



Peer-2-Peer (P2P) Mentoring for Teaching Pilot Report

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P2P Pilot Report

Peer-2-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching at the University of Toronto is a faculty peer mentoring program that was piloted by the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) at the University of Toronto from December 2016 to May 2017. It drew on U of T specific findings from the CTSI Mentoring for Teaching Report (CTSI, 2016) and included a concurrent research study to assess the program elements and effectiveness. The purpose of the study was to develop further insights into how mentorship of faculty can support teaching at the University of Toronto, as well as more widely. The following is a report on those findings.

Executive Summary

The Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation's (CTSI's) Peer-2-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching program paired 32 continuing stream University of Toronto faculty (eight tenure stream and 24 teaching stream) in a cohort and reciprocal mentorship program, whereby instructors were matched in dyads based on campus location, identified stream (teaching or research stream), and compatible but different disciplines.

The purpose and goals of the P2P pilot program include:

- to increase reflection on one's teaching and gain a better understanding of students' learning needs
- to build leadership capacity and mentoring opportunities for faculty at U of T whereby methods and approaches that support effective teaching can be shared (PATS Guide, 2011)
- to provide a "structured framework for ongoing improvement of a [course] and learning practice with input, assistance and guidance from faculty teaching leaders" (PATS Guide, 2011: 2)
- to improve the quality of a course and student learning experiences within that course through a focus on quality teaching and through analysis of student course feedback.

The pilot included: 3 workshops; a resource book, *When Mentoring Meets Coaching*, focusing on mentor-coaching practices; two CTSI's guides: one on gathering and implementing mid-course feedback, *Gathering Formative Feedback with Mid-Course Evaluations* and a second on observing peers in the classroom and giving feedback: the *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices*; mentor-mentee meetings; and, a follow-up research study including focus groups and a post-program survey. The program was well received and highly regarded by participants. The program format, length and activities effectively supported the development of meaningful mentor-mentee relationships and faculty development. The research results will inform a second iteration of the program to run in 2017-2018, and continued assessment will expand our understanding of what creates effective mentorship for teaching at U of T.



P2P Pilot Program

Rationale

The Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation (CTSI) at the University of Toronto recognized a need for the creation of a teaching-focused structured peer mentoring support model for faculty. In October 2016, CTSI issued the Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Research Report in which this need was highlighted. Building on a review of the literature on higher education faculty mentoring around teaching, and using information from an environmental scan of mentoring practices within 15 divisions at U of T, and from interviews with 44 faculty members from across divisions in both the tenure stream and teaching stream, this 2016 report offered an extensive assessment of the current mentoring practices at the University of Toronto (Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, 2016). It was found that peer mentoring practices occur inconsistently across the university in varied ways from deliberate initiatives to informal ad hoc mentoring relationships, and that faculty benefit from mentoring relationships. CTSI determined that it could be more involved in supporting mentoring across the institution by working to develop a teaching-focused mentoring model that could support focused goal-setting for teaching improvement, as well as provide some skills development and education in mentoring practices and leadership opportunities for participating faculty. The model, accompanied by relevant resources, could be offered centrally and elements possibly adapted in local contexts by departments. Drawing on the Research Report recommendations, the CTSI team designed P2P and piloted the program from December 2016 to May 2017.

Goal

The goal of the pilot program was for faculty to have a peer mentorship experience that would extend beyond the typical formally-matched dyadic mentoring experience, where a junior faculty member receives general advice from a senior faculty member. Through P2P, faculty members would learn to practice focused reflection and discussion on their teaching practices, would experience the chance to develop new skills related to the peer observation of teaching and mentor-coach conversations, the opportunity to craft specific goals for course and teaching improvement based on course evaluation data and exposure to new approaches and teaching strategies. The model utilized a reciprocal peer mentorship partnership and a supportive cohort. The research component to the program ran concurrently and reflective exercises and instruments were gathered throughout. Those were followed by focus groups and a final survey with the broad goal of gathering insight on the effectiveness of P2P, how mentorship can support teaching at U of T and beyond, and to inform future peer mentor programming.

Program Design

Structure

A key element to the design of P2P was to offer formal peer mentoring in a structured format. The cohort of paired peer mentors attended three CTSI two-hour full group workshops, had

structured activities and resources, and could opt in to participate in a final survey and focus group.

Program Element	Date
Recruitment	Online information posted and link distributed via Provost’s e-Digest September 23, 2016; multiple CTSI Newsletter announcements distributed through October 2016; two webinars delivered November 8 & 10, 2016
Workshop One	December 13, 2016
Regular Mentor-Mentee meetings arranged by the pair	Determined in the first workshop on December 13, 2016
Workshop Two	January 27, 2017
Workshop Three	May 11, 2017
Focus Group	May 11, 2017 (formed part of third workshop)
Post-Pilot Survey	June 15 – June 30, 2017

For the purposes of this report only the Focus Group and Final Survey data were analyzed.

Approach - the mentor-coach model

The concept of mentoring for teaching continues to evolve and it is understood that both mentor and mentee learn and gain from the experience. However, “Mentoring within the higher education context has historically focused on a one-to-one relationship, often hierarchical in approach” (CTSI, 2016, p. 23). To counter this historical model, a mentor-coach model was adopted for this program. A coaching approach acknowledges that mentees come to the conversation with a personal wealth of inner wisdom and that through the support of a coach asking powerful questions to encourage reflection the mentee will discover their own voice and inner resources. This differs from an advising or consulting model in which one person holds the authority of process and knowledge and imparts it to their mentee. “More recent shifts in faculty mentor approaches have described a more reciprocal dyad that enhances learning for both individuals involved (mentor, mentee/protégé)” (CTSI, 2016, p.24). Participants in this pilot program were oriented to mentor-coach communication techniques with the goal of supporting one another’s learning rather than simply issuing or receiving advice. They were encouraged to see their partnership as one of equal give and take rather than authority and apprentice. The reciprocity of this model encouraged all, regardless of career stage, to continue to enhance their teaching.

Program participants and study participant recruitment

The P2P program participants were all tenure stream and teaching stream continuing appointment faculty members from a range of academic disciplines and from across the three campuses at U of T. Program participants were recruited through CTSI communication channels



(newsletter, email, website, webinars). Thirty-two faculty members were selected among 36 applicants based on available matches. All P2P Program participants were eligible to participate in the research study. Consent was granted by 23 P2P program participants.

Pairing

Matches were made by pairing one post-tenure or post-continuing status applicant with one pre-tenure or pre-continuing status applicant. In most cases both members of the pairs were in the same stream, either tenure or teaching stream. An effort was made to place people with a partner in a cognate disciplinary area and on the same campus.

