a piecemeal approach for it to be impactful. With that, they noted the difficulty in creating and implementing such comprehensive mentoring approaches because it tends to fall on chairs and the demands of the university make them too busy.

Other chairs longed for a system that welcomed new faculty to the institution and encouraged them to work as a team. Similarly, many chairs wished it was set up so that new faculty members had many people to help them but recognized that this would require mentorship to be a priority, and sadly it is not. To illustrate this, one chair said:

> My ideal definition of mentorship is a collaborative environment, where, as faculty members, we have our research areas that we are passionate about. We don't expect that we have to do it ourselves. And an academic environment that supports and encourages us to support each other, not forcing everyone to work together. We would have our own research but encourage and support each other. Mentorship would be a natural outcome. Trying to force it in today's setting is not a natural fit. (Eng/Sci C1)

And another chair who expressed "the greatest reward is having a strong department/faculty, not strong individuals" (Eng/Sci C5). Other chairs noted that an ideal version of mentorship is not just reserved for new faculty but extends throughout the whole system to support faculty at each stage of their career. One even noted that they felt mentorship could have been valuable for them as they stepped into their chair position. This reflected a theme that emerged in the data around a desire for a cultural shift, that would normalize and prioritize mentorship with the result being the mutual benefit that can emerge for the mentor, the mentee.

In reviewing the responses from the chairs, there appeared to be a tension between who is ultimately responsible for ensuring mentorship occurs. As noted above, many chairs valued mentorship and have taken steps to ensure it is more widely integrated. Whereas others appear to individualize the problem rather than set up a system where support is given. This quote presents the contrast of both views, in one perspective "we, the mentors, must take responsibility for the relationship and I have to encourage it in the new faculty. It's frustrating when I see them struggle yet not reaching out" (Health Sci C5).

Thematic Category 5 - Facets of Academic Work and Life

Participants had a lot to say about the various facets of academic work and life. The most common themes that emerged were overall expectations around teaching, research and service; tenure, feedback and promotion; and work-life balance.

Overall Expectations: Teaching, Research and Service. Most participants expressed a need for more support in all three areas: teaching, research and service. Of the three, teaching was talked about most often. I already touched on the topic of teaching in the previous section around considerations for mentorship. I will now delve more deeply into what the data revealed around new faculty expectations and mentorship needs pertaining to teaching. Many new faculty members articulated that they had little to no experience teaching throughout their graduate work and felt significantly underprepared in this area. Some who had acted as a teaching assistant in graduate studies felt that it gave them some basic knowledge but managing an entire course as a professor was new and challenging. Some of the specific challenges regarding teaching were how to develop and structure content, how to evaluate students, how to make students engaged and satisfied with the course. Participants shared the type of direction they had received, such as this quote:

> The argument is to spend less time on teaching; they don't give a shit about teaching, nobody cares and they say it's not going to help you with promotions, raises etc., and that teaching takes away from research. It's easy to say 'spend less time prepping for classes', but I'm unsure how to do this. (Arts NF3)

A couple of participants mentioned the increase in international student enrollment, which has resulted in larger class sizes particularly in masters' programs therefore increasing the time spent towards teaching and supervision (more time marking, editing, preparing). Another

theme that emerged from the data was a lack of feedback for their teaching as well as inadequate assessment tools, such as the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI). As one participant exclaimed “USRI’s are bullshit. Nonwhite faculty are shown to be at a disadvantage. For example, USRI scores for Chinese professors is lower and females are at a disadvantage, they score lower, by 0.3. The students treat you differently" (Eng/Sci NF4). Another participant stated, “the USRI is not a good tool. Tools like this can be tense and you think you might need to do certain things to get good marks but it’s not actually a good way to teach” (Eng/Sci NF3). Some participants suggested a need for a group or a network of mentors at various levels of experience to assess classroom teaching in a hands-on way (e.g., sit in on lectures, review or share materials). Another resource that came up frequently throughout the interviews was the University’s Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Participants were divided on their experience with CTL. Some found it valuable, such as Eng/Sci NF6: “CTL is useful, maybe didn’t explore as well as I could have early on” while others felt it did not address their specific needs: “CTL offers a lot of workshops on teaching, I went to a lot. They were helpful but geared towards more open learning. Only so much in my discipline can be open learning. CTL stuff didn’t always apply” (Health Sci NF5). Most participants who brought up the CTL expressed being self-motivated to reach out to CTL, while a few were instructed to go to CTL by their chair. Either way, it was noted that those who may most need services from CTL, may not reach out themselves. Lastly, regarding teaching, there were a lot of comments around graduate teaching and supervision (e.g., how to get them through the system, procedural questions, or the differences between teaching undergraduate versus graduate students).

When it came to the chair comments on teaching, some recognized that there is a lack of experience in this area. As one chair said, “universities are one of the only enterprises where we

hire them for something they are not prepared for - they are researchers, but we expect them to teach" (Eng/Sci C3). Additionally, it was mentioned that there are resources on campus. For example, CTL that mentors can help connect them with or they should seek out on their own. Data from the chairs tended to focus more broadly on the overall expectations of the role and preparedness for the job. Many recognized the time it takes for new faculty to transition into their role and to grasp the big picture of academia. On this note, a couple of chairs agreed with the sentiments expressed by many new faculty; that they need and deserve more support in all areas. Alternatively, some chairs expected new faculty to have an element of preparedness, for instance one chair said:

> I don't want to sit down with those applying for SSHRCs and go through the grant applications. They should know how to do this already. And if not, there are a lot of workshops and information available on campus. As for teaching, we don't hire anyone who does not already have teaching experience in their doctoral program, and a proven record of successful teaching. (Arts C2)

Another chair said, "we don't hire anyone who does not already have a proven track record in all three areas; teaching, research, service" (Arts C5).

In terms of research, it was clear across all new faculty who were interviewed that they knew how to conduct research from their time in graduate school, therefore experiencing less shock when transitioning into academia in this regard. In engineering and sciences, most participants felt adequately supported in their research and cited the dollar amount of start-up funding they received to conduct their research as particularly conducive to their readiness (e.g., funds to hire grad students, purchase lab equipment etc.). These amounts ranged from $75,000-$100,000 in their first year to 1.9 million across the first few years. Many new faculty members

in the sciences commented on the pressure to receive an NSERC. They expressed a desire to receive support and mentorship around how to be successful in grant application processes, what timelines to be mindful of and once successful in receiving such grants how best to allocate funds. In the health sciences, a handful of participants had positive experiences with the grant assist program and felt it contributed to their preparedness for conducting research. In the health sciences, the data revealed a lack of administrative support which increased the workload on new faculty to manage human resource systems and paperwork.

On the research side, many chairs noted that some start-up funding is provided and otherwise, new faculty know what they are doing when it comes to research. Furthermore, many chairs acknowledged the need for support in adjusting to research expectations in the new faculty positions. This quote captures that: “it is important to recognize that new faculty have no experience in teaching and applying for research grants. It is not appropriate to take the sink or swim attitude” (Eng/Sci C5).

As for service, there appeared to be a consensus among new faculty members that service expectations were a bit of a mystery yet caused the least amount of stress. As expressed by one participant: “I just do what I was told to do. That was it. The expectation for junior faculty regarding service is extremely low, and we know we should put energy and time into research to get tenure” (Arts NF2). A few participants shared their experience as a new faculty member belonging to a marginalized group. For example, women, people of color and the explicit or implicit directive to take on more service responsibilities than their white peers. Additionally, one person shared this “I take on this extra service. Not fair? Yes. But life is not fair. I was willing to do this because to say no would have been problematic” (Arts NF8). This was

perceived by these individuals as tokenistic and further disadvantageous to their tenure and promotion progression as service was not valued as heavily at FEC.

In terms of the chair data, some chairs stated that they protected new faculty from service because it does not play as important of a role for tenure, while other chairs felt that putting new faculty on a lot of committees will help them socialize and connect with others in the department or faculty. Much of the data collected from the chairs pointed to the realities that exist in academia in terms of work expectations and culture, which was to blame for some of the struggles that new faculty face. As one chair pondered: “unrealistic expectations - not sure about that. It’s not easy but that’s what is expected of academics, they are what they are” (Health Sci C5).

Tenure, Feedback and Promotion. Participants talked quite a bit about the tenure, promotion and faculty evaluation committee (FEC) process. Overwhelmingly, new faculty expressed a need for more feedback in all areas of their performance and many agreed with the previous data, that the tenure process needed to be demystified. Mentorship was identified as potentially helpful in doing so. Even of those who acknowledged that the process for tenure and promotion was clearly laid out to them, they still found that it was either unrealistic or problematic. For instance, as one participant, stated:

> While the process was clear, there are embedded expectations that are unrealistic. I had a 2-year-old daughter so while I met expectations, it was at a cost. My chair was clear on the tenure system, yet I realized that it’s uneven, for example some people got tenure that you wouldn’t expect which points to a different kind of process for different people. (Arts NF1)

For those who felt in the dark about the tenure process, a few reasons were hypothesized such as what this participant shared: “very vague information was provided to me about tenure. The University would like to withhold this information to be able to control your tenure, so it makes sense that they are not that clear” (Arts NF2). Many felt that mentors would be particularly valuable in directing new faculty to focus on tasks or areas of work that matter to FEC because, as one participant said, “if it’s not acknowledged at the FEC level...then it doesn’t matter” (Arts NF3). The data revealed a feeling of unpredictability and unease around tenure, as one new faculty articulated “the junior people, we don’t know, it depends on who says what to who. Some people say don’t sweat it too much, as long as you have X amount of whatever” (Arts NF5). Many feel that they are left guessing, for instance when one participant noted, “the information somewhat percolates and makes its way informally to me, with its share of fuzziness and downright contradictory signal” (Arts NF7). Another said, “I don’t know how I am doing. Maybe I am spending too much time with my family. I will have my first annual report in August, so I guess I will find out then how I am doing. Right now, I can only assume my work is fine” (Eng/Sci NF12). Another reflected by asking: “what is good enough for tenure and promotion? I don’t know. I don’t know how much longer I can keep this pace up” (Eng/Sci NF11).

