

Intrapersonal Outcomes of Mentors who Participate in a Peer Mentoring Project

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What We've Done:

A 2010 Summer Teaching Development Grant made possible the development of a new course and the expansion of The Peer Mentoring Project at Kent State University. Initially, this Project began as an informal "mentoring" initiative, where students from previous semesters would voluntarily come into the current semester's classes and answer questions the students had. The formalization of a mentoring "class," interviews conducted with the mentors and mentees, and an interest in social construction and relational learning led to the development of the only education elective course in Kent State's teacher education program: *Relational Learning in Education*. Throughout this course, a main focus has been to incorporate the Four Pillars of KSU Undergraduate Education: Knowledge, Insight, Responsibility, and Engagement.

Relational Learning:

Relational learning is a way of being with others that deconstructs the traditional hierarchy of "teacher" and "learner." This more-democratic approach to education allows both the teacher and the learner to actively engage in and take responsibility for the construction of knowledge and the ways in which we come to understand. In Peer Mentoring, relational learning works well, as it allows both mentors and mentees to engage with social constructionist learning principles while gaining insight into the teaching profession and building skills and abilities in a number of areas (outlined in the "Results" section).

Research Design and Methods:

- Conversational Interviewing (Rubin & Rubin, 2006)
- Semi-Structured Life World Interview (Kvale, 1996)
- Reflecting Processes (Morrison, 2001)
- 12 Mentors: 9 Females, 3 Males. Ages ranged from 19-27.
- Research Questions:
 - What kinds of experiences are these mentors having?
 - What are the learning outcomes for these mentors??

Results:

4 Main Themes:

- Intrapersonal Outcomes
 - Interpersonal Outcomes
 - Professional Development
 - Improvements
- (Each Main Theme also had a number of subcategories within)

References:

- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Morrison, A. (2001). *Reflecting processes in therapeutic conversations* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Information and Learning, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