Workshop content

Workshop #1 In this workshop, participants were introduced to the six guiding principles of mentor-coaching, and were provided with the *When Mentoring Meets Coaching* book and a laminate that summarized key approaches for supporting a mentoring conversation. Participants also completed an activity that asked them to practice “deep listening” with their mentoring partners. Strategies for maintaining focus through mentoring conversations and throughout the pilot were discussed. At the end of the workshop, participants reviewed their course evaluation data and completed a brief reflection on a priority area emerging from the student feedback that they would like to work on with their mentoring partner through the coming term. Individual coffee cards were also distributed to encourage/facilitate mentoring meetings.

Workshop #2 The second workshop focused on asking effective questions and providing/receiving helpful feedback. Participants were trained on a 3-step process for conducting an observation of a peer’s teaching and strategies for providing effective and appropriate teaching feedback. Participants received CTSI’s newly released *Peer Observation of Teaching* guide to support the peer observation process. The workshop then focused on mid-course student feedback, taking participants through strategies for crafting meaningful questions that connect to their teaching goals, and developing actions and implementing changes based on the feedback received. Training on a mid-course feedback tool, *Bluepulse*, was also offered and an instruction booklet was provided, as was CTSI’s revised guide, *Gathering Formative Feedback with Mid-Course Evaluations*.

Workshop #3 The focus of the final workshop was “What have we learned”? Prior to the workshop, participants completed an email questionnaire that asked them to describe their experiences with peer observation and mid-course feedback. This information was used to inform a paired discussion in this session. The workshop began with a calibration exercise that asked each pair to review in tandem their individual Participant Logs, to ensure meetings were accurately captured and key points recorded. The Logs were collected at the end of the workshop. Still in their partnerships, participants then reflected on their experiences observing one another teaching and collecting mid-course feedback, sharing one key highlight of both the observation and mid-course feedback processes as reported on their pre-workshop



questionnaires. In the last hour of the workshop, participants were assigned to one of four focus groups facilitated by CTSI staff not associated with the pilot program. Following the focus group discussions, participants reconvened for a final reflection and celebration.

Data Gathering

Ethics. The research study component was designed and conducted according to the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board protocols (protocol reference # 33977). Participants were invited to give their consent to participate in the research study and were free to withdraw at any time. They were also free to participate in some elements rather than all elements.

Method. As described in the Program Element chart above, some of the program activities provided data for the study, while others served as programmatic and reflective purposes. The focus groups and post-pilot survey, for example, were collected specifically for the purpose of the study alone.

Instruments

Reflection Exercise – a reflection worksheet distributed at the end of the first workshop asked participants to record three priority areas of focus for improving their course/teaching in the coming term, and describe one “actionable” area they could work on with their partner and the rationale for selecting that one area

Participant Log – each mentoring partner was asked to use the log to track the date, format, key points of discussion and follow-up items of each meeting

Peer Observation – templates were provided in the *Peer Observation of Teaching* guide that could be used to guide formative feedback for teaching observations; participants were free to choose a form that worked for them

Questionnaire – following Workshop #2 participants were emailed a questionnaire focussed on their peer observation

Focus Groups - four facilitated groups of up to 8 participants each - either all mentor or all mentee; one hour in length

Survey - online 20-question post-pilot survey

Method of Analysis

Focus groups. Four focus groups were conducted simultaneously by CTSI staff not involved in the delivery of the P2P program. Each group was comprised of either mentors or mentees (pre- or post-tenure or pre- or post-continuing status faculty). The discussion was guided by a protocol of questions and lasted approximately one hour. Discussion centered around participant experience of the program and partnerships, as well as feedback on program elements. The discussions were recorded, transcribed, anonymized, and coded. Codes were clustered according to emergent themes.



Survey. An online 20-question survey was sent to consenting participants after the conclusion of the program. Quantitative results were analyzed descriptively and qualitative questions were coded and analyzed.

P2P Research Study Findings

The survey and focus groups data are presented below followed by summary remarks and recommendations for the next iteration of P2P.

Survey Results

Introduction

The 20-question online survey (Appendix B) of participants was conducted after the conclusion of the P2P program. The survey questions were a mix of quantitative and qualitative. All P2P Program registrants were invited to participate. Of the 32 P2P Program participants 23 participated in the survey: 12 mentors and 11 mentees for a response rate of 72%. What follows is a summation of those responses.

Recruitment Communication

Participants were contacted by email, webinar, newsletter or word of mouth and the program was on the CTSI website. In answering *How did you first learn about the P2P program?*, 16 participants wrote that they learned about the program through email or the CTSI newsletter, four from word of mouth, two from the CTSI website and one from a personal email.

Motivation to Participate

Participants answers to a question *What motivated you to participate in the Program?* included wanting to develop mentorship skills, connect with others, build a network, learn new or specific teaching strategies such as large classroom student interaction or online strategies, benefit from career development guidance, and to experience a meaningful mentor-mentee relationship.

Partner Meetings

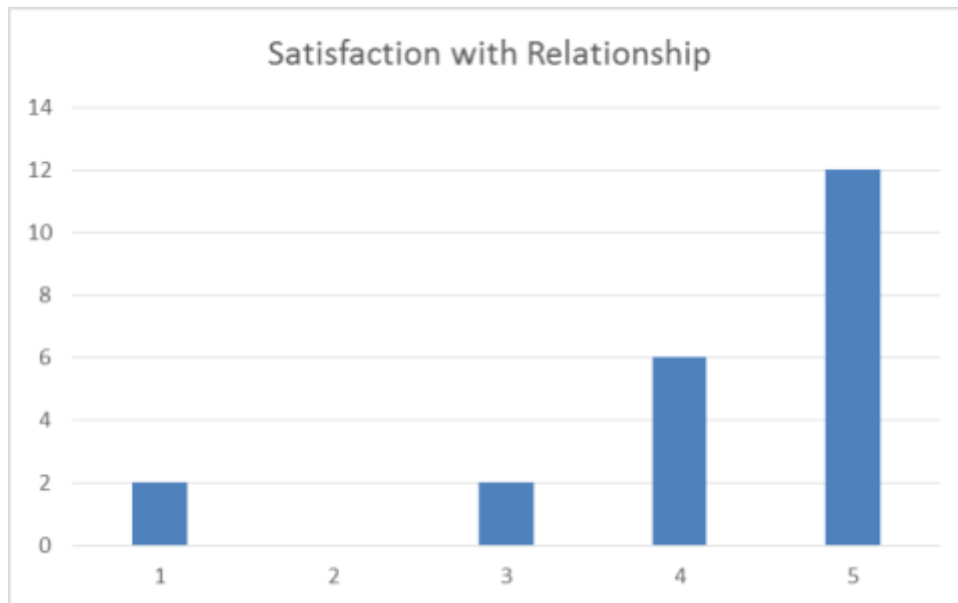
The participants met throughout the pilot period in person, with some supplemental or substitute meetings via phone, email or Skype. They typically met in offices, other spaces on campus or coffee shops. Meetings were an average of 51 minutes in length with a range of 30 to 60 minute meetings and one respondent who had a pre-existing work relationship with their partner and worked very close by had many 15-minute meetings. The frequency of the respondents' meetings was variable from weekly to only three times within the term. Five respondents reported meeting every week and 6 reported 1 meeting per month or less. The others met every 2-3 weeks or described their meeting frequency as variable or sporadic.

