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# MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE: APPRENTICESHIP INTO COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

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# Mentoring in the professional doctorate

- .. Theoretical framework
  - ✘ Mentoring in the professional doctorate
  - ✘ Theories and models
    - Burgos, Hager, & London, 1999 & 2008; Kram, 1985; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998
- .. Methods of analysis
- .. Themes
- .. Challenges and opportunities
- .. Future directions – why this matters...
- .. References

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# Theoretical framework

- Professional doctorate & mentoring
  - ✦ Professional socialization and communities of practice (Caboni & Proper, 2009; Carter, 1994)
  - ✦ Learning in social contexts, teams and Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (Carter, 1994; Everson, 2009; Smrekar & McGraner, 2009).
  - ✦ Lessons from one trench – nursing (see for example Brown-Benedict, 2008 and Hinshaw, 2001)
- Mentoring theory
  - ✦ Career & psychosocial functions (Kram, 1985)
  - ✦ Sponsorship, exposure & visibility, coaching, protection, challenging assignments
  - ✦ Role modeling, acceptance & confirmation, counseling, friendship
- Best practices from mentors and students in graduate education (Burgos, Hager & London, 1999 & 2008)

# Theoretical framework

- .. Legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991)
  - ⌘ Enculturation – from novices to experts; from junior positions to greater responsibility
  - ⌘ Professional doctoral students are community members seeking greater centrality and sophistication of practice
- .. Communities of practice (Wenger, 1998)
  - ⌘ Serve as “nodes for the exchange and interpretation of information.”
  - ⌘ Maintain information about practices and ways of doing and being in “living ways.”
  - ⌘ “Steward competencies.”
  - ⌘ Provide “homes for identities.”
- .. Becoming...(Hager, 2003)

# Methods of analysis

- .. In depth interviews with acknowledged exemplary mentors and their student protégés
- .. Focus groups with students and faculty in multiple disciplines
- .. Multi-step content analysis to identify emic (insider) and etic (outsider) themes
- .. Member checks of initial emic themes and those predicated on the literature
- .. Synthesis with existing literature on mentoring in professional doctoral programs

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# Themes



- .. Professional socialization - how to become a...
- .. Collaborative participation in the practices of the community
- .. Communicating with professional communities
- .. Multiple mentoring relationships in a professional network
- .. Becoming successful members of the community

# Themes

- .. Professional socialization - how to become a...
  - ⌘ Learning, refining, and expanding the practices of the community
    - n Mentors model advanced practice and professional life
    - n A new doctorate means new ways of being and doing
    - n Mastering and integrating tools of research and practice – putting theory into practice; practice informing research
- .. Collaborative participation in the practices of the community
  - ⌘ Apprenticeship and shared responsibility
    - n Scaffolding challenging assignments
    - n Acceptance and confirmation of growing professional identity
- .. Communicating with professional communities
  - ⌘ Contributing to professional conversations with multiple tools/audiences
    - n Discourse mastery – growing responsibility for professional communication, presentation, consultation, publication
    - n Community groups, governmental organizations, clients and funders

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# Themes

- .. Multiple mentoring relationships in a professional network
  - ⌘ Encouraging and facilitating networking opportunities
    - n Taking advantage of the professional network
    - n Benefits of professional contacts for working partnerships
    - n External advisors and guidance (Smrekar & McGraner, 2009)
  - ⌘ Multiple psychosocial roles for both partners
    - n Providing multiple role models of professional identities
    - n Woman to woman; underrepresented groups
  - ⌘ Answers to challenges such as poor fits or inadequate skills in a mentor
- .. Becoming successful members of the community
  - ⌘ Validating identity development and career trajectories
    - n Increased collegiality and responsibility for presentation, consultation, diagnoses, research, writing, teaching...the work of the community
    - n Identifying and sharing a common professional goal of the community of practice

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# Challenges & opportunities

- .. Uncomfortable fits
  - ⌘ Divergent expertise in research and practice
  - ⌘ Different goals: research over practice or vice versa
  - ⌘ Incompatible interests
    - n Students desire mentors who share their interests
    - n Faculty desire students who want to learn what they have to offer
- .. Power
  - ⌘ Over, shared, denied (Heinrich, 1995)
    - n "I think he's one of these professors that just uses me as a tool."
- .. Time: Many demands = many opportunities to collaborate
- .. Developmental needs differ by place in academic and professional career
  - ⌘ Students new to their careers vs. mid-career advancement

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# Future directions

- ∴ Why does this matter?
  - ✧ Producing new visions of practice integrated with scholarship (Lester, 2004; Shulman, Golde, Conklin, & Garabedian, 2006)
  - ✧ Expanding scholarly resources within communities of practice
- ∴ Where to next? Recommendations for research and practice
  - ✧ Synthesis of literature on professional doctorate
    - n Need for greater depth of reflection on mentoring in professional doctoral education – how can we capitalize on unique character and opportunities?
    - n Need for systematic assessment of mentoring experiences of faculty and students in professional doctorates – what lessons can we learn from successful practice? Nursing? Educational administration?

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Full sources available on request – [mhager@menlo.edu](mailto:mhager@menlo.edu)

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