Connected to the theme around unease, was the stress that new faculty encountered. As one new faculty shared, “I do not understand tenure or promotion and I am anxious about this. I’m not sure if I’m on track, or not. It causes me to lose sleep. I don’t know what others have done to get promotion and tenure. This process is not transparent” (Eng/Sci NF10). The ambiguity is evidenced by this comment, “there are written and unwritten rules” (Eng/Sci NF 9). On the other hand, one said: “in a big system, the recognition goes to people who play the game,

for example I go drinking with associate chair, so have lots of opportunity to be recognized" (Eng/Sci NF4). Another common theme was connected to the lack of feedback. For example, one shared "yes, there is little to no feedback…yes endemic to academia. We don't celebrate successes at all, just work work work" (Eng/Sci NF1). A few others described only critical feedback, such as this comment: "the only feedback I ever get is always negative, never positive" (Eng/Sci NF4). Many echoed this comment by accepting that the lack of feedback is a reality of academia and people should seek it out on their own if they need it.

According to the data, the Chairs seemed to recognize that new faculty are overwhelmed and confused with the tenure process. Many commented on initiatives that are in place or should be developed to help new faculty understand tenure. Others promoted the idea that new faculty need to learn how to play the long game and be more strategic with their time. There was widespread support for mentorship in doing this. As one chair said, "it's overwhelming in their first year and tenure can be a big knotted ball of anxiety, so we need to help people untie and manage it" (Arts C1). The same participant went on to say, "even senior faculty don't necessarily have a great sense of how FEC or university works" (Arts C1) which presents the extent of confusion across positions and levels of experience. A handful of chairs described setting up regular meetings in between FEC to check in with new faculty and provide feedback although this did not appear to be the norm. As one said, "the chairs can help in demystifying tenure and promotion. It's not rocket science" (Eng/Sci NF2).

On the other end of the spectrum, some chairs felt that the status quo has sufficiently provided feedback to new faculty (e.g., annual FEC, USRI from students). Others acknowledged that there are plenty of resources available should the new faculty need to reach out (e.g., CTL for teaching support). Some of the data focused on the fact that good new faculty will not need

these additional supports, or if they do, the strong ones will figure it out on their own. This aligns with comments like: “people get worked up about tenure but they need to be confident. When we hire we are looking for self-starters and those are the ones that tend to be most successful” (Eng/Sci C2). The same participant went on to say, “for promotion, you need to show results and progress. People want a cookie cutter formula approach, but it’s not like that” (Eng/Sci C2). A handful of chairs reflected that the current state is much better compared to their experience when they were starting out or compared to other institutions across the country and in the states. A couple of chairs acknowledged systemic challenges that may explain why they cannot be more forthcoming around the process, “the message to me is clear: for financial reasons, we cannot continue to promote new faculty as quickly as we have in the past. I have no further comment on this except that I have towed the line” (Arts C3). One chair even acknowledged that the system is flawed, “universities are archaic with all the rules, documenting everything. It’s tedious, trivial. Annual reviews are filled with stuff that nobody reads” (Health Sci C3). As has been mentioned throughout this chapter, a couple of chairs emphasized the need for mentorship to be acknowledged at FEC to further embed it in the culture and expectations. The culture around mentorship will be expanded upon later in this chapter.

Work-life Balance. Overwhelmingly, new faculty members struggled to obtain a manageable work life balance, and many shared their challenges around burnout and poor mental health. One new faculty member shared: “I’m really aware of burnout, a few weeks ago I was so tired, work seemed impossible, not depression, just exhaustion” (Arts NF1). Another reflected that “the transition was impossible. I’m supposed to tough knuckle it throughout the first year. I was working 100-hour weeks that first year” (Health Sci NF6). Another participant noted: “work life balance is a joke - don’t know what life is anymore. My first year was the worst ever. I

wasn't told in the doctorate that it gets infinitely worse, and I thought the doctorate would be the worst" (Arts NF3).

One participant expressed that they would have benefited from a mentor specifically focusing on the topic of work-life balance. Similarly, others felt mentorship could have prepared them for the challenging workload. The data revealed that many participants wanted a mentor who was not their chair, and therefore would not see their burnout as a weakness that may affect tenure. From the data, it seemed that they were craving validation and normalization of their overwhelmed feelings, as one participant put it: "people will tell you that some end up with work life balance once they have tenure because they are not as busy, or at least worked out a routine. I would love it if I had a mentor to tell me not to worry" (Arts NF5). On the flip side, some felt that work-life balance was too subjective therefore mentorship would not be effective as it is too personal.

Repeatedly, the data revealed the extreme demands and unhealthy expectations experienced by new faculty members. For example, as one said, "there is a rhetoric out there that you don't have life before tenure and work until 9 pm every night" (Eng/Sci NF2). Another said, "it's common for me to get up at 4 am and start working because I couldn't sleep, and I needed to meet deadlines" (Health Sci NF6). This way of working was described as simply part of the culture e.g., when people see others putting in that many hours there is an implied expectation that everyone should be.

The uncertainty and pressure around tenure appeared to be deeply connected to the challenges around work-life balance, as one participant said, "they say don't be here until 10 pm but at the same time, you need to pick it up for FEC" (Eng/Sci NF4). This aligns with the next comment around the pressures and desire to showcase hard work, "I am new and want to show

the department that I'm there. I take a lot on, to show them" (Eng/Sci NF7). A couple of participants expressed concern for what their unhealthy practices around work-life balance were role modeling to their students and the next generation of academics. For example, that students would not want to enter academia or would enter but with unhealthy habits from the outset.

A minority of new faculty members articulated that their work-life balance is good or okay and that as an academic it is what they expected. As one said, "you have to be that specific type of individual to do the job; you have to work independently, under stress, and there is nobody to see you through" (Arts NF2). Others appeared to truly enjoy the chaotic nature of the job, for example, "I just work all the time. I never thought about it because I enjoy what I do" (Eng/Sci NF6). Some commented on the flexibility of their job, for instance: "not being chained to a desk 8-4 pm, I can work when I want" (Health Sci NF2). As another new faculty shared, "the life of medical practitioners is to have no life, only work. I know this. I enjoy my time in the lab. Hours pass and I don't notice. Sometimes I stay all night" (Health Sci NF8). One person defined work-life balance as "less of a balance and more of a dance; how to have fun in our work" (Eng/Sci NF1). Another said "it's a personal thing. I try to balance time for kids on the weekend, and weekdays I'm here 5-6 am and stay long hours. I've chosen that, and knew it wasn't going to be a vacation" (Eng/Sci NF8). Another recognized: "I don't have a family so it might not be so balanced if I had kids. I have a partner and we both balance our personal-professional lives" (Eng/Sci NF10).

When it came to the chair's perspective on work-life balance, it too was mixed. Many acknowledged the difficulties in adjusting to the demands of the job and the impossibility of work-life-balance. This was expressed both from their own experiences earlier in their career and

in what they observe and hear from new faculty in their departments. One faculty member recognized the bigger picture at play by saying:

> As for work-life balance, it goes back to the issue of the neoliberalization of higher education – with the ongoing cuts we have no choice but accept the crushing workloads foisted upon us. So, it is not an issue of rethinking faculty roles and collegial relationships, it is a matter of rethinking the neoliberal focus on universities. (Arts C3)

Neoliberalization has also challenged the health care system and impacted work life balance for faculty working in that system, as this quote captures, "work life balance – this is increasingly difficult. We know that the number of patients seen whether in the clinic, in the emergency room or in hospital is increasing every year – but we are not getting more doctors" (Health Sci C1). Data collected from the chairs revealed that work-life balance was a struggle for both new and senior faculty, with chairs sharing their own struggles later in their career as they transitioned into new roles (e.g., chair of department). One participant asked: "is there such a thing as work-life balance? There are fewer jobs that you can turn off at 5 pm. Work life harmony maybe?" (Eng/Sci C1). Another participant stated: "work-life balance - is an artificial concept. My work doesn't compete with my life, it is my life. I have a family and a life and it shouldn't be a competition" (Health Sci C3). Another shared, "I haven't found work life balance, when I retire I will" (Health Sci C4). Lastly, one chair said, "I tell all the faculty, nobody laid on death bed wishing to work more" (Eng/Sci C2) yet the same participant later said, "I'm here 7 days a week, but my kids are older, and gone now, so don't copy me as an example" (Eng/Sci C2).

On the topic of work-life balance, some of the chairs commented on the gendered challenges that exist. One chair noted that the struggles with work-life balance are: "more

prevalent for women as they are taking on the brunt of what happens at home and have a tougher time integrating personal responsibilities with their professional lives" (Health Sci C1). Furthermore, one male chair stated:

> Work life balance has to do with their values. I have 5 children and I've been very successful. I always made time for my family, even if I had to be at work at 3:30 am. I was a grad student when my first daughter was born, and I went to class the next day. You can do both, you just need to be efficient. (Eng/Sci C2)

In the next section (theme six), more will be provided on the gendered challenges as shared by participants.

Others felt that the conversation on work-life balance has progressed over the last decade for example: "work-life balance is becoming less of a problem here. If you were hired 10 years ago, they were expecting people to be here on Saturday" (Eng/Sci C3). One chair observed that new faculty place an increasing sense of importance on work-life balance, and want to have a life outside of work, which the chair supported. Conversely, another chair placed blame on the individual as they said:

> The ones who talk about it (work-life balance) are not being as productive as they need to be to meet expectations. If you want to have work hours that are set then you probably don't belong in academia. You have to want to do it. (Arts C5)

Thematic Category 6 – Discrimination and Belongingness

As participants reviewed the summary of previous findings document, many were drawn to expand on their own experiences with discrimination, collegiality and institutional belongingness.