Facilitators and Barriers to Meeting

Time was reported as the biggest barrier to meeting with 13% respondents citing this in their qualitative survey response to the question *What facilitators or barriers either supported or hindered meeting with your partner?* For four participants, illness or another unexpected life event interfered with regular meetings. Factors that supported meetings included: the structure of the program, having made a routine or commitment to regularly meeting, being in close proximity on campus, perceiving that the program offered flexibility in meeting frequency and meeting length and exercising that flexibility, and the coffee card, provided by CTSI for P2P participants.

Relationship

Participants rated their overall satisfaction with their mentee-mentor relationship (*Overall, how satisfied were you with your P2P partner relationship?*) as “very unsatisfied” (1), “unsatisfied” (2), “neither satisfied or nor unsatisfied” (3), “satisfied” (4) or “very satisfied” (5). Both mentees and mentors ratings were an average of 4.18 out on this 5.0 point scale. This concurs with the qualitative survey data of high levels of satisfaction with the mentorship experience



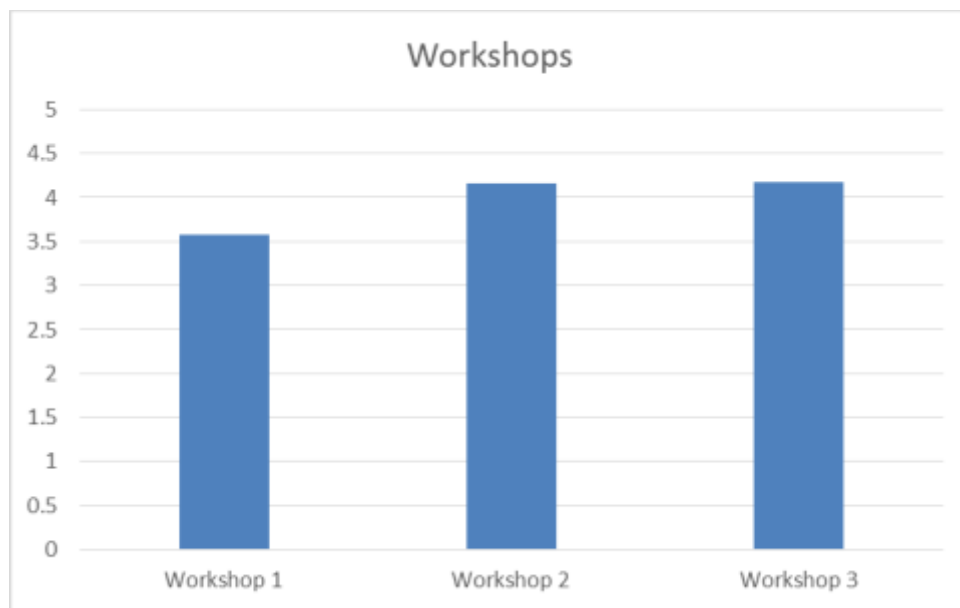
1 = Very Unsatisfied 2 = Unsatisfied 3 = Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied 4 = Satisfied 5 = Very Satisfied

Response	Frequency	Percent
1	2	9.09%
2	0	0%
3	2	9.09%
4	6	27.27%
5	12	54.55%
Total	22	100%

In answering *Please describe the quality of your relationship with your P2P partner and elaborate on the reasons why*, all but two survey respondents (90%) included comments such as “good rapport” or “fit” or “respect” in their description of the quality of their mentor-mentee relationship. They found they had compatible goals, values or interests. The majority of the time being from different disciplines was reported as positive. However, one pairing was not by similar stream (e.g. a tenure stream instructor was paired with a teaching stream instructor) and this was reported as a challenge. The one participant who selected “very unsatisfied” with their relationship had indicated a very positive experience in their other answers. It is possible this was a mis-chosen selection as “very satisfied” would be more in keeping with their other answers.

Nineteen out of 21 survey respondents stated that they would like to meet with their partner in the future with 13 replying that they had already met since the conclusion of the program and 19 responding that they had plans to meet.

Programming - Workshops



1 = Very Useless 2 = Useless 3 = Somewhat useful 4 = Useful 5 = Very Useful

	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3
Mean	3.58	4.16	4.18
# Responded	19	19	17
# Did not answer	4	4	6

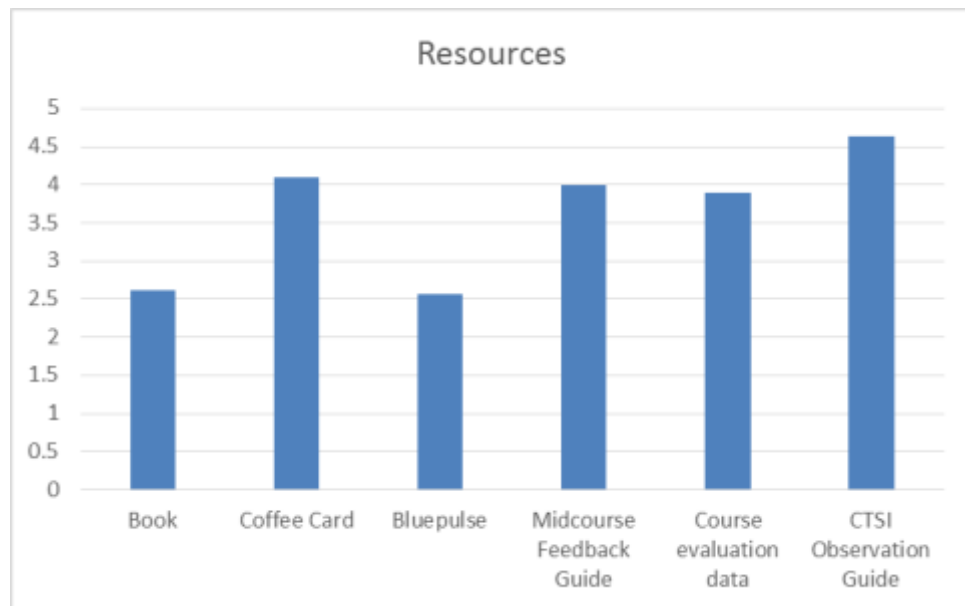
There is a correspondence between scores on resources and the accompanying resources (below). Workshop #1 was the least highly ranked, as was the resource book introduced in Workshop #1.



