



***Peer Mentoring in Agricultural and Environmental
Science majors:
Elements of Effective Mentor Training***



**Victoria David, Director
Office of Diversity Affairs**

Objectives

- MAPP background
- Format
- Preliminary Data
- Connection to Boundary Spanning Theory
- Mentor Training
- Discussion

Action Research:

Stringer (2007) AR is a participatory process that relies on the wisdom of the people, and the knowledge they have of their own situation to provide a basis of action and to provide solutions to challenges within their operating system.

Action Research Core Process:

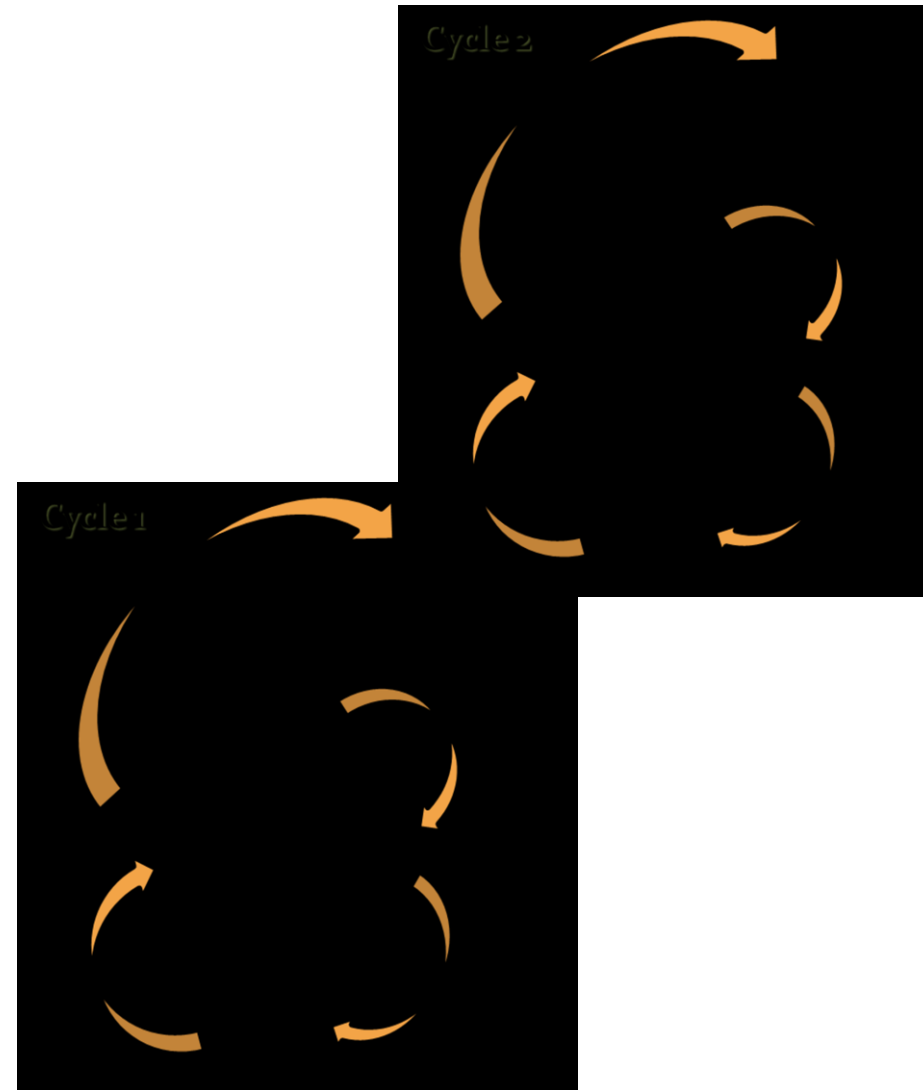
(Coghlan and Brannick, 2010)

Constructing: Exploration of context & purpose

Planning Action: Describe how to implement the action

Taking Action: Plans are implemented and interventions are made

Evaluating Action: Outcomes of the action are examined



MAPP PILOT Format

- **Pilot**
 - Paired with MANRRS; Contact once per month & via social media
 - No workshops; Qualtrics progress report
 - Potluck with MANRRS year end celebration
 - Evaluation: informal interviews of mentors and mentees
- **Year 2**
 - Mentor workshops with MANRRS meetings
 - Mentee workshops on various freshmen transition topics
 - Mixers
 - Potluck with MANRRS; IRB; Survey & Focus Groups
 - Re-branded the program with a new logo