Discrimination. Regarding discrimination, new faculty members reported a range of experiences. Some felt surprised that discrimination was listed in the previous findings, as they had never had first-hand experience with it. Others reported direct experience with discriminatory remarks in the workplace or commented on the systemic injustices that exist. As one participant put it:

> Discrimination – well it depends on who you ask. There is a hierarchy of injustices happening in our department. Or maybe it is a form of competition of who is discriminated against the most. Bad behavior is tolerated by anyone who is a minority of any kind because no one wants to have a discrimination charge thrown back at them. I am a visible minority, but I don't feel discrimination against me. I do see that sexual minority faculty (openly gay/lesbian) have difficulty here. (Arts NF6)

Some felt it was difficult to define discrimination (e.g., of what kind and to whom), whereas others felt that because gender was varied in their faculty or their department was: "run by strong women" as one participant (Arts NF3) described, there were no issues. Some recognized that discrimination happens to others, but they could not comment on any personal examples. For instance, one participant said "I haven't had discrimination. As a white guy I'm hard to discriminate against" (Eng/Sci NF6). Several comments like this were made by male participants, but as evidenced in this next comment, participants identified a range of privileged identities that protected them from some discriminatory practices: "discrimination - I can't speak to it, as an educated woman working in a female dominated field, I'm privileged" (Health Sci NF6). Others reflected on the aspects of their identity that facilitated their ability to manage the demands of academia. For example, one participant said:

> If I started as a new faculty member at the same time as having a family, it would have been challenging. The system can damage diversity and inclusion, because you need to be okay working 70-80 hours a week or have a significant other who doesn't work. I fit the stereotype of someone who can do this kind of position. (Eng/Sci NF6)

There were a few new faculty members who declared that discrimination was not a problem in their department. For example, one person said, "I don't think there is any specific discrimination against minorities, or women" (Arts NF2). While some participants focused on diversity solely in the way of race or ethnicity, as seen in this comment: "the faculty is diverse; everyone is from everywhere. In this regard it is nice. Canada is a great country to live in" (Eng/Sci NF12). On the other hand, many observed that discrimination, particularly around race, gender needed to be ameliorated. A few participants reflected on who is supporting diversity work both as diverse faculty members and allies. As one participant stated, "one of the most difficult aspects of working at a predominantly white institution (faculty, staff and students) is finding support among people of color or finding progressive, anti-racist faculty (white and nonwhite)" (Arts NF7).

Some new faculty observed high female enrolment at the undergraduate level yet few females in professor positions for instance in engineering. A few participants noted the unconscious bias in hiring practices along with a broader systemic bias towards women. One woman shared her unique perspective as she just returned from maternity leave:

> I have a unique perspective as I just went on maternity leave. In my department I'm one of 4 women and the first person to go on mat leave. Starting a new job, also trying to figure out how mat leaves work in this kind of job. Didn't have anyone to ask. Fortunately, one of my mentors, a man, connected me with a woman in the faculty. It was

> one of the most difficult mentorship areas to ask for help with. Now I have informal coffee dates in the faculty for women, which came out of me seeking out mat leave stuff. Mentorship for underrepresented faculty is what led to the meet ups. (Health Sci NF1)

In addition to a lack of infrastructure in place to support the unique needs of women, as articulated by the previous quote, there were other experiences that were revealed in the data. A few women shared comments that others had made to them over the years, such as "I have heard things in passing like, these grants don't mean anything because only women apply" (Health Sci NF7). As for new faculty who were new to Canada, a handful shared their challenges, particularly in the classroom. For instance, "students have commented negatively on my accent. They say they can't understand me and said I don't speak English well. I do speak it well and write very well. I can't change my accent" (Health Sci NF8).

As with the previous categories, the chairs were divided in their comments regarding discrimination. Many chairs recognized that discrimination is present and pervasive in many forms. As one chair said, "equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and mentorship have to go together, and as chairs we help people find their networks and support. The problem is that faculty of color have more of a burden to mentor than others" (Arts C1). Another chair said, "misogyny and mistreatment is alive and well" (Health Sci C3). One participant commented on the need to be more inclusive and supportive of aboriginal students in health sciences. This was the only time that the lack of indigenous representation within academia was brought up. While some chairs acknowledged the inequities that exist, they were not definitive in their role to assist. As one chair said:

> Sometimes faculty will experience discrimination by their students, which I can't deal with - of course. As for discrimination in the workplace, it is my job to make sure this

> does not happen. When it does (and it has happened) I try to deal with this but there is only so much a department chair can do. (Arts C5)

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the topic of gender was discussed more often than other marginalized identities. Through analysis of the chair data, it was noted that many observed a need for female specific mentorship and support. Some acknowledged that young faculty might feel uncertain about having children before tenure. Others, recognized the gendered challenges, yet still individualized the issue, as depicted in this comment, "the women who have trouble balancing work are the ones without solutions (they burn out and feel alienated, are not keeping up and get poor merits). When this happens, it's easier to hate the department head than a husband" (Eng/Sci C4).

A small number of interviewed chairs were perplexed by the thought of discrimination existing at all as seen in this comment "no idea, on discrimination - might be an issue, but I hope university is beyond that" (Health Sci C5) and another who said:

> Discrimination - is this an issue? We have women moving into leadership roles in our department and half our faculty are non-European white people. When you reach a level of diversity that we have, discrimination is less of an issue. I'm the only white guy (on the executive team) and that's deliberate. (Health Sci C4)

Collegiality/Competition. On the topic of collegiality, some new faculty reported that their colleagues are friendly, and welcoming. For example, participant Eng/Sci NF4 shared that: "young people help young people. In our department all young new assistant professors will grab beers which is so different from other schools I've been to where people hated each other".

That said, the data was overwhelmingly filled with comments pointing to a lack of collegiality. Many participants agreed with sentiments like this, from one participant

"competition and incivility are alive and well. It's the whole system; we're set against each other" (Health Sci NF6), and another who shared: "it is definitely competitive. Whoever has the biggest grant rules the roost. More money – more special privileges" (Health Sci NF8). One participant said: "many felt unprepared for the toxicity in department culture as well as the politics, nobody ever talked about these aspects of academia" (Health Sci NF8). Another participant said, "collegial relationships could and should be different. We would all be better knowing what each of us is doing and bouncing off ideas and learning from each other" (Eng/Sci NF12). The data showed a normalization of such toxicity, as depicted in this comment: "we need some healthy competition, or else this environment would be so lonely - not good for mental health" (Health Sci NF4).

> That said, a few chairs described the efforts they are undertaking for instance one said: I'm working to help new faculty understand that rigor matters, but that doesn't mean it has to be fierce competition. Competition can be at a healthy level, to help bring up standards in a collegial sense, but competition can lead to fragmentation, loneliness. (Arts C1)

A small minority of interviewed chairs seemed immune, unaware or ignorant to such issues as evidenced by these comments: "no competition from my point of view" (Health Sci C3) and "collegial relationship could be an issue in other departments but competition is not an issue here" (Health Sci C5). Others saw no problem, "we are a very collegial department. We work together and this strengthens the department. When we individually succeed, this strengthens the department. So we help each other to succeed, so we can all benefit" (Eng/Sci C5). Many felt that it is just the way it is, a reality of academia as this comment captures: "yes, there is competition. And rejection happens. As does failure. This part of being an academic" (Arts C5).

Another voiced uncertainty, stating: “people for the most part are civil and nice to each other. That said, unclear, who is looking out to see that my best interests are served” (Arts NF4).

Isolation/Institutional Belongingness. Isolation came up quite often in the interviews. Participants across all faculties commented on experiencing some form of isolation as they transitioned into their new faculty position. One new faculty member mentioned that: “you work as an isolated unit on your research, and can see that people feel isolated, but it’s part of it” (Arts NF1). A number of new faculty talked about the isolation inherent in their research work, and some talked about the physical isolation, such as this participant who said, “it is easy to just stay in your own little office” (Health Sci NF7). While others talked about a lack of connection and belonging as seen in this participant comment: “it would be great to feel like I belonged here. I’m an outsider. Need to figure out how to become an insider” (Health Sci NF8). Or another who said “I do feel isolated, and fragmented. I come to my office to work, and no one is around. Anywhere” (Eng/Sci NF11). Others expanded on the challenges in building a more connected environment, such as this participant who said, “I’m unsure how collegial relationships can be formed in this kind of environment. On the positive side, I don’t have to be around the faculty who are miserable people” (Eng/Sci NF12).

Almost all the participants who moved to Edmonton, Alberta for their position at the U of A reported challenges in the relocation which impacted their sense of isolation and institutional belonging. Challenges included everything from adapting to a new system, poor spousal hiring practices and lack of HR support. One participant, Arts NF4, raised the concern around inequitable relocation support as seen in this comment:

> I’m a single woman and my major challenge when moving was that I don’t have a car, or a partner, so I struggled to set up my life here. Department not at fault for that but at the

> same time, there was very little institutional support. University has no realtor or housing support, no tenancy laws - not a normal rental situation. Having more university guidance on this would have been nice. Also, on the structure and systems of the university - you would assume that if you have a friend or partner they would pay for them to come and help, but they wouldn't (even though they would for a spouse).

To counteract the isolation, some talked about reaching out to others intentionally, or others forced themselves to walk around to connect with colleagues in the department. One new faculty member who had been in her role for a few years said: "I invite all new Associate Professors over for a barbeque with their families. This goes a long way and people have told me it's the first time they feel welcome in the faculty" (Health Sci NF6).

Related to isolation, the majority of new faculty did not feel a sense of institutional belonging to the University of Alberta. As one participant said:

> I have no loyalty to this institution, so it doesn't matter if there is a sense of belongingness. The only thing I care about is that the UofA continues to hold its reputation as a good research institution in Canada. There are some benefits to being associated with a research university in the top 5. (Arts NF6)

Or another who shared: "at my previous institution: we were given $25 to buy something with the university logo on it. This may seem silly but reinforces the culture" (Arts NF4). One participant noted, "colleagues and I share the feeling that there wasn't an immense level of pride from the U of A, or faculties or department" (Health Sci NF4).

Chairs generally echoed what the new faculty shared. From the data, it appeared to be understood by all chairs that institutional belongingness is difficult, and competition, incivility and a lack of collegiality exist. Some did not see the point as evidenced by one chair,

"institutional belongingness – I'm not sure this is relevant. We belong to our disciplines, housed in an institution/university" (Arts C5). A few chairs commented on the challenges of forcing institutional belonging: "It's difficult to make it happen. You can invite people to things, but they are so overwhelmed with everything on their plate" (Arts C1). Others reflected on the impacts of budget cuts to the institutions, "we used to have a faculty room where we had coffee/lunch, staff room, could mingle with people, then our building was renovated, and we don't have these spaces" (Eng/Sci C2). One chair noted that a community of nearly 40,000 people makes building a community difficult and that it is easier to achieve institutional belonging in a smaller institution. One chair felt that there used to be more collegiality when there was more money in the system. Another echoed those sentiments when they said, "nowadays it's so competitive, people don't want to take time for niceties of collegiality. They're wrapped up in their own world, no time to actually be collegial" (Health Sci C2). From the data, it was recognized that collegial relationships are important and that isolation is a predictor of failure for new faculty members. One chair noted that the cuts to the department resulted in "fragmentation of what used to be collegial groups. This department used to have 25 members, 10 members now. Still individuals who get together and connect, collegiality happens in spite of the rest" (Health Sci C2). Much of the comments placed the onus on the new faculty member, for instance one chair said:

> My job is to manage the department and of course it is important for new faculty to find friends in the city. They can do this the same way anyone does this who moves to Edmonton. They can join clubs, exercise groups, book clubs, and while I don't know much about online dating, I understand Tinder is a great option to find partners, should they choose to look at this option. (Arts C5)

From the data, there was recognition by a few chairs that the politics and departmental tensions are difficult for new faculty to manage but inevitably exist and need to be accepted. Some noted the difficulties that exist for chairs in unearthing how new faculty are truly doing, as depicted in this comment: “people tend to treat the department chair differently; they tend to be extremely respectful towards me, so I sometimes am unaware of deep-seated animosities” (Health Sci C1). The same chair went on to say, “by the time they are in their fifth year, from satisfaction surveys, it is very clear that people feel positive about the work they’re doing and have a sense of institutional belongingness” (Health Sci C1).