Programming - Resources

The CTSI *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices* guide, *Gathering Formative Feedback with Mid-Course Evaluations* guide, course evaluation data, and coffee card were well received. The *When Mentoring Meets Coaching* book and Bluepulse were noticeably less well-received, though it should be noted that Bluepulse seemed infrequently used by participants given that 16 participants chose not to answer this question, suggesting they did not use Bluepulse.

It could be interpreted that resources that did well are those that supported intentional interaction towards formative improvement of teaching. Bluepulse was different in that it was a tool to use in one's own classroom, and it had technical issues. The book was somewhat lengthy, perhaps didn't apply completely to the participants' context, and proffered a model of interaction that participants sometimes suggested was not viable or felt unnatural to them.



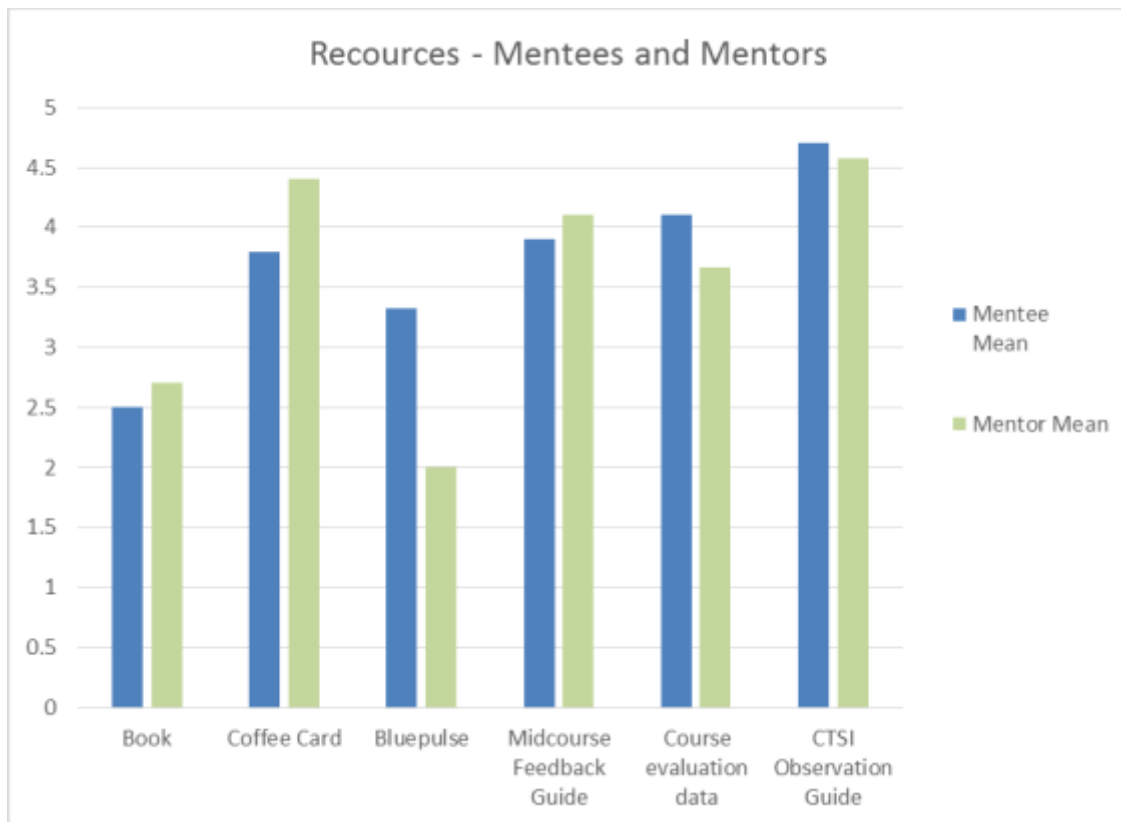
1 = Very Useless 2 = Useless 3 = Somewhat useful 4 = Useful 5 = Very Useful

	Book	Coffee Card	Bluepulse	Midcourse Feedback Guide	Course Evaluation Guide	CTSI Observation Guide
Mean	2.61	4.1	2.57	4	3.89	4.64
# Responded	18	20	7	19	18	22
# Did not answer	5	3	16	4	5	1

The CTSI *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices* guide and coffee card received the highest ratings, and the published resource book *When Mentoring Meets Coaching*, and Bluepulse the lowest.

Mentor vs Mentee Scores

Mentors and Mentees scored satisfaction with their mentor-coach relationship identically but there were two differences in scoring that are of interest. The coffee card was scored higher by mentors than mentees (4.4 vs 3.8) and the course evaluation data were given a slightly higher score by mentees than mentors (4.11 vs 3.67).



1 = Very useless 2 = Useless 3 = Somewhat useful 4 = Useful 5 = Very Useful

		Book	Coffee Card	Bluepulse	Midcourse Feedback Guide	Course Evaluation Guide	CTSI Observation Guide
Mentee	Mean	2.5	3.8	3.33	3.9	4.11	4.7
	# Responded	8	10	3	10	9	10
Mentor	Mean	2.7	4.4	2	4.11	3.67	4.58
	# Responded	10	10	4	9	9	12

Book: *When Mentoring Meets Coaching*



Broad Benefits

The success of the P2P program was articulated in a qualitative question: *Please describe any broad benefits you feel you gained through participation in the program.* Participants reported gaining connection, expanding their network, learning and trying new teaching strategies, developing mentoring skills and new listening skills, feeling re-energized in their teaching, learning more about the university and about peer mentoring for teaching at U of T, and feeling optimistic about the future of mentoring at U of T. For example, representative quotes include:

“I have developed a very positive relationship with a teaching faculty member from a different faculty to my own. Our sharing of ideas has given me much food for thought regarding the way in which mentorship could be broadened out in my own department and how feedback could be solicited from students in our large courses.”

“Overall, participation in this program has enabled me to renew my love of teaching.”

“(Participation) lead to a greater understanding of the university.”

“Revitalized my motivation and belief in peers’ interests in teaching development. Helped me frame and work on my own teaching.”