Mentors

1. Decision to be a Peer Mentor

To help a freshman

Recruited by email or CAES faculty

To build relations

2. Building trust with the Mentee

Becoming friends

Feeling comfortable

Mentor role

3. Leadership development & Preparation for the role

Confidence

The importance of relationships

Time management

Importance of training sessions

Communication and stress training sessions

4. Representing CAES

Adequate representatives

Recruit active mentors

Pairing efforts

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Mentees

1. Sense of belonging to CAES

Mentor helped mentees feel welcomed
MAPP as a community

2. Retention efforts

Opportunity to meet professors in an informal way
Learn opportunities in the college
The mentors motivates mentees

3. MAPP as a positive experience

MAPP break down barriers
Help connect mentees with CAES and networking

Student Retention through Peer Mentoring in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at The University Of Georgia

Results suggested peer mentoring helped the mentees feel more integrated and supported in CAES. Data also suggested that their leadership skills were affected beneficially.

- Thoughts about leaving changed
- Positive impact increased confidence to complete degree and cope with problems



PEER MENTORS AS BOUNDARY SPANNERS

BOUNDARY SPANNING

Boundary spanners are a “bridge between an organization [college/university] and their exchange partners, competitors, and regulators [community partners]” (Scott, 1998, p. 196).

Peer Mentors in an Ag College

Office of Diversity Relations

Resources

- Tutoring
- Counseling
- Academic Advising
- Deans Promise
- Study Abroad
- Leadership
- Internships
- Service Learning
 - Research

Activities

- Mixers
- Recognition Ceremonies
- Major Madness
- SLICE (career exploration)

Workshops

- Know your CAES Admin
- Transition Tips
- Time Mgt
- Stress Mgt
- Networking
- Undergrad Research
- Affinity Clubs
- Professional Development
- Library Resources
- APA Workshops
- Academic Honesty

UGA CAES
Administration
Faculty
Staff
Exemplar Students

Community #2
Freshmen
Transfer Students



PEER MENTORING IF-THEN STATEMENT

IF WE KNOW: What supports/factors produce exemplar (flourishing CAES students)

IN WHAT CONTEXT: among students new to the college (freshmen and transfers)

THEN WE CAN: reduce attrition; retain and develop exemplar students/future mentors



BOUNDARY SPANNING THEORY

Product Innovation
Product Research & Development

- Boundary Spanners: “key individuals [who] are able to communicate effectively across boundaries and are, therefore, an important linking mechanism”, (March & Simon, 1958)
- Boundary Spanners: “individuals who are well connected to external information areas and who also are well connected internally and thus able to disseminate new information and new ideas to their more locally oriented colleagues”

(Tushman and Scalan, 1981)



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BOUNDARY SPANNING & PROGRAMS

- Boundary Spanning is multi-contextual
- Much of the literature on BS theory originates in the business and management field
- Theory used to investigate boundary spanning roles related to ~~product~~ **program** innovation research, ~~product~~ **program** design and ~~product~~ **program** development

Elements of Effective Training

☐ Year 3

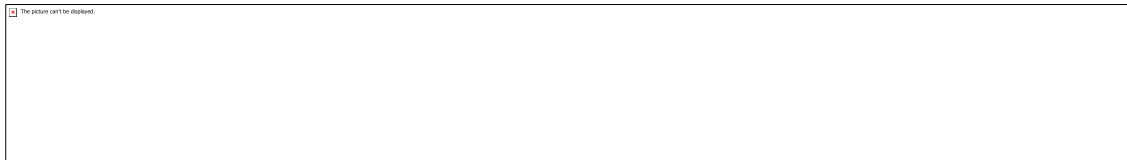
New Mentor Training & Program Framework

- Faculty & CAES Administrator Led Leadership Trainings
- Ambassador Led Resource Training
- Program planning training for Mentors (workshops delivery)
- Mixers, Activities & Study Groups



- New Manual including college administration pictures/roles/contact
- New Program delivery model
 - 3 generations of Mentors
 - Buzz around the college
 - Multicultural Participants

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Elements of Effective Mentor Training

- Representatives of the CAES
- Representatives of their major
- Know and access resources
- Interaction and engagement with mentees
- ID skills as useful for professional and interpersonal development
- Program development and delivery
- Connection to the College and it's faculty & staff
- Belonging = retention and success

Outcomes:

- Sense of belonging in the CAES
 - Familiar with resources, administrators, Faculty, Staff & Students
- Representative for the CAES
- Retain students/majors in the CAES
 - Increase graduates with CAES degrees
- Develop future mentors
- Leadership, professional development, interpersonal and program development skills beyond campus years
- Expand program using success model
- Continue to track retention

Thank You!

Questions/ Comments

Dr. Victoria David – vdavid@uga.edu

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