Thematic Category 7 - Barriers to or issues with Mentoring

As participants reviewed the previous research findings, a large proportion of them reflected on the barriers to accessing mentorship as well as the issues with mentoring in general. Four themes emerged: it is difficult to find a good mentor, everyone is busy, the culture does not value mentorship, and there is a lack of clarity around what mentees need from mentorship.

Difficult to Find a Good Mentor. New faculty talked predominantly about how difficult it is to find a good mentor. There were numerous reasons for this difficulty. Some felt that the pool of potential mentors was limited to begin with, which presented challenges in finding a mentor with the desired skill set. A few participants expressed discomfort in having to reach out to initiate a mentorship relationship. The inherent power dynamic that exists between senior mentor and new faculty was brought up a few times, as articulated by this participant: “there is an implicit power dynamic in the mentoring process which needs to be addressed. If I am to be taken seriously as a peer, not a subordinate, it is disadvantageous for me to be mentored by particular people” (Arts NF7). Another participant shared: “as academics, we are go-getters, self-starters, and it is the nature of the job, but the expectation of new faculty to reach out to faculty is

unreasonable" (Health Sci NF1). This connected to data around the fear of being perceived as incompetent in their role, or weak by voicing their struggles with a mentor. As presented earlier in this chapter, many blamed the lack of training for mentors as part of the reason why it was hard to find good mentors. Participants felt that while there are some good natural leaders who step into mentorship, they are limited, thus the need to train more faculty with experience to become skilled at mentoring.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, good mentors were defined as likable, relatable with a good reputation and relevant experience. Quite a few participants expressed that their paired mentor was hard to relate to and so finding someone who has a balance of experience in the academe with an idea of what young and new faculty need, was difficult. As one participant said, "older faculty might not be very good mentors because their expectations are quite different from those of my older colleagues (20 years ago)" (Arts NF7). Also on relatability, some expressed a need to connect on aspects of their diverse/minority identity, which leaves a limited pool of mentors to choose from. For instance, one participant said:

> New faculty (white and nonwhite) who are progressive need mentors to help them work through institutionalized racism and other forms of oppression (including being asked to teach all the 'race' classes, mentor all the students of color, teach the white faculty about racism, serve as a bodily "representation" of "affirmative action" – not to mention student remarks, racist graffiti, etc.). (Arts NF7)

Another stated, "a lot of the time, mentorship is an old guy telling you how it used to be, which is less helpful, for example for my office neighbor who is a woman, different lived experience" (Eng/Sci NF4). Another participant felt that their mentor was out of touch with the current realities of academia as noted in this comment: "I could teach a thing or two about

academia to some of the senior faculty here – many of whom fall into the dinosaur category. Many of them are stuck in 1980 or 90" (Health Sci NF9). Or another participant who shared:

> My mentor assumed I needed the same help as she needed when she started (probably 30 years ago, maybe longer). She never asked what I needed help with; she mentioned several times, *I needed help with this, so I will help you with it too*. (Health Sci NF10)

A couple of participants described tension or competition with their mentor which had disastrous effects on the progression of their research and at FEC. One participant said, "it felt like my mentor was fishing for ideas for their own work, then taking them" (Health Sci NF2) and the same participant went on to say, "for me, mentorship created more problems than it solved. It created more tension for me to deal with my mentorship relationship" (Health Sci NF2). Some new faculty identified a need for mentorship that begins even earlier in their academic career, as captured by one participant, "mentorship should start at the doctoral/post doc level. It all hits you like a truck the first year as an associate professor" (Arts NF3).

Chairs did not discuss the challenges that exist for new faculty members in finding a good mentor. As has been shared throughout this chapter, they tended to focus on the macro level and the institutional structures and limitations as opposed to the individual pairings around mentorship. These themes will be expanded upon below.

Time Constraints. Another barrier to mentorship that was brought up repeatedly was the issue of not enough time; everybody is busy and good mentors especially, are very busy. This was stated on the summary of previous findings document and was agreed with by new faculty and chairs alike. Participants either blamed senior faculty as too busy to find time for mentoring or praised the good faculty for finding time to participate in mentorship even while being busy. A few comments that illustrate this are, "good faculty are busy, yes, but good faculty are ones

most inclined to seek out new professors, if they respect you, they will seek you out" (Arts NF3) and the same participant went on to say, "the best mentors are the most successful faculty members. They are as good as they are because they prioritize what matters over what doesn't matter. They wouldn't be where they are if they prioritized mentorship (nobody does)" (Arts NF3). On the other hand, some felt that the busiest mentors were inaccessible, as shared by this participant:

> The faculty I would like to work with are all very busy people. Have a lot on the go. These faculty members are not assigned as mentors because their research takes precedence. It is the faculty that are not so busy that are paired with new faculty. While I understand the prioritizing – why would a mediocre faculty member be assigned as a mentor? Would it not make more sense to have new faculty model and learn from the best? It seems counterintuitive to have a so-so faculty member as a role model for new faculty. (Eng/Sci NF13)

Lastly, "we will never have enough time and resources, always in crisis with budget" (Health Sci NF2).

These comments were underscored by an understanding by most participants of the busy environment and culture of academia. Many tended to reflect on how the notion of time or lack thereof has always existed. For example, one new faculty shared, "the university has changed so much, there's so much work. You're essentially running your own business with your research, and there are more demands for your time. Our department is much smaller yet the workload seems heavier" (Arts NF1) and a chair who said, "good faculty are busy yes, but in my experience most busy faculty want to help" (Health Sci C5) which was similar to another chair's comment: "I have found some of the busiest members of our department provide the most

effective mentorship" (Health Sci C1). The chairs that were interviewed were more able to see that being busy did not prevent mentorship from happening compared with new faculty. There appeared to be disparity between departments and faculties in terms of resources available and priority placed on mentorship. For instance, in the health sciences, there appeared to be efforts made to have staff positions created solely to manage mentorship initiatives, whereas some of the other departments had nothing in place.

Poor Culture. According to the data, the issue surrounding busyness is connected to an academic and institutional culture that does not value or prioritize mentorship. Many participants observed a lack of incentive for mentors to participate in mentorship activities because it is not valued at the FEC level. It was predominantly chairs who discussed the cultural component of mentorship but a few new faculty recognized the issue, as one commented, "the programs are there but the culture is not there" (Eng/Sci NF4). Some new faculty felt that a poor departmental culture was preventing mentorship from being effectively delivered, "given the politics in my department I do not think it should be left to the Dean or Chair but rather a senior faculty member who has experienced mentorship" (Arts NF8). Or another comment that said, "I don't see the University suddenly valuing this" (Arts NF3). It was clear that participants felt a lack of priority towards mentorship, and some were able to articulate external factors that detract focus from such activities, as noted in this comment: "the way we do things is ingrained in institutional rankings. Universities are forced to compete with rankings – this requires certain activities by faculty" (Eng/Sci NF11).

Many of the interviewed chairs expressed a desire to improve mentorship, but felt it was very difficult to do given the current culture within the institution. As one chair said, "we are trying to get it (mentorship) more recognized at FEC, because currently it doesn't count for much

at FEC. More could be done on the side of the academy, to value this (mentorship) more strongly" (Health Sci C5). Another chair mentioned, "the conditions described here have arisen from the corporatization of the university and commodification of what I would call consumerization of our services and pressure to turn our faculty into an entrepreneurial focus" (Arts C3). A few chairs described challenges with implementing mentorship at all levels, including for senior leadership positions because the academe simply does not value it or see the need for it. As one said, "I've been trying to work with the Dean, but I'm not making a lot of headway. Even if the words are there, there is not always action" (Eng/Sci C1). The same participant went on to identify the structural nature of the problem, by saying: "the system is broken. Would like to see the U of A take a leadership role with mentorship" (Eng/Sci C1). Further, this participant envisioned the following: "as an institution, we could model an approach that other Universities could copy. It would require grassroots initiative and initiative from the top, and middle" (Eng/Sci C1). Another chair said, "the system needs to be picked up and shaken into a new system. It's no longer viable, but nobody is willing to take the lead" (Health Sci C2). The same participant observed the neoliberal impact of less funding to post-secondaries is evident in this comment by a chair: "government funding continues to decline which is not helping system wide challenges" (Health Sci C2).

Unknown Mentee Needs. The last theme that emerged was around a lack of clarity regarding what new faculty need as they start their careers. These comments were mostly from chairs, but even a couple of new faculty members expressed uncertainty around what they did not know or what they needed to know. Evidence for this was captured earlier in this chapter when I presented what new faculty look for in their mentor. For example, someone to show them the ropes, highlight blind spots or identify common stressors and deadlines in the first years.

Some new faculty brought up the lack of resources in place to help them get started, such as a set up office, or resources for their lab which was felt to be necessary before mentorship could be effective. As one new faculty member said, “the university needs to set up new staff appropriately, for example I had to buy my own white board. Give new faculty stuff at the beginning, give them more start-up money because it will better the university in the long run” (Eng/Sci NF4).