When asked if they would recommend the program to others (*If there are future iterations of this program, will you recommend it to others? Yes, No, Comments*), 100% replied yes. “Loved it.” “Absolutely” “Programs like this are vital to developing a teaching community at U of T.” Importantly, 18 out of 22 respondents replied that they would like to be involved in the program again.

Focus Group Findings

Eleven mentors and nine mentees participated in the focus groups. Dominant themes are presented below in three sections: program elements and structure, resources and activities, and mentor-mentee relationships and conversations.

Program Elements and Structure

Time requirements. The time requirements of the program were reported as greater than expected but those who met with their partner regularly and participated fully reported that they found it rewarding. Time was the most frequently cited barrier or challenge to participation and it was recommended that people be aware going into the program of what would be required. Several participants expressed interest in their department Chairs fully understanding the extent to which they were committed and involved. The considerable

commitment, however, was also cited as contributing to the value and effectiveness of the program.

“I thought ‘oh my God, an hour every week, how will I find that time?’ And I did, but it’s a lot.”

“We actually met quite a lot...over a dozen times in person.”

“I was happy with the time because it actually made me feel like I have a commitment to this program...I took pride in the fact that we took all this time to do this.”

“Scheduling was a challenge.”

Some participants saw flexibility as an inherent benefit of the P2P program and arranged their meeting times, locations and meeting lengths to suit their needs.

“We didn’t follow the rules. We couldn’t meet every week – I teach 8 hours a day for three months...It was tricky.”

“You know, none of us followed the rules and yet the whole thing had enough flexibility to accommodate that.”

Importance of recognition. It was very important to participants, and to mentors in particular, that their department Chairs receive comprehensive information on their involvement in P2P, particularly the time involved, at the beginning of the program. CTSI sent out a letter to all participants and Chairs upon acceptance into the program, outlining the commitment to P2P. “I really appreciate the letter of participation that came through.”

The value of structure to the program. The value of being in a formal, structured program was mentioned as supporting participation and validity.

“I think there was a real advantage to the fact that we were in a formal mentorship project that gave it some credence...”

“It was a formalized learning piece for me.”

“It was really good to have a framework.”

Length and layout of the program. The length of the program was debated somewhat but the current timing – the first workshop beginning before a term, and the layout of the three workshops plus meetings, was approved by the majority. Many suggested that partners meet before the first workshop or that the first workshop provide more time for partners to get to



know one another. Some people would have liked a longer program, others found the format just right.

Resources and Activities

The mentor-coach model: Effective and challenging. The mentor-coach model taught in Workshop #1 presented participants with specific strategies for listening and supporting one another. Some participants expressed struggle with this request. “I know we have been talking a lot about reciprocal relationships, but the idea of mentee/mentor/coach, is kind of a confusing thing.” This mutually reciprocal collaborative model was expected of these mentor-mentee relationships with no one person adopting an exclusive role of advisor or advisee. Participants grappled with this notion of reciprocity in the mentor-coach model and many mentees cited concern that they hadn’t reciprocated enough and were on the receiving end of what could be viewed as an inherently unequal relationship due to the differences in experience. These comments around contemplating the mentor-mentee relationship came up frequently, suggesting reflection on the partner dynamic and the challenge of moving from a model of “sage advisor” to a reciprocal “mentor-coach”.

“It’s a bit disingenuous almost to pretend it’s symmetric because I’ve been teaching for 24 years and a lot of things I’ve already tried, and it’s not that I couldn’t learn from him, but there was a lot of pressure in a way to come up with new things I hadn’t thought of before.”

“I think our relationship was very one-way.”

Possibly unbeknownst to mentees, mentors often expressed a rewarding experience, were learners in the process, and reported value and satisfaction in furthering their mentor-coach skills, renewed enthusiasm in teaching and in learning and expanding their own teaching knowledge.

“I’m starting to think a lot about my first classes now, having seen my partner teach her first class.”

“I was actually really taken by the research that my mentee was working on.”

Comments around contemplating the mentor-mentee relationship and communication came up frequently, suggesting valued reflection on the dynamic and a shift to a model of reciprocity. Other elements to the Workshop content were listening skills; many respondents reported finding those techniques useful. “For me it would be being a little more mindful about giving feedback and maybe not trying to jump in with all the solutions right away.” One participant described the first relationship and skills development workshop as problematic or “too flakey.” Another reported that the mentor in their pairing adhered closely to the “be mindful of always providing advice to your peer” sentiment and it created limitations on their conversation.



Other participants reported utilizing elements from the workshop that worked for them, including flexing between advisory and more learning-focused and reflective moments, and went on to enjoy a successful reciprocal relationship.

Other resources and activities. The first workshop received mixed reviews and the accompanying published resource book (*When Mentoring Meets Coaching*), was generally disregarded. CTSI's peer observation worksheet was very well received as was the *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices* guide. The mid-course evaluations workshop content in Workshop #2 was appreciated by some but the mid-course feedback tool Bluepulse was not attempted by most. The participant log, and reflection exercise were not mentioned much.

"The structure for the observations worked beautifully for us."

"I did not like the book." "I didn't use the book." "We didn't use the book either."

"We used the peer observation guideline, as well, which was great."

"I was really happy that the workshops were focused and concrete."

"I didn't like some of the stuff in the first workshop... It was way too touchy feely."

Many people referred to the value of learning about "listening through versus listening to" but a few found it inhibited their conversation.

Nature of the Relationship and Conversations

Successful relationships. The partnerships and mentor-coach conversations were largely highly successful.

"It seems like we all had a positive experience, so I think the mentors were selected very carefully....'I really want to make you better' and I could see my mentor also having a good attitude about learning from me as well."

Mentees, in particular, expressed gratitude for their involvement in the program and for the experience they had with their mentor. Most of the pairings worked very well and participants reported happy surprise about how much they had in common with a faculty member from a department or discipline that differed from their own.



“One of the most eye-opening things for me and these conversations was with how much we have in common even though we are in different departments and different Faculties altogether.”

Occasionally the difference in discipline limited what one of the partners felt they could offer and this was notably felt in one pairing where the pair were not in the same stream.

In many instances the desire to meet other mentors or mentee pairs, or to meet the whole cohort, was raised. Several participants did connect with one another outside of the workshop time due to physical proximity. They enjoyed this and also referred sheepishly to their cohort as a “clique”.

Value of conversations. Participants repeatedly mentioned in focus groups the value of having conversations about teaching, of face-to-face interaction, of sharing thoughts and ideas and going “back and forth” or “bouncing ideas” off one another. They shared tips, exchanged strategies, and even content. “There was never a shortage of topics.” Their conversations included philosophical ponderings and concrete “nuts and bolts” elements and pragmatic implementation methods or procedures including strategies for large classrooms, active learning and online learning. “We have actually been sharing exam questions, slides and articles.”

