Effective practices of peer mentors in an undergraduate writing intensive course

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This article explores the effectiveness of peer mentoring of undergraduate education students enrolled in core curriculum, writing intensive courses. Peer mentors who had previously taken the courses worked with students to facilitate their learning and achievement by assisting them with required writing assignments. Survey rankings of important characteristics of mentors identified in previous research were examined to determine the commonality of perceptions of mentors and students of the importance of these characteristics in the mentoring relationship. The findings should be useful in selection of mentors and implementation of other peer mentoring programs.

Key words: Peer mentoring, undergraduate peer mentors

An Exploration of the Characteristics of Effective Student Peer Mentoring Relationships

Research in the field of education identifies peer mentoring as an effective way to enhance the academic success of undergraduate students (Fox & Stevenson, 2006; Jacobi, 1991; Smith, 2008). Peer mentoring is defined as an assistive relationship in which two individuals of similar age and/or experience work together, either formally or informally, to fulfill some kind of informational and/or emotional need (Terrion & Leonard, 2007). Kram and Isabella (1985) verify peer mentoring as a suitable alternative to traditional mentoring programs because it can not only provide academic, but also social and emotional support while matching mentors and mentees on levels of age and/or experience.

Benefits of peer mentoring

Based on previous research, it is widely accepted that peer-mentoring programs can provide additional instructional support for students. In addition to the academic benefits, peer mentoring has several other advantages. Many universities today are faced with ever-increasing class sizes leaving instructors with less time to provide students with personalized academic attention. Peer mentoring programs are able to offer students an additional instructional outlet thereby relieving some of the pressures from course instructors while still providing students adequate opportunity for assistance (Fox & Stevenson, 2006; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh & Wilss, 2008; Mazur, 1997; Smith, 2008). Moreover, peer mentor programs provide an opportunity for both mentors and mentees to reflect deeper on the learning process. Mentors in particular must be able to think about how students learn and apply this to their interactions with mentees. In this regard, peer
mentoring can be especially useful in teacher education programs where students are preparing for a career in educational service (Heirdsfield et al., 2008).

Peer mentoring can also provide emotional support which, in turn, may enhance undergraduate students’ academic success (Rice & Brown, 1990; Fox & Stevenson, 2006). Several studies of effective mentoring programs have reported that undergraduates feel less intimidated by peer mentors and more likely to ask questions they may not be willing to ask course instructors (Heirdsfield, et al., 2008; Page & Hanna, 2008). Thus, it follows that if students feel more secure in asking course-related questions, they will become more comfortable with the material and more likely to succeed in the class.

Capitalizing on the fact that students often turn to one another for academic support and information, many universities and colleges have implemented various types of peer mentoring, peer helping, or tutoring programs in their general student support services by providing access to a knowledgeable peer who understands the students’ concerns. However, there are often limitations to these programs, including the inability to match mentees with mentors who, although they may have academic expertise in the content area, may not have taken the same courses or instructors. This aspect has been identified as an important element in many programs and is currently of particular interest to researchers and program developers.

Theoretical construct

Based on the previously cited research and well established theoretical frameworks of learning and cognition, it is generally assumed that students’ educational success could be enhanced through the academic and social interaction provided by a peer mentoring program. Vygotsky’s (1978) social learning theory attributes cognitive development to social interaction between a learner and a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO). According to Vygotsky, the MKO is anyone with a higher understanding of a particular concept than the learner, including peers and other students. Social interaction plays a key role in the peer mentoring process by creating an atmosphere in which students are comfortable seeking assistance from a more knowledgeable peer.

Mentor characteristics and development of an effective peer-mentor program

According to Heirdsfield et al. (2008), both academic and social competence are important characteristics of a mentor. Terrion and Leonard (2007) support this claim in their review of the literature where they describe characteristics most often cited regarding effective peer mentors. Their results are separated into the academic and social components of mentoring. They indicate that a similar program of study and the mentor’s self-enhancement motivation are the most important factors in the academic and career-related function while communication skills, supportiveness, trustworthiness, a reciprocal attitude, empathy, personality match with the mentee, enthusiasm, and flexibility are most important in the psychosocial function. In addition, McLean (2006) asserts that peer mentor programs are most effective when the mentors share the same curriculum as the mentees. That is, when peer mentors have experiential knowledge of the subject matter, they are better able to provide reliable advice.
Research findings indicate that utilizing a peer mentor program at the undergraduate level holds great potential for improving students’ academic success in traditionally difficult subject matter. Due to the personal nature of writing, both the academic and social functions of mentoring appear to be vital considerations in the selection process of a writing peer mentor. Thus, as Terrion and Leonard (2007) report, it is important to create a systematic review process regarding the selection of peer mentors thereby allowing institutions to determine the best possible candidates for the role. Indeed, the success of a peer mentor program relies heavily on the quality of the mentors selected which is why this topic deserves further exploration.