Much of the data collected from chairs identified their struggle in predicting what incoming faculty need. Many felt that to know how to support new faculty depends entirely on their previous academic experience. For example, as one chair said:

> If someone did a postdoc, they might be better equipped and informed. If not, and they are coming in right from being a grad student, they might not know the administrative piece. It is important for mentors to know what experience their mentee has. (Arts C1)

One chair worried about creating dependency: “depending too much on a mentor for help can be a problem. I think we’ve taken steps to avoid this kind of person (who would be dependent) based on our hiring practices. We don’t hire needy people” (Eng/Sci C5). Another chair questioned whether generational differences exist in terms of preferred approaches to mentorship, “would a millennial approach to mentorship be that different than a baby boomer? Now we have a mix in the workplace, it used to be a stoic model that valued independence and to not share fears or frustrations. I suspect millennials might be better at opening up and seeking that sort of mentorship and it can be fantastic” (Health Sci C3). Overall, chairs seemed split; some placed the onus on the new faculty member to figure out what they needed and blamed a lack of mentorship or poor mentorship on the new faculty for not taking charge of their transition.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the findings of my qualitative study that address my research questions: how, if at all, have perceptions of and/or experiences with mentorship changed over time for new and early faculty? Through my data analysis I identified seven thematic categories: overall reactions to previous findings, experience with mentoring/forms of mentoring, mentorship considerations, characteristics of good mentors/purpose of mentoring, facets of academic work and life, discrimination and belongingness, barriers to or issues with mentoring. Overall, my participants were not surprised by the summary of data from prior research and the themes that emerged tell the story of their experiences with and perspectives of mentorship.

Most of my new faculty participants had experience with formal mentorship initiatives and were not satisfied with the dyad model that they were placed into. Most of the chairs that I interviewed talked about the challenges that exist within institutions of higher education that make it difficult to prioritize mentorship initiatives.

In the next chapter, I discuss the results of my analysis by presenting key findings and implications from my research, practical applications and recommendations for academic practice, along with limitations and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

The following discussion examines the qualitative results of my research project. As the purpose of this study is to build upon prior research to contribute to a qualitative retrospective exploration of mentorship, this chapter will discuss the findings from my study as it relates to the general literature and will be compared specifically to prior Canadian research conducted at the University of Alberta. This will aid in examining how perceptions and experiences of mentorship have changed over time for new faculty. The Canadian data that is frequently cited throughout this chapter is from the Teaching, Learning and Technology Council (TLAT) research that was conducted in 2012. These findings were compiled into the data summary document that my participants reviewed and reacted to during their semi-structured interview.

The data from new faculty members and chairs in my study highlight the desire for mentorship, yet there remains significant challenges and considerations regarding the appropriate application, delivery and assessment of such initiatives. My data echoes much of what has been reported in the literature for decades, suggesting that not much has been learned or integrated from the previous research. It appears that new faculty continue to struggle as they enter the academe and traditional mentorship rarely addresses their needs, sometimes worsening the situation. To explore these points further, this chapter will be organized into the following sections. I will first capture key findings and implications from my study, then present practical applications and recommendations for academic practice as well as limitations and recommendations for future research. Throughout all sections, I will integrate the impacts of

neoliberalism and discuss the results and implications through an ethics of care/caring democracy lens.

Mentorship in Academia

Early research on mentorship in academia touted the benefit triad; mentorship benefits the mentee, mentor and the institution (Boice, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Greying & Rhodes, 2002; Lannkau & Scandura, 2002; Reich, 1995; Otto, 1994; Luna & Cullen, 1995). More recently, research has begun to question the benefit triad. For instance:

> Canada-wide survey and interview data at the UofA do not support the benefit triad. In particular, there is little evidence from the participants of the Canada-wide survey and the UofA interview data that the advantages cited from the benefit triad were benefits they experienced. (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, p. 7, 2012)

Furthermore, "it is not entirely clear if mentoring helps new faculty, or hinders them". (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012, p.7)

Most of my participants were not surprised by the summary of previous research findings that were shared with them during the interview (see Appendix C), suggesting that there has not been a significant shift in the application of previous research findings regarding the considerations and challenges with mentorship. In the following section, I provide a snapshot of the prevalence of mentorship to contextualize it within the Canadian higher education landscape and will then present the key findings and implications of my study.

Canadian data from 2012 expressed encouragement that more new faculty were being mentored than in the past while also noting that fewer spontaneous mentoring relationships were being formed (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). Most of my participants reported being mentored as they transitioned into their role, so it appears that the trend of

increasing participation in mentorship prevails. Most of these participants reported participation in a structured formal mentorship program, which may align with the prior research that commented on fewer spontaneous mentorship relationships emerging.

The fact that more faculty members are receiving mentorship does not tell the whole story. As seen in my data, most new faculty who received formal mentorship were dissatisfied. Common reasons for this dissatisfaction centered around their mentor being out of touch with their needs and ultimately unhelpful in providing the support they required. Many new faculty members reported that their organically formed mentoring relationships were more helpful, or that they relied on existing (e.g., from grad school) or external (e.g., outside the university) mentors. Overall, the new faculty data from my study revealed a tension between those who felt that some structure from the chair or the dean would be beneficial to get the ball rolling, and others who strongly valued the independent approach to self-selecting. As for the chairs interviewed in my study, a few favored a structured approach which involved their direction in creating mentorship pairs, but most chairs expressed a preference for informal mentorship initiatives. This is somewhat aligned with Canadian research that found inconsistencies regarding mentor assignments and that mid-to late faculty believe mentoring relationships should be "mutually formed with some combination of input from the new faculty member, mentor, department chair/head and dean" (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012, p. 4 0). This suggests a mismatch between what is happening in practice (structured mentorship) and faculty preferences (unstructured and organically formed) as well as a lack of consensus regarding how formalized or structured mentorship activities should be.

Key Findings and Implications

No one Size Fits all Approach to Mentorship

Much of the early literature focused on traditional formal structured mentorship initiatives that promoted the benefit triad. Even though recent Canadian data did not support the benefit triad (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012), there was only a superficial exploration of alternative models. This is where my findings stand out in that many of my participants expressed an interest in alternatives to the dyad model such as peer mentorship and a network mentorship approach. Many commented on the need for mentors with varying levels of seniority that can offer diverse perspectives and that it is not feasible or realistic for one person to fulfill all their needs. This exact sentiment emerged from earlier findings as seen below:

> While there are many factors contributing to mentoring relationship problems, one aspect seems to be dominant: the orientation for new faculty into academia has been bundled into one activity: mentoring – with one person responsible for all the orientation activities for new faculty. Of course, assuming that one person has expertise in all areas is an optimistic assumption. (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012, p. 7)

There was a lot of interest from my new faculty participants in considering how peer mentorship could fill identified gaps for new faculty which included informal (socializing) to formal (networking) opportunities for connection. As for the chairs, peer mentorship was not mentioned as much, except for a few participants who identified it may be helpful for women. While some of the literature does focus on the benefits of peer mentorship for women faculty (Biehle et al., 2021) it has also been promoted as a useful mechanism to support all faculty including those who identify with underrepresented groups (not just gender) because of its supportive environment and discussion-based format (Cree-Green et al., 2020). While there

remains a lack of Canadian data in this area, findings from my study suggest new faculty want alternative models. This, in turn, may serve as a starting point for more research to build upon.

Overall, my findings and the literature suggest that there is no one size fits all approach to mentorship. Mentors and mentees have different preferences, expectations, experiences and resources making it necessary to assess needs and design custom mentorship initiatives that consider traditional and non-traditional models of mentorship. Given the conceptual framework of this study, these implications, as viewed through a *caring with* lens, would consider the unique needs of faculty members rather than assuming such care looks the same for everyone.

Micro and Macro Considerations for Mentorship

In analyzing the interview data, it became apparent that new faculty members tended to focus on the micro level, or small-scale factors related to mentorship whereas the chairs talked about the macro level, or large-scale factors. For instance, most new faculty members discussed specific characteristics that mentors possess, or resources that would have facilitated mentorship whereas the chairs tended to talk about the broader systems around mentorship and necessary conditions for its effectiveness.

More specifically, data from new faculty members focused on their desire for a mentor to train them on specific components of the job, skill development and to provide advice and information in key areas where they lacked knowledge (e.g., how to write grants, how funding works, supervising students, teaching undergraduates, how the department operates). In terms of specific characteristics that participants are looking for in a mentor, descriptors such as open, trust-based relationship, ad hoc/shouldn't be forced, collegial, confidential, respectful, intrinsically motivated to mentor, supports psychological need for autonomy, and competence were shared. Unsurprisingly, as these characteristics are synonymous with support, this aligns

with Canadian data that captured characteristics/personal qualities of good mentors to include similar terms, such as openness, strong interpersonal skills, available (Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012). There were mixed responses from new faculty related to shared research interests. Both the pros and cons of having a mentor who shares research interests versus not were discussed by participants. This was also an area that was conflicted in the literature suggesting the benefit to multiple mentors (e.g., some with shared research interests and some without) as seen in the various non-traditional models (e.g., constellation model, network approach).

To improve their experience with mentorship, new faculty suggested more support in all areas, and desired tangible resources related to curriculum and teaching (e.g., syllabus and exam templates), onboarding documents and tip sheets, as well as guidelines for mentorship. As a result of follow up interviews conducted at the University of Alberta over a decade ago, a transition guide for new faculty was developed in 2012. Based on my analysis, it appears that these materials were not integrated into mentorship and onboarding activities at the University of Alberta, as most of my participants were unfamiliar with them. This may be due to a couple of reasons such as an institutional culture that does not value mentorship enough to embed these resources, and/or confusion regarding who should own the implementation of these resources. Furthermore, this ultimately leads to the question of who is responsible and accountable for mentorship activities across the institution, faculties and departments. It is well recognized that institutions of higher education are both siloized and organized around entrenched structures, with faculties and departments working in isolation (Mascolo, 2020) and mentorship is not often identified as a major strategic priority of the institution (Choi et al., 2019). This should raise concern with administration given the missed opportunity to capitalize upon prior research. To

consider hours of time spent researching and developing resources to support new faculty resulted in a document that was just sitting on a desk untouched, is disheartening from a care perspective and wasteful from a financial perspective.

Both new faculty and chairs grappled with the idea of reward and training for mentors without consensus on what should be in place. New faculty members in my study tended to suggest small scale or very broad rewards such as coffee for meetings or general incentivization. On the other hand, chairs were less convinced that rewards were necessary and more so talked about the recognition of such activities at the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC level). This aligns with the literature and Canadian data. Training for mentors was similarly unclear. New faculty in my study were slightly more on board with the idea of training for mentors, whereas chairs less so. This again, promotes the need for a cultural shift to encourage and recognize mentorship in various ways at different levels as this will contribute to higher engagement with mentorship initiatives across positions. Further, it will focus not just on the basic requirements of mentorship, but in preparing (e.g., via training) faculty to mentor and be mentored.

