MENTORSHIP AND THE VIRTUAL WORLD

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What is Mentorship
Existing Models and Frameworks
An Example of a Virtual Mentorship Course; Outline, Projects, Outcomes
Benefits and Challenges
Lessons Learned and Moving Forward
WHAT IS MENTORSHIP?

Mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentoree) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person’s professional and personal growth.
MENTORSHIP MODELS

Informal:

- Goals of the relationship are not specified & outcomes are not measured
- Access is limited and may be exclusive
- Mentors and mentorees self-select on the basis of personal chemistry
- Mentoring lasts a long time; sometimes a lifetime

Formal:

- Goals are established from the beginning & outcomes are measured
- Access is open to all who meet program criteria
- Mentors and mentorees are paired based on compatibility
- Training and support in mentoring is provided
COMMON MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

- Adult – Youth
- Faculty – Student
- Peer – Peer
- Hierarchical
ACADEMIC MENTORSHIP

- Internships and Co-Ops in specifically defined positions that “revolve”

- Focused on the traditional student who takes a “break” from school to work full time or for the full-time student who participate in a defined problem specific project under the guidance of a faculty member.

- Award of academic credit based on meeting key performance metrics.

- Effective opportunities to learn new skills and demonstrate competencies in a safe environment.
WHY A VIRTUAL MENTORSHIP?

Online Education Has Changed the Game!

The need for academia-industry collaborative relationship to enhance student learning and professional development is important in all academic settings, they are even more important for online programs. Most students in online programs are working professionals and adults with competing demands on their time and more likely to suffer from disengagement due to limited professional and community building opportunities.
SIMILAR NEEDS - DIFFERENT DYNAMICS

- Provides non-traditional, working professional students opportunity to participate in relevant, applied on-the-job projects in real-time.

- Student designed and driven experience independent of a workplace supervisor/employee focus.

- Formal mentor relationship is embedded in the context of both academic experience and the workplace but without a specific supervisory relationship.

- Supports continuing alignment of industry need and curriculum innovation by integrating student/employee experience to enhance learning outcomes and competencies.
COURSE DIMENSIONS

✓ Experiential
✓ Project Centered
✓ Competency Based
✓ Integrated Support - Mentorship
✓ Industry Aligned
COURSE DESIGN

- Complete a personal “SWOT” analysis (identifies strengths/need for improvement in areas of motivation, influence and negotiation skills, etc.)
- Perform academic and professional research leading to KPA recommendation(s)
- Using Project Management Principles - Development of project plan and implementation of recommendation(s) in the workplace
- Present results in both a final course report and workplace presentation
- Receive constant mentorship support by faculty and sponsor throughout project