While it is clear that peer mentoring can have a positive impact on student learning, important questions remain. Specifically, what academic and personal characteristics of mentors are perceived to contribute most effectively to the mentee’s learning and academic achievement in undergraduate courses designated as writing intensive?

**Study goals and questions**

The purpose of this study was to determine the characteristics deemed most important as traits of a good mentor, both from the perspective of the mentors and the mentees. Approval of the study and the specific measures for collecting the data was granted from the institutional research ethics committee prior to the study’s conduct. Information was collected from one survey designed by the authors to measure the questions addressed in this study:

1. What characteristics do students and peer mentors perceive as most important in the mentor/mentee relationship?
2. How do perceptions of these important characteristics differ between mentors and students?

**Program description**

The undergraduate peer mentor (UPM) program was embedded in the education department of a large university in the southwest and was modeled from a similar program previously implemented in the university’s College of Engineering (Yalvac, Economides, Brooks, & Smith, 2009). A full-time Graduate Assistant was assigned to coordinate and monitor the program. Peer mentors were selected by several criteria. First, they had to have previously taken, and excelled, in the writing-intensive course in which they would mentor. In addition, they had to be recommended by their instructors after demonstrating exceptional writing and interpersonal skills along with being deemed highly motivated to help others with the writing process. The 13 mentors selected for the program were required to serve 10 hours a week and were paid in accordance with university guidelines for undergraduate assistantships. Their duties consisted of attending monthly meetings with the program coordinator for training and informational purposes, assisting instructors in class, maintaining office hours for conferencing, and assisting students with writing assignments.

The five writing-intensive courses in which the program operated included a total of 20 sections: four sections of multicultural literature in the middle grades; four sections of reading and writing curriculum in the middle grades; five sections of teaching reading with children’s literature; one section of teaching reading and writing in elementary and middle school; and six sections of dynamics and management in a multicultural environment. Instructors of the classes all agreed to participate in the program and to serve as liaisons between the students and the UPMs assigned to
their classes. Prior to the beginning of the semester, the instructors and UPMs met to plan their roles, coordinated schedules, and reviewed curriculum requirements and assignments. Individual consultations between instructors and their assigned UPM occurred as needed throughout the semester.

Each UPM was assigned to a specific course section; however, since there were more course sections than UPM’s, some UPM’s were assigned to share additional sections. UPM’s were also required to devote five hours of their 10 hour work week to scheduled office hours. UPM’s worked together to coordinate their schedules so that a UPM was always present in the program’s dedicated department office during the week in both day and evening hours. Mentees were allowed to walk-in or make an appointment with an undergraduate peer mentor at any time. This was in addition to any time UPM’s spent in the classrooms discussing writing assignments, guidelines, and procedures. Most students visited a UPM voluntarily; however, two course instructors made it mandatory for their students to conference with a UPM on all papers. Students were allowed to visit with UPM’s for any reason regarding their writing assignments. Mentees’ paper requirements varied depending on which section and course they were taking. Two examples of paper requirements were philosophy papers, where students had to develop and write about their personal teaching philosophy, and a reading comprehension research paper where students were required to research and write about a topic in reading education.

Although peer mentors were available to students through email, the UPM’s chose to do all formal discussions regarding mentees’ papers in a face-to-face format. The UPM’s felt this allowed for more thorough feedback and provided an opportunity for new topics to emerge through discussion that may have been missed by simply providing feedback via email. The UPM’s interactions with mentees were strictly in a mentoring capacity and were non-evaluative. In addition to working with students, UPM’s assisted course instructors in creating writing assignments, presenting writing information to students, and updating students on assignment expectations.

Methods

Instrumentation

The survey instrument was developed by the researchers and served as the data source for the study (see Appendix A). The Undergraduate Peer Mentor Ranking Survey (UPMRS) was modeled from the characteristics of mentors found to be important in Terrion and Leonard’s review (2007) as well as characteristics reviewed by Rice and Brown (1990). This instrument was the primary research tool designed to answer the research questions regarding students’ versus mentors’ perceptions of characteristics most critical in mentors’ support of students’ achievement in writing intensive education courses. For the UPMRS, both students and mentors were asked to rank each of 10 mentor characteristics from 1-10 with one being the characteristic they perceived as most important and 10 the characteristic they found least important in a peer mentor. The characteristics included: availability; ability to spend one-on-one time; same gender; knowledgeable of the writing process; previously enrolled in the course; prior mentoring experience; good communication skills; enthusiastic about the writing process; supportive; and mentor is trustworthy. These results were then compared for the similarities and differences in the characteristics students and mentors perceived as most and least important in the mentoring
In addition, both mentors and students had opportunity to respond to three open-ended questions pertaining to the primary benefits of the UPM program, suggestions for improving the program, and additional comments.