When the chairs in my study discussed mentorship, it tended to focus on the broader systemic level. Some talked about the need for mentorship to be ongoing and continuous, not a one-time fix. With that, they noted the difficulty in creating and implementing such comprehensive mentoring approaches because it tends to fall on chairs and the demands of the university make them too busy. Many chairs expressed a desire for the institution to shift in a way that would welcome new faculty members and encourage collaboration and teamwork at the outset. Furthermore, there was a desire for mentorship throughout the entire career trajectory of an academic, not just in the first year. This aligns with data outlined in Canadian research, that based on participant input stated “the duration of the mentoring relationship should be ongoing

until the new faculty member has attained tenure, requiring 2-4 hours / month. However, the broader literature tended to focus on small scale and short-lived mentorship programs that targeted new faculty needs during the first months and years in the professor role; not until tenure has been attained, or beyond (e.g., support transitioning into chair positions). This presents another area where future attention and research is needed, to explore the critical points along the career trajectory of an academic where mentorship is needed and how it can be most effective.

My findings also found a tension that emerged from chairs regarding who is ultimately responsible for mentorship. Is it up to the new faculty to identify what they need and then seek out mentorship? Or is it the responsibility of the senior faculty to recognize what new faculty need and to facilitate mentorship? In my review of the literature, the acknowledgement of the macro level, big picture, which can include the questions around who is ultimately responsible for mentorship, was often covered in the recommendations for future research sections, further emphasizing the value of my study in incorporating the perspectives of both new and senior faculty members on these topics. While my findings generally align with the sentiments expressed in the recommendations for future research from other studies (that both the micro and macro factors must be in place for mentorship to thrive), there has not been enough robust research conducted within the Canadian context to explore how to address these challenges.

Overall, my findings and the literature suggest that both need more attention and it is not possible to have one without the other. A well-designed program or resource, such as the Guide created in 2012 has no chance of being utilized if the broader structure is not in place. Conversely, the institution can purport to value mentorship but must implement specific strategies and tangible outputs. “Elevating mentorship to a strategic priority requires a merging

of top down and grassroots approaches" (p. 632, Choi et al., 2019). Given the conceptual framework of this study, these implications, as viewed through a *caring with* lens, would see the necessity to care with both ends of the spectrum; with senior leaders and with new faculty alike, using empathy to seek understanding of the micro and macro needs, realities and challenges that are being experienced in order to determine next steps in ameliorating mentorship practices.

Supporting the Whole Faculty Member Needs

Consistent with the literature, my participants expressed a need for more support in all three areas: teaching, research and service with teaching being mentioned most frequently. Participants either had little to no previous experience teaching, did not know how to manage class and student expectations, or felt the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) is an unhelpful assessment tool, and the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) not always an adequate resource. While the literature may debate which is of more concern for new faculty members: teaching or research, there has been a consistently documented challenge with new faculty members adjusting to all three areas: research, teaching, service. Given the neoliberal pressures on the institution to do more with less, and the impact that has on teaching, research and service, this area deserves more attention. Furthermore, my data suggest that expecting individual faculty members to preemptively know what support they need in these areas is unrealistic and putting the onus on them to seek out mentorship is burdensome. This complete lack of care for the overwhelm that they endure is compounded by a commonly held belief that academics need to be self-sufficient, independent and resourceful. These beliefs are unfortunately perpetuated across generations of faculty members due to the meritocratic nature of the neoliberal university.

Another consistent area of concern for new faculty members was the lack of clarity regarding tenure and the poor culture surrounding feedback. This too has been consistently documented in the literature and highlighted in Canadian data making clear that not enough has been done to address these areas. Most of my participants reported feeling in the dark regarding tenure and promotion and this caused significant stress and anxiety that impacted their mental health. Chairs also recognized that this was a reality felt by new faculty, but to them it was accepted as part of the job and endemic to the life of an academic. The implication of this stress is significant and impacts their level of engagement. As data has shown,

> Engaged faculty are emotionally and psychologically committed to their work *and* their workplace. Gallup finds that engaged employees are less likely to leave their institution, represent lower healthcare costs for their employer, have fewer absences and are more likely to recommend their institution as a place to work. And while these are important outcomes for institutions, so too is the student experience -- and faculty engagement is highly predictive of a high-quality student experience. (Marken, 2021)

Related to the stress surrounding tenure, new faculty overwhelmingly shared their struggle in achieving a healthy work-life balance. This was due to the unrealistic expectations of academia which tremendously impacted their mental health. Even many of the chairs in my study recognized that work life balance and mental health is a challenge for new faculty, yet the topic is not extensively discussed in the literature. Shockingly, mental health was not mentioned at all in the 2012 Teaching Learning and Technology Council report. While there may be research conducted outside of the scope of mentorship that explores faculty mental health, there ought to be a future focus on the connection between the two. Work life balance and mental health are so deeply connected to the experience of new faculty, and mentorship in its various

forms may address aspects of mental health. The lack of literature around this connection may be due to a few reasons. Given the culture of the academe, it is plausible that mental health and work life balance are not topics that align with the archetype of the individually strong, responsible and successful academic. This is particularly concerning when there is such an institutional focus on student mental health initiatives and an expectation for faculty to support them. Furthermore, the literature reveals that female faculty tend to have a heavier student care load which further exacerbates their stress, impedes scholarly work (Dengate et al., 2019) and does not adequately help the struggling student. This supports the need to prioritize mentorship in playing a role in supporting faculty mental health, which if left ignored has a compounding effect not only to their work but to student success and well-being (Marken, 2021).

Faculty members are a diverse group of individuals with various dimensions of identity, personal, professional/academic experiences and needs. Many new faculty members that were interviewed for this study reported first-hand experience being discriminated against based on gender, race or ethnicity. The majority of new faculty and chairs acknowledged the systemic injustices and discriminatory practices that exist, with only a few participants stating it was not an issue or these challenges have been overcome. These experiences align with the research and are likely more pervasive given the increasingly diverse cohort of incoming new faculty members. This suggests that diverse faculty members face substantially more challenges and barriers and are at risk of burning out or leaving the field altogether. Representation of diverse faculty within the academe is not enough, they need and deserve the appropriate support and mentorship to be able to thrive. Furthermore, institutions must integrate the learnings from the research surrounding how certain types of mentorship can support marginalized faculty members. That said, it must also be recognized that mentorship alone does not solve the issue.

While all Canadian postsecondary institutions have a comprehensive strategy to support diverse faculty which includes recruitment and retention strategies, diversity hiring initiatives, education in unlearning biased beliefs and accountability mechanisms for inappropriate and abusive behaviors, based on the findings of my study it is recommended that mentoring be added to these initiatives.

In alignment with prior research, a significant portion of my participants noted the ongoing issues with collegiality and competition. Related, many of my participants reported feeling isolated and a lack of institutional belongingness. This feeds into much of what has already been covered in this chapter. It suggests that not only are faculty struggling, but they are also alone and disconnected. COVID likely worsened these feelings, so a check-in is needed: are new faculty members okay? How can mentorship help them to reconnect collegially and with the institution?

Overall, this section detailed the major themes that emerged in my study, and my analysis suggests that not much has changed in the last decade surrounding the needs that new faculty have for support in research, teaching and service, as well as tenure, work life balance and isolation. Given the conceptual framework of this study, these implications, as viewed through a *caring with* lens, make clear the lack of care that has been available to new faculty members through inadequate attempts for mentorship to support their needs. This demands a refocus and consideration for how mentorship can act as one part of the puzzle to supporting the whole faculty member, alongside other strategies. When I say *whole faculty member*, I mean to include all aspects of their identity (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation etc.) and components of wellbeing (e.g., academic, social, mental, emotional etc.) across personal and professional

realms. If they are cared for in one area (e.g., through mentorship at work) it has ripple effects to the other areas of their life.

Who Conducts the Interview and Where it Happens Matters

In the first chapter of this thesis, I acknowledged that the various components of my identity mattered when sitting down to discuss mentorship with my research participants and impacted the conversation in a different way than the interviews Dr. Kanuka conducted. This required me to examine my positionality as a researcher. As outlined by Savin-Baden and Major (2013), there are three ways to identify positionality: locating oneself about the subject, the participants and the research context/process. First, in terms of the subject, I had no experience with mentorship within academia. My previous interactions with the topic were with student mentorship programs. I have generally viewed mentorship with a positive connotation and held assumptions that it is a good practice to support people, regardless of the context. I also considered mentorship a uniform phenomenon that centered around an experienced person helping a less experiences person. Second, in locating myself to the participants, I must consider how I view myself as well as how others view me. I utilized the wheel of privilege and power (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2023) to identify the level to which the dimensions of my identity reflected privilege. This revealed that I possess some privileged identities (e.g., heterosexual, able-bodied, white, English-speaking, non-indigenous, Canadian citizen) and some less privileged identities (e.g., cisgender woman, early 30s, graduate student, junior researcher). Some of these identities showed up explicitly in the interview (e.g., white woman, introduced as a graduate student) and others more implicitly (e.g., sexuality, citizenship). Regardless, all components of my identity had meaning for how I showed up and for how my participants viewed me. I may have been viewed as young, naive, unthreatening, powerless, but I also may

have shared a connection to some of my participants based on gender, race and area of study. This meant that I may have developed a different rapport or level of trust with participants that could have impacted the way they opened up to me during the interview, thus influencing my data collection. Third, to locate myself about the research context and process, I acknowledge that as a graduate student I have been learning throughout this thesis process. Having never conducted a research study, this experience required me to accept an iterative process, support from my supervisor and acknowledgement that mistakes were part of my learning process.

In addition to the identity factors at play in the interview dynamic, the physical location of the interviews influenced the data collection and analysis process. As I traveled across campus and met with participants in their offices, I was able to observe their space and their relation to it. May and Lewis (2020) found that the *in situ* nature of the sit-down interview allows participants to easily talk about place in embodied terms. Faculty spend a significant amount of time in their offices, at least prior to COVID and so it provides a snapshot into the department culture, norms, values. The disparity that I observed when meeting faculty members across campus was noticeable. In general observations, health sciences and engineering are apparent in the fact that they as a faculty have more resources. Shiny buildings, lush office spaces, modern materials and furnishing as opposed to the dated, tired and bare bones offices I visited in the humanities. While this is a generalization, it is worth noting. What we see in our society means something. When we see that certain disciplines are not resourced, what does that say about the care and attention they receive? How do students view these differences, and does it impact their experience and future career prospects? What does it say about institutional, governmental and industry priorities? Given the conceptual framework of this study, I felt it necessary to include the

observations and comments on space, as it has considerations around overall support, including the role of mentorship.