Safe space. There was a strong sense that there was enough trust established in these new relationships to forge a safe space for sharing uncertainties as well as enthusiasm about exchanging strategies.

“I found that this experience helped me to have a more positive sense of myself as an effective teacher – balancing some of the student evaluations of teaching that you get, which can be brutal. So, it was kind of...the less I felt like an imposter and the more I reconnected with myself as a competent, effective, capable teacher. I believe that benefitted the students ...Work in academia can be very hard and you may not have the institutional, division or departmental supports that you wish you had.”

“Yes! In one of our Second Cup conversations we asked each other: ‘So, what’s the most brutal teaching evaluation you’ve received?’”

“It was just really nice to have somebody sort of just personally supporting you without judgement.”

Career development. Mentees did want to receive career advice and guidance and were concerned about career development, performance, recognition and their dossier development. For such issues, they were seeking a more traditional mentor-mentee conversation.



“I’m the elder partner and she is pre-tenure, and it’s more of that career advice and navigating departmental relationships and teaching dossiers and things like that which was really career advice things that she came to me for and I’m happy to do that.”

This participant also explained how in addition to this element to the relationship they would discuss assignments and strategies and brainstorm in a way that was “much more mutual” as well. Course evaluation conversations evolved into career development conversations. Network expansion was also cited as of value and an asset when it was experienced as a result of the pairing.

Extension: Participants spontaneously raised recognition of the value of elements of the P2P program for their own departments or their own students, in particular graduate students. They wanted to share what they had learned, practiced and experienced with others.

“I think we will link our classes together at times as a result of this experience.”

“We were discussing ways we could bring this forward to our department.”

“I applied the P2P methods to my graduate students.”

“It’s great to roll out to our departments, and have opportunity for really great resources and to more explicitly create mentorship models in our departments.”

Significantly, many were also interested in taking on a role in future P2P programming.

Summary

These research findings generally describe the P2P program as highly effective with a good basic structure that could continue to benefit from the ongoing use of specific resources and design features, along with a reconsideration of the use of certain resources, and modifications to the first Workshop. Overall, participants responded positively to the structure, format and timing of the program and reported an engaging, enriching experience. They pondered teaching strategies, mentorship, and professional skill development, in keeping with the goals of the program. The participants’ stated motivations for applying to the program were also satisfied (to connect with others, learn new strategies, benefit from career development and experience a mentor-mentee relationship). There was high satisfaction with the relationships and mentor-mentee meetings, and most intend to sustain their relationships. Many reported being interested in extending their new skills and program elements in their work or departments or being involved in the next iteration of the P2P program. A genuine enthusiasm for the program and the experience runs through the focus group transcripts and qualitative survey results.



The success of the program's recommended resources varied, with the CTSI *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices* guide, *Gathering Formative Feedback with Mid-Course Evaluations* guide, receiving the best uptake, and the published resource book the least uptake. The workshops and program structure were appreciated. The activities to introduce the mentor-coaching model in Workshop #1 and Bluepulse in Workshop #2 were not as well received. Broad benefits of participation included learning, connecting and increasing skills and improved engagement. Mentees do want career development support and mentors valued the leadership and mentor-coach skill development opportunities. Participants would like more opportunities to meet other pairs or members of the cohort.

Participants found finding time to meet the greatest challenge, but it also came through that the significant time commitment provided meaningful rewards. Physical proximity was cited as a challenge in some cases. The absence of an active course in the term, illness, or inability to attend a workshop or meetings with their partner inhibited engagement or success in some cases. While rapport was cited by most as an enabler, an absence of rapport or "click" was a barrier to a richer experience for only one mentee.

Feedback for The Next Iteration of P2P

"I think the model works well" (survey response) is in keeping with the sentiment of the responses overall from the pilot cohort. Participants were very supportive of the continuation of the program. "It was a great initiative!" "Yes! It should continue and I would support it to continue."

Format. While some variation was expressed on workshop length or program length, the general format, culture and intent of the program should go forward intact. General consensus is that beginning the workshop before the main term was beneficial and that it is best if both members of the partnership have courses in the term in which they participate. Adding a check-in point for pairs by a CTSI staff member mid-way through the program was recommended and this would help determine where additional support might be provided by CTSI. Many pairs found it impossible to connect every single week but they perceived the program as having enough flexibility to accommodate different meeting schedules. Going forward the program should make clear up front the time expectations and the range with which flexibility can be exercised in timing, frequency and length of pair meetings.

Despite the reported difficulty with finding time to meet, participants suggested that in the next iteration of the program, CTSI consider a way to connect partners before the first workshop, (e.g., informal meet and greet reception). Many pairs did do this on their own prior to the first workshop in the pilot and recommended it. More get-to-know-you partner time in the first workshop was also recommended as was the creation of opportunities for pairs to interact with other pairs and program participants. Overall time commitment and balance of



skill development information with interaction between partners and cohort members will be considered for the next iteration.

Recognition. Recognition or incentives for involvement and level of involvement mattered a great deal to participants. There was some concern that this information be communicated adequately to department Chairs, so a comprehensive letter is recommended for next time.

Resources. The resources most valued were the workshops, and the CTSI *Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices* guide and templates. Use of the book, methods associated with the reciprocal mentor-coach model are of value despite some initial resistance to this new model. There is evidence in these findings of successful rethinking of mentorship, reflection on the value and practice of reciprocity, and engagement with new listening techniques.

Any lengthy text-based resources would best be accompanied by a summary or directions to specific elements of the resources. Forms and activity sheets and templates could be offered in digital fillable format. Bluepulse wasn't well received by all but one participant. However, CTSI noted the initial technical elements for integration at U of T made for a rushed pilot of this specific resource. It may be that it is now ready for a smooth implementation and so it could be offered as a more integrated or separate and supplementary workshop.

Exercises and Activities. It would be worthwhile to carefully consider which exercises to include and which documents the participants will be required to submit in order to create more consistent participation, sharing and data collection via these items. Perhaps use of an online tracking system of what is expected by when could be included in the portal. Consent to use any of these as research instruments would best be obtained at the start of the program even if CTSI wanted to allow time for people to consider their consent for research elements that come later in the program.

Faculty moved through a process of relationship building, reflection, skill development, skill sharing, discovery and reflection over the course of the P2P program. Adding a reflective exercise near the conclusion of the program to invite faculty to reflect on and articulate their transformation would round out their learning and wrap up the experience for them. This may also serve them well in documenting their professional development experience. That documentation could, in turn, inform elements of their dossier and their mentor-coaching of others. They may benefit from prompts that ask them to ponder their understanding and experience of mentor-coaching, their evolving understanding of themselves as teachers and their perceptions of leadership in teaching.