Participants

Students (400+) who were mentored in the program were enrolled in upper level, writing-intensive, education courses (five courses; 20 sections) designed to prepare pre-service teachers for classroom instruction. All of the courses were required for degrees and various licensure areas in K-8 elementary and middle school education. Participants received writing instruction in the context of the teacher preparation curriculum and were provided access to at least one undergraduate peer mentor (UPM) per course section.

Thirteen students were selected for the role of Undergraduate Peer Mentor (UPM) by the writing-intensive course instructors. These students had previously taken and excelled in one or more of the required writing-intensive courses. Additionally, they all had high overall grade point rates (GPR’s), were in good standing with the university, and were recognized as having strong interpersonal and intrapersonal skills by their professors. This selection process was intended to ensure that students selected for the role of UPM were not only knowledgeable of the coursework and writing process, but also had the ability to work with mentees in a professional teaching capacity. The students were paid $1,000 for their work during the semester.

More than 400 students were originally surveyed for the study; however, any surveys that were incomplete or inaccurately filled out were excluded from analysis. As a result, 335 student responses were included in the analysis. Of these students, 320 (96%) were female and 296 (88%) were White. Additionally, 310 (89%) had GPR’s of 3.0 or higher. Finally, the undergraduate peer mentors who were surveyed consisted of 12 females and one male. One of the UPM surveys was found to be incomplete and was therefore excluded from analysis. All of the peer mentors were White and 11 of the 13 peer mentors (85%) had a grade point ranking of 3.5 or higher.

Data Collection Procedure

The instructors of the writing-intensive courses were contacted by the researchers in the middle of the spring semester to schedule the administration of the surveys. Each course section was provided a packet with all surveys and directions to be read by a student administrator. Survey instructions explained to students that their participation would help contribute to the information in the field regarding peer mentoring and aid in the development and improvement of the current UPM program at the university. If students chose not to participate, they were excused from the classroom. Each student who agreed to participate filled out a consent form prior to completing the survey. Most students were able to complete the surveys in 20 to 30 minutes.

The peer mentors attended monthly meetings with one of the researchers and were asked during this time if they would participate in the survey. All 13 peer mentors present agreed and were given directions orally by the researcher. Undergraduate peer mentors also filled out a consent form prior to completing the survey and were able to complete the survey in approximately 20 minutes.
Results

Descriptive statistics for the UPMRS are reported as mean rankings by both students and mentors for 10 UPM characteristics and are displayed in Table 1. Students and mentors ranked each of 10 characteristics on a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important. Therefore, lower means indicated a higher ranking of importance. According to the means, students cited knowledge of the writing process, previous enrollment in the course, and good communication skills as the three most important characteristics a UPM should possess. UPM’s also reported knowledge of the writing process as the most important characteristic and good communication skills as second (as opposed to students’ ranking of third). Trustworthiness was ranked third overall by the UPM’s. This is in contrast to the students’ rating of trustworthiness at number nine. Both students and peer mentors cited the UPM’s gender as the least important characteristic. Prior mentoring experience also fell in the bottom three characteristics for both students and UPM’s with a ranking of eight and nine, respectively. Additionally, peer mentors cited availability as one of the least important characteristics with a ranking of eight, while students found it more important with a ranking of four.

Table 1: Mean Rankings of Important UPM Characteristics by Students and UPM’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Students (n = 335)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>UPM’s (n = 12)</th>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Prev. enrolled in course</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Good communication skills</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Good communication skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Trustworthy</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Availability</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Supportive</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. One-on-one</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Enthusiastic</td>
<td>5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Prev. enrolled in course</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Enthusiastic</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>7. one-on-one</td>
<td>6.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Prior mentoring experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Availability</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Same gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td></td>
<td>10. Same gender</td>
<td>9.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent samples t-test was performed in order to determine whether or not significant differences existed in how students and peer mentors ranked the 10 characteristics. Several significant differences were found and the results are displayed in Table 2. The students ($M = 4.59$) ranked availability significantly higher than the mentors ($M = 6.25$), $t (345) = -2.2$, $p = .028$. Students also ranked prior mentoring experience significantly higher ($M = 6.27$) than peer mentors ($M = 8.67$), $t (345) = -10.311$, $p = .001$, while mentors ($M = 3.17$) ranked good communication skills significantly higher than students ($M = 4.43$, $t (345) = 2.02$, $p = .045$. Mentors and students ranked supportiveness significantly different with mentors ($M = 4.00$)
ranking it higher than students \((M = 5.68)\), \(t(345) = 2.693, p = .007\). Finally, peer mentors \((M = 3.58)\) ranked trustworthiness significantly higher than students \((M = 6.31)\), \(t(345) = 3.58, p = .001\). However, the Levene’s test for equality of variance indicated a significant result for the responses from both groups on trustworthiness. This indicates a possible problem with the variance between peer mentors and students and we are therefore unable to report these results as valid. No other significant differences were found. All of the findings are reported in Table 2.

### Table 2: Independent Samples