Practical Implications and Recommendations

Cultural Shift

A cultural shift within academia must occur for meaningful integration and prioritization of mentorship. For starters, the recommendations outlined in the 2012 Teaching, Learning and Technology Council are still relevant and should still be considered as next steps. In the report it was recommended that the TLAT findings be distributed to Deans and Chairs, and added to the agenda of the next Deans retreat. It was also stated that units (faculties and or departments) are responsible for initiating, advocating and promoting orientation activities via the oversight of department committee. The report further outlined recommendations that the provost articulate the importance of supporting new academics and they should follow up annually with Deans to ensure progress is being made. Lastly, the report suggested that ongoing support be provided as new faculty enter the mid-career phase of their career to prepare them to step into leadership roles.

Aside from my recommendation that the above remain as recommendations, it would be impactful to see faculty mentorship prioritized in the institutional strategic plan as an indicator that senior leadership value it. From there, it is critical that faculties and departments customize mentorship activities to best support their people and these initiatives should align with institutional strategy. Additionally, best practices must be shared across the institution. Given the competing demands that senior administrators must respond to and recognizing the neoliberal pressures for them to prioritize items that feed the bottom line, perhaps they need to be provided with not just the literature, but the return on investment in financial figures. There is ample

research both in and out of the faculty development realm that confirm, when employees are not engaged, it costs the institution as outlined earlier in this chapter (Marken, 2021) plausibly impacting their research and publications, so perhaps this angle would resonate. Alternatively, an ethics of care lens (Tronto, 2013) would say enough is enough; faculty need mentorship that cares for their needs now, as they are on the brink of burnout and resignation. Creating a cultural shift will not happen overnight, but with these specific recommendations in mind, the needle may begin to shift, and these priorities will trickle down to the individual faculty level, ideally merging with whatever grassroots efforts currently in place. Further evidence of a cultural shift would be in the presence of mentorship across all faculties and departments. My data and the literature point to some excellent initiatives, often focused in the health sciences, but this is not reflective of an institutional culture around mentorship for all. This would require faculty members to identify as part of the broader U of A community, not just with their faculty or discipline. It is possible for faculty members to associate and connect with both the institution and their smaller communities. The next section will illustrate how I recommend balancing campus wide collaboration with faculty/department initiatives.

Needs Assessment and Customized Approach

I will present my step-by-step recommendations for how institutions and leadership across faculties and departments can begin to customize the mentorship experience for new faculty members to better address their needs. Before re-inventing the wheel, institutions must assess the current state regarding mentorship.

First, it would be valuable for institutional leadership to conduct an environmental scan of what mentorship initiatives area currently in place across all faculties and disciplines at the institution. This could be compiled into a strategic document that captures strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) or a similar report structure that could be used to outline successes, wins and action items.

Second, a needs assessment at the faculty or department level should be conducted. To establish trust, build relationships and begin to shift the culture, I recommend that all faculty levels be involved in the needs assessment. Additionally, I suggest ongoing discussions or focus groups be established to converse with colleagues around what it would look like to develop and launch strong mentorship initiatives. Resources like the International Association for Public Participation's (2023) spectrum of public participation can be utilized to transparently articulate what input is desired around the development of mentorship initiatives.

After assessing faculty needs, I recommend that institutions take a customized approach to developing mentorship initiatives. Specifically, I recommend that mentorship be approached in a *choose your own adventure* way. By this, I envision new faculty members filling out a questionnaire or meeting for an interview to reflect on their ideal type of mentorship, based on their unique needs. The questionnaire would pose questions designed to solicit information on the ideal structure and model such as formal or informal (structured or unstructured), self-selected or assigned, in person or remote/virtual. Other questions may then identify which theoretical framework best aligns with their preferences (e.g., developmental, learning and social) and then a suggested list of mentorship models or general resources that align with each would be provided (e.g., a mentorship model with a social underpinning would suggest different groups, associations or networking and peer support). These personalized suggestions would incorporate key considerations from the literature as outlined in this thesis and the specific outputs will be dependent on department and campus resources. This would require a certain level of cross campus collaboration to share resources rather than duplicate efforts. For instance,

perhaps there is a women's peer support network (peer mentorship) for women working in engineering, and in addition, someone who participates in that group may also be encouraged (based on questionnaire results) to participate in a traditional dyad pairing which they can either seek out on their own or be provided with a list of available mentees that they can select from.

This approach embodies principles of adult learning theory which places the new faculty member at the center of their mentorship experience, integrates their prior life experiences, and recognizes that they are interested in immediate application of knowledge, and are internally motivated to create their own experience (Merriam, 2001). Given that the literature was divided on which mentorship approach is best (e.g., dyad model, peer mentorship, orientation activities), this customized approach serves as an in ideal in between; it provides some structure, but ultimately new faculty have agency over their experience. This process also inherently promotes reflection which is critical for learning and development (Fiddler & Marienau, 2008). Many new faculty stated that they do not know what they do not know, or consider their situation atypical or unique, so this process uses best practices to guide them through the aspects that may be less familiar, that they may not have thought of and that mentorship may ultimately support. This differs from the traditional expert (mentor) and novice (mentee) pairing and leaves room for future research to examine the benefits of non-traditional mentorship models including role-reversal mentorship which would explore the learnings that mentors glean from their mentee. More on this in areas for future research below. Lastly, this approach promotes a multi-pronged approach to support new faculty, where mentorship and other resources may be suggested to ensure the whole faculty member is sufficiently supported, and not just by one mentor.

Limitations and Future Research

I identified three limitations to my study. First, the sampling occurred only at the University of Alberta. As my study drew from previous research conducted through the University of Alberta that interviewed faculty across U-15 schools nationwide, a limitation in my comparative analysis is that my study did not include the same subset of participants. Related to this point, a limitation is that the study is retrospective but not a true longitudinal study as I did not interview the same participants who participated in the 2012 study that I compare my findings to. Second, I did not conduct all the interviews as they were shared with Dr. Kanuka. While I conducted most of the interviews, the fact that I was not present for all of them could have impacted the data analysis stage of the project. Fortunately, I did implement rigorous methodologies and procedures to mitigate any discrepancy in my analysis. Third, the entire duration of my research project was lengthy. Sampling procedures were initiated in fall of 2018, interviews spanned 2018-19 and the analysis was spread out from 2019-2022. During this time, the COVID-19 pandemic occurred which may have transformed the ways that institutions of higher education operate, including the application and delivery of mentorship practices.

As for future research, there are three areas that I recommend be explored further to contribute to the literature.

Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Faculty and Mentorship

It was an interesting experience to finish my data collection before the COVID-19 pandemic hit and be consumed with the data analysis phase of my research project during the COVID-19 pandemic. While there is a small amount of emerging research examining the impacts of the pandemic, it may be too soon to truly appreciate the scope and scale of such impact. For that reason, I recommend more research focus on the experiences of faculty

members during the pandemic to better understand their current needs and how mentorship may be able to assist. Some of the questions I would recommend are: did existing mentorship programs stop running during the pandemic due to restrictions of in person gatherings? Did they pivot to online delivery? Did faculty members lean even more strongly into their mentorship relationships for support during the pandemic? What was the experience of new faculty who were hired right before or during the pandemic? How did their needs shift? Were they even more isolated or struggle even more with not being able to conduct research in their labs, or in having to pivot multiple times to online learning, or synchronous learning? What impact has that had on their progression towards attaining tenure? How did it impact their mental health? What role does mentorship have in all of this?

Non-Traditional Mentorship Models

Most of the small-scale research studies or ad hoc opinion articles that discussed non-traditional mentorship models (e.g., anything other than the dyad model, such as peer mentorship or reverse mentorship) were from the health sciences fields. A major gap appears to remain in the literature regarding non-traditional mentorship models. Research is needed across all disciplines, faculties and departments regarding the various types of mentorship models. What are the pros and cons of these models? How are they designed? How is effectiveness measured in the short and long term? Who benefits most from non-traditional mentorship models? Based on my participant data, of particular interest would be to further explore peer mentorship and network mentorship. Given the oftentimes differing opinions or reactions between new faculty and chairs, the data suggests that they may be out of touch with the experiences, needs and challenges of the other. For that reason, I suggest more research be conducted to understand reverse mentorship in academia. More research would be helpful in learning how these models

may facilitate connection, understanding and truly embody a *caring with* mentality. Along these lines, some of the questions that would be worth examining would be, how do new faculty and chairs feel misunderstood? How do they understand the needs of the other? What would they hope to learn from the other? How may reverse mentorship address these questions. The implications of these research questions may significantly aid in building connections, supporting mental health and succession planning. While this may or may not directly tie back to mentorship, it is still critically important to be studied.

Short and Long-Term Assessment and Evaluation

As concluded by Schechtel et al., "every mentoring relationship matters and is essential to have metrics that capture a complete and authentic story rather than creating an incomplete picture to satisfy metrics, timing, and voices that are already well established in the literature" (2022, p.13). Building off this statement, more research is needed to measure the effectiveness of mentorship while it is happening, upon its completion and in the months and years that follow. Consideration must be given to formative and summative assessment practices that can be integrated to capture insights from mentors and mentees. Additionally, more research is needed to examine cross faculty and department communication and collaboration when it comes to mentorship. It appears that areas are working in silos and not sharing information, resources and learnings related to mentorship. Related to the shift in academic culture, more research is needed in order to understand how to do this.

Conclusion

Faculty are an important and costly asset to institutions of higher education and are currently struggling as they enter the academe. This thesis has focused on the needs of new faculty members and the role that mentorship plays in supporting them through their transition

into academia. Mentorship has existed as a concept and practice for a long time and the study of mentorship has emerged from various fields with its usage spanning many industries. The literature presents a multitude of mentorship definitions, theories, models, practices used in academia and has begun to question the benefit triad commonly associated with the traditional dyad model of mentorship. “Based on the data from the Canada-wide survey and the semi-structured interviews, it appears that the way mentoring is conducted in institutions of higher education in Canada, and the UofA, needs to be rethought” (p.7, Teaching, Learning and Technology Council, 2012).