Final remarks. The feedback from participants indicates that this was a highly successful program and its continuation will continue to shape the existence, notions and practice of faculty peer mentorship across the University.



“(P2P) can reinvigorate your teaching and your connection to teaching and connection to teachers in different divisions. It actually made me really proud to be a part of this institution, and connected to the whole idea of it, and that they valued the teaching.”

References

Resources on mentor-coach model:

Sharpe, K. & Nishimura, J. (2017). *When Mentoring Meets Coaching*. Toronto: Pearson.

Carbone, A., & Wong, J. (2011). *Peer assisted teaching scheme (PATS) Guide* (3rd ed.). Melbourne: Monash University.

University of Toronto Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation Guides:

Peer Observation of Teaching: Effective Practices

<http://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/peer-observation-of-teaching/>

Gathering Formative Feedback with Mid-Course Evaluations

<http://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/gathering-formative-feedback/>

Other Sources

Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation. (2016). *Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Report*. Toronto: Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation, University of Toronto



Appendix A Letter of Consent

[On Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation Letterhead]

You are invited to participate in a study titled Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching. This study is being led by the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) at the University of Toronto, which provides leadership in teaching and learning for all teaching staff and graduate teaching assistants across all of the university's campuses and divisions.

Purpose of the research study

The purpose of this study is to capture P2P faculty participants' insights and feedback on the various elements of the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Pilot Program. Included here are questions with respect to faculty perceptions of their mentoring relationship. Information collected from the survey, focus groups and documents completed by participants will provide important insights on what worked well, challenges and feedback on future iterations of the P2P program. This information will inform teaching innovation and research within the University of Toronto community, assist to identify areas for faculty development programming, resourcing, and education, and be of value to academic and administrative staff in other institutions that have an ongoing interest in peer mentoring for teaching programs.

Overview of the data collection process

As a participant, we are asking you to consent to:

1. The use of the following P2P pilot activities and documents:
 - P2P Participant Reflection Worksheet (from Workshop #1)
 - P2P Participant Log (ongoing from January –May 2017)
 - Reflections on key activities

2. Participate in:
 - P2P Focus Group (in the May 11 2017, Workshop #3). Through these focus groups we are seeking to gain insights from P2P participants on faculty members' experiences in their P2P mentoring relationship, types of teaching-related topics they discussed, level of engagement in the CTSI-facilitated workshops, challenges, successes, and overall feedback on the pilot program resources. We will be audio-recording these sessions, and by providing consent below, you consent to be audio-recorded in the focus group.
 - Complete a twenty minute online post-pilot survey following Workshop #3 (May 11, 2017):
 - *Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Pilot Program: Mentoring Relationship Survey*



Confidentiality and potential risks associated with participation

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. In the focus group you will need to maintain confidentiality regarding your conversations with your peers. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You can opt to not participate or provide any piece of information asked for, including particular questions or survey instruments. You may also withdraw from the study completely at any time. Simply inform any of the investigators and/or P2P workshop facilitators.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses are anonymous and will be kept confidential. Data from this study will only be shared in aggregate form. The primary data will only be available to the PI and CTSI staff directly involved in the research study. No other parties within the University of Toronto will have access to the data.

Data from this study will only be reported and shared in aggregate and/or anonymized form. No information that would allow individual subjects to be linked to specific statements will be reported in any form.

This study may be reviewed for quality assurance to make sure that the required laws and guidelines are followed. If chosen, (a) representative(s) of the Human Research Ethics Program (HREP) may access study-related data and/or consent materials as part of the review. All information accessed by the HREP will be upheld to the same level of confidentiality described here.

You may contact the Principal Investigator of this study:
Dr. Carol Rolheiser, Professor (OISE)
Director, Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI)
University of Toronto: (416) 946-8534 carol.rolheiser@utoronto.ca

Withdrawing from this study

Should you withdraw, your P2P pilot documents will not be used for the analysis for this study, and your responses on data collected specifically for this study will be deleted (i.e., the post-project survey). Please note should you withdraw after having completed the focus group, your input from the audio-recordings and transcripts of focus group sessions will not be deleted as the interactive nature of the session and need to retain the data of consenting participants would make this infeasible.

Benefits associated with participation

While we would appreciate your participation in this study, you are not obligated to participate and there is no compensation for your participation, or consequences for your non-



participation. You may choose to withdraw your consent at any time after the study has begun as well with no consequences.

You may benefit from this research through the act of reflecting on and completing survey items, and during the focus group you have the opportunity to discuss with your peers your insights specific to your mentoring for teaching experience throughout the P2P Pilot Program. As well, final results of the study will assist CTSI in its ongoing programming and services to support instructors and other members of the teaching and learning community in both formal and informal mentoring for teaching relationships and activities.

If you are interested in receiving a summary of the results of this research study please contact carol.rolheiser@utoronto.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at the University of Toronto (file 33977). If you have comments or concerns about participants' rights or about the way the study is being conducted you may contact Office of Research Ethics at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273.

Thank you for your assistance in this research study.

By providing your signature and indicating "YES" below you are indicating that you have read and understood this information form and agree to participate in this study. **We also ask that you retain a copy of this consent form for your records.**

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by circling "NO". Your signature is not required.

I have read the study information provided above and I voluntarily agree to participate in this survey.

Yes

No

Signature



Appendix B Survey Questions

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Pilot: Mentoring for Teaching at the University of Toronto

1. Were you initially identified (for the purposes of P2P) as a
 - mentor or
 - mentee?
2. How did you first learn about the P2P Pilot?
3. What motivated you to participate in the Program?
4. Over the course of the P2P program (December 2016 - May 2017), please describe the following:
 - a) Average length of your partner meetings (minutes):
 - b) Overall frequency and regularity of your meetings and how this did or didn't change over the course of the program (please describe):
 - c) Types of locations/venues you used to have your meetings:
Check all that apply
 - University office
 - Other locations in the university (e.g., classroom, meeting room)
 - Coffee shop
 - Skype
 - Phone
 - Other (fill in the blank)
5. What facilitators or barriers either supported or hindered meeting with your partner?
6. Have you met since the end of the program?
 - yes no
7. Do you plan to meet in the future?
 - yes no

Please describe:
8. Please describe the quality of your relationship with your P2P partner and elaborate on the reasons why (e.g., rapport, communication style, professional interests etc.).



9. Overall, how satisfied were you with your P2P partner relationship?
very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, unsatisfied, very unsatisfied

Comments

10. To what extent do you feel the following were useful?
1= Cannot assess/do not know, 2= very useless, 3= somewhat useless, 4=somewhat useful, 5= useful, 6= very useful
- a. Book: *When Mentoring Meets Coaching* by Kate Sharpe & Jeanie Nishimura
 - b. Coffee card
 - c. Bluepulse software for mid-course feedback
 - d. CTSI Mid-Course Feedback guide
 - e. Use of course evaluation data areas to inform focus/reflection
 - f. CTSI Observation of Teaching Guide
 - g. Workshop one overall (consultants Kate Sharpe and Jeanie Nishimura & course evaluation reflection)
 - h. Workshop two overall (mid-course feedback, peer observation, Bluepulse)
 - i. Workshop three overall (focus groups and culminating activities)

Comments

11. Please describe any broad benefits you feel you gained through participation in the program? (e.g., broadened network, introduction to new ideas, participation in additional programming, introduction to new resources, motivation to engage in new practices, etc.)
12. Any other overall comments about the P2P program:
13. Please share your suggestions for future iterations of the P2P program:

Thank you for completing this survey.



Appendix C Focus Group Protocol



FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

May 11, 2017

Facilitator's welcome, introduction and instructions to participants

Welcome and thank you for participating in this focus group. My name is _____ and I am your facilitator. Our notetaker is _____ and neither of us has been working on any aspect of the P2P initiative. Our roles at CTSI are _____.

Introduction:

- This focus group discussion is designed to capture P2P faculty participants' insights and feedback on the various elements of the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Faculty Mentoring for Teaching Pilot Program.
- Included here are also questions with respect to your perceptions regarding your mentoring relationship in P2P.
- Information collected will provide important insights on what worked well, as well as challenges and feedback to inform future iterations of the P2P program.
- This information will inform teaching innovation and research within the University of Toronto community, assist in identifying areas for faculty development programming, resourcing, and education, and be of value to academic and administrative staff in other institutions that have an ongoing interest in peer mentoring for teaching programs.

As a reminder, we will be recording the discussion to facilitate its recollection.

(Note Takers: Switch on the recorder – begin taking notes, also include non-verbals, as appropriate)

Anonymity, Confidentiality & Data Security: Despite being recorded, the data will be anonymized during analysis. All data collected are strictly confidential and the names of participants will not be used in any reporting of this study. We will be transcribing this session and deleting the audio-recordings afterwards. The transcribed notes of the focus group will contain no information that would allow individual subjects to be linked to specific statements. Names will not be transcribed.



I encourage you to answer and comment as accurately and truthfully as possible. For the purpose of anonymity and confidentiality I and the other focus group participants would appreciate it if you would refrain from discussing the comments of other group members outside the focus group. If there are any questions or discussions that you do not wish to answer or participate in, you do not have to do so; however please try to answer and be as involved as possible.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- You do not have to speak in any particular order, not does each person need to respond to every question.
- Be mindful of allowing all participants to speak.
- When you do have something to say, please do so by raising your hand. There are many of you in the group and it is important that I obtain the views of each of you.
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group and we want to encourage an open discussion.
- We have 8 broad questions and I am hoping we will get to all of them, so I may need to move us along at times.
- Does anyone have any questions? (answers).
- OK, let's begin!

Warm up

- First, I'd like everyone to briefly introduce themselves.
- Can you tell us your name and academic discipline?

Introductory question

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

- ***ROUGHLY 5-6 MINUTES/QUESTION --- monitor time accordingly***
- ***Generally speaking, the intention of the probes is that these are used in the case where no one says anything or to provide natural follow up to something that was said. There is one instance, Q#8 where we do want each probe to be asked.***

I am just going to give you a minute or so to think about your experience with your mentor/coach in P2P and the kinds of teaching related topics you have discussed in your mentoring interactions. (Give them a minute then repeat Q#1 below)

1. Describe teaching-related topics you have discussed in your mentoring meetings/interactions.
Probes:
 - a) course evaluations



- b) teaching dossier
 - c) locating resources
 - d) tenure and promotion guidelines
 - e) logistics or 'nuts and bolts' of teaching
 - f) stress/anxieties
2. What evidence emerged during P2P that you feel will inform your course/teaching (e.g., may help improve your course or teaching)?
Probes:
 - a. mid-course feedback
 - b. grades
 - c. personal/anecdotal observations
 3. Share any new strategies, approaches or activities that you feel have emerged from the P2P pilot process that have advanced your teaching practice.
 4. What worked well or could be improved during P2P?
Probes:
 - a. your mentor/coach relationship
 - b. design (e.g., it was one term, 3 workshops, meetings with partner in between, etc.)
 - c. content (e.g., skill development as mentor/coaches, peer observation protocols, mid-course feedback, etc.)
 - d. facilitators (including CTSI facilitators & external consultants from workshop #1)
 5. Were there any challenges, problems or issues that arose as you and your peer mentor-coach engaged in the pilot?
Probes:
 - a. in your match
 - b. time constraints
 - c. how did you resolve these challenges?
 6. Please comment on the value of P2P resources (e.g., **Facilitator to list the following examples:** *When Mentoring Meets Coaching* (book provided); Handouts; Peer Observation of Teaching Guide; Mid-Course Feedback Guide; Blue Pulse Guide; CTSI facilitators; or other).
 7. Share opportunities you may have had to discuss P2P and/or related teaching topics:
Probes:
 - a. with colleagues
 - b. with others in the pilot cohort
 - c. at the departmental–divisional level (e.g., faculty meetings, presentations)



external to UofT

8. Provide recommendations for specific areas of the P2P program to inform future iterations. **NOTE Facilitators: Please probe each sub-part**
 - a. workshop format (2 hours x 3 workshops, the first before the term started)
 - b. time commitment
 - c. duration of program (1 term vs full year)
 - d. timing of year (Dec-May)
 - e. use of software such as Blue Pulse for gathering mid-course feedback
 - f. other?

Concluding question

- Of all the things we've discussed today, what would you say is one of the most important messages you would like to share about P2P?

Conclusion

- Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion!
- Your opinions will be a valuable asset to the study.
- We hope you have found the discussion interesting.
- If there are any follow-up questions you have please contact Carol Rolheiser as the PI or speak to me later.
- I would like to remind you that comments will be anonymized and the discussion we have had should be kept confidential.

NOTE Facilitators: Please collect the recording and notes (labelled with the focus group #, the names of the facilitator and note-taker) .

As well, each facilitator will do a brief summary immediately after the focus group, highlighting the key themes or overriding impressions.

Provide all to Andrea Graham.

Thanks!