To answer my research question, my data analysis suggests that there has not been much progress over the past decade in improving mentorship practices for new faculty members. I provided recommendations to shift the culture around mentorship and specific steps that would assist in assessing faculty needs and designing customized mentorship programming. These recommendations incorporate learnings from this research study and the literature.

Throughout the research study, my own definition of mentorship and perspective on its value has changed, multiple times. I have landed on the simplistic definition that mentorship is centered around relationships and is best done with multiple people, offering different inputs. It has also become clear to me that mentorship is just one piece of the puzzle, and when done in isolation, has a slim chance of fulfilling the entirety of support that new faculty members not only need but deserve. This means that institutions need to prioritize it, academic culture needs to value it, and faculty members from all levels need to be bought in. For this to resonate with a wide audience (e.g., faculty, leaders etc.) it may need to be looked at from a few perspectives. For instance, from a financial or neoliberal perspective, the return-on-investment argument may be valued and from a caring perspective, the fact that people benefit from the social elements of

mentorship to feel a sense of connection and belonging may mean more. Rather than viewing this as a binary, both can be true and in place at the same time. Additionally, mentorship will thrive when the other pieces of the puzzle are in place such as inclusive hiring practices, strategic priorities related to mentorship, orientation programs, mental health services, teaching resources and the list could go on. It appears that sometimes all these activities are lumped under the umbrella of mentorship, and this is simply unrealistic and unattainable.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Consent Form

This consent explains what the research is about and what your participation involves. The consent form is part of the process of informed consent. If you would like more information about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information before you reply to my request to participate in the interview.

Invitation to Participate and Purpose: The purpose of this study is to conduct a follow-up investigation with faculty at the University of Alberta about mentoring practices within university settings. In 2012, based on a study conducted at the University of Alberta and a large Canada-wide survey, resources were developed for department chairs, deans and other senior administrators on mentoring practices designed for new and early faculty at the University of Alberta.

This study aims to explore the impact (if any) of the resources developed. Through interviews that use the same questions from the prior study, I will collect data on the mentoring experiences of selected individuals from the same four type of participant groups as in the prior study: (1) recently hired faculty who have been mentored; (2) recently hired faculty who have not been mentored; (3) established faculty who have acted as mentors; and (4) administrators who have been responsible for arranging mentor relationships or who have an interest in doing so. These data will be compared with the findings of the prior study. This information will provide a good baseline understanding of the effectiveness of providing institutional resources to implement mentoring programs within a University setting. As a [**mid- to late- / new**] faculty member I would like to obtain your perspectives on this topic. Your views will make an important contribution in understanding new and early faculty members' career development with respect to mentoring.

Interview Participation Process: If you decide to participate, you will be one of approximately 40 participants interviewed. The questions in this study focus on mentoring at the University of Alberta. Your feedback will help advance research on this topic.

Research Design: This phase of the study is based on semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

Participant Role: Your signature on this consent form will be interpreted as your consent to participate. You will be asked to participate in a 30-60 minute focus group interview. I anticipate that the interviews will take place between October to December 2018. I do not expect any risk to you in participating in this study. Although individual monetary remuneration is not possible, study benefits are summarized at the end of this form. The study is not structured to involve

psychological or emotional manipulations. There are no known harms associated with your participation in this research.

Information Shared: You will be provided with a brief overview of the study at the start of the group interview to minimize bias in data collection. All study participants will be provided with notification on publications from the study by email.

Withdrawal from Study: You may refuse to answer certain questions during the interview and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may end your participation in the study by simply letting the interviewer know during the interview. You will have the option of informing me that your input collected to that point can be used in our study, or informing me **prior to [date]** to destroy your input immediately so your interview cannot be used in our study.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Your identity as a participant in the study is confidential; all personal identifiers will be removed from the transcribed data and reported in the aggregate (anonymous). I will keep any personal information gathered about you during the study confidential and will never be made public.

The identity of participants will be excluded from all published materials related to this study.

Data Storage: Data will be stored on a hard drive on an encrypted laptop, which is password protected. Data access will be limited to a research assistant and myself. The Research Assistant and myself will be the only ones with access to the interview data. Upon completion of the study, the data containing any personal information will be cross-shredded. The period of data retention up to project completion will not exceed five years.

Study Benefits: Study benefits to participants involve the opportunity to participate in research and give back to the professional community.

Future use of Data: This data collection is designed to build on prior exploration into mentoring. The findings in this study may be useful to the University of Alberta, as well as other universities nationally and perhaps internationally.

By participating in the study, in no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension and Augustana Research Ethics Board (EEA REB) at the University of Alberta, Canada. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEA REB at (780) 492-3751.

Your signature below indicates that you would like to participate in the interview, and will constitute your consent.

_____	_____
Signature of Research Participant	Date
_____	_____
Witness	Date

Appendix B: Email Invitation

LETTER OF INVITATION (via email)

[date]

Dear [potential study survey participant],

Re: Follow up study on mentoring new and early faculty – Invitation to participate

I am writing to invite you to participate in a follow-up study on mentoring new and early faculty. In 2012, based on a study conducted at the University of Alberta and a large Canada-wide survey, resources were developed by a sub-committee of TLAT for department chairs, deans and other senior administrators on mentoring practices designed for new and early faculty at the University of Alberta. This study aims to explore the impact (if any) of the resources developed. I realise that there are many demands on your time and that you may not be able to commit to this at this time. However, the study would greatly benefit from your participation. This information will make an important contribution towards understanding the academic development of new faculty.

Participation will involve an in-person interview. Each interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes. Participation in this study does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life. You are free to refuse to answer particular questions, to quit the interview, or to withdraw from the study altogether prior to submitting the interview data. There is no remuneration or compensation for participating in this study.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please reply to this email to arrange a date and time for this interview. At the onset of the interview, you will be asked to read the letter of invitation which includes the description of the study and sign a consent form.

Thank you for considering my invitation to participate. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant, or how this study is being conducted, you may contact the University of Alberta's Research ethics Office at 780-492-2615. This office has no affiliation with the study investigators.

Sincerely,
Heather

LETTER OF INVITATION (via email)

[date]

Dear [potential study survey participant],

Re: Follow up study on mentoring new and early faculty – Invitation to participate

I am writing to invite you to participate in a follow-up study on mentoring new and early faculty. In 2012, based on a study conducted at the University of Alberta and a large Canada-wide survey, resources were developed for department chairs, deans and other senior administrators on mentoring practices designed for new and early faculty at the University of Alberta. This study aims to explore the impact (if any) of the resources developed.

I realise that there are many demands on your time and that you may not be able to commit to this at this time. However, the study would greatly benefit from your participation as a new faculty member. This information will make an important contribution towards understanding the academic development of new faculty.

Participation will involve an in-person interview. Each interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes. Participation in this study does not involve any risks greater than those encountered in everyday life. You are free to refuse to answer particular questions, to quit the interview, or to withdraw from the study altogether prior to submitting the interview data. There is no remuneration or compensation for participating in this study.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please reply to this email to arrange a date and time for this interview. At the onset of the interview, you will be asked to read the letter of invitation which includes the description of the study, interview questions and sign a consent form.

Thank you for considering my invitation to participate. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant, or how this study is being conducted, you may contact the University of Alberta's Research ethics Office at 780-492-2615. This office has no affiliation with the study investigators.

Sincerely,
Heather

Appendix C: Guided Interview Questions

Based on the findings of a Canadian-wide survey and follow up interviews, what are your reactions?

Findings of prior research on mentoring

With few notable exceptions, following is an overview of the findings in our prior study:

- New faculty have difficulty transiting from doctoral studies to academia
- New faculty state they did not have sufficient support when they first started as a faculty member
- With a few notable exceptions, new faculty tend not to find mentoring helpful

The reasons for the above findings are varied, but (and consistent with prior literature) the Canada-wide survey and the follow-up interviews reveal the following difficulties:

- Lack of collegial relationships resulting in experiencing isolation, separation, fragmentation, loneliness, competition, and sometimes incivility
- Lack of integrated personal and professional lives
- Little or no feedback, recognition and/or reward
- Lack of comprehensive understanding of the tenure and promotion process
- Unrealistic expectations and insufficient resources and support system

It has been argued in the literature that efforts to address these issues necessitate rethinking faculty roles and collegial relationships.

In the Canada-wide survey and UofA follow up interviews, the following reasons for the above findings:

- Reward system (lack of rewards for mentoring)
- Time (the ones who may be the best mentors are already too busy)
- Resources (no compensation or support for mentoring)
- Training (faculty have little guidance on what effective mentor is)
- Structuring of mentoring programs / mentoring relationships (self-select? New faculty select? Structured? Non-structured?)

Mentors and coordinators state that they need:

- Resources
- Guidelines, suggestions for meetings, duration etc
- University-wide orientation / preparation for mentoring
- Peer-peer support
- Access to expert / experienced mentors
- Recognition / rewards
- Training
- Autonomy (advice vs. surveillance)

New Faculty indicate the following:

- Demystify expectations or tenure and promotion
- Mentoring relationship are typically problematic

- Discrimination is problematic
- Good faculty are busy
- Help in ALL areas (teaching, service, research)
- Feedback in ALL areas
- Sense of institutional belongingness
- Better support systems
- Work-life balance
- Collegial relationships (vs. competition and incivility; advice vs. surveillance)

Appendix D: Codes and Themes

Theme	Code
Overall Reactions to Previous Findings	• Not surprised • Surprised • I'm fine but can see how others struggle • Unusual hire
Experience with Mentoring/Forms of Mentoring	• No mentor • Informal self-directed • Formal • Informal matched • Do not need mentorship
Mentorship Considerations	• Training • Reward/incentive/recognition • Mentorship suggestions • Pro structured/formal • Con structured/formal • Group/peer mentorship
Characteristics of Good Mentors/Purpose of Mentoring	• Advocacy • Information sharing/training • Personal characteristics/qualities
Facets of Academic Work and Life	• Work life balance • Tenure • Feedback/FEC • Overall expectations: teaching, research, service
Discrimination and Belongingness	• Isolation • Relocation • Discrimination • Collegiality
Barriers to or Issues with Mentoring	• Lack of resources • Poor culture • Uncertain needs of new faculty • Hard to find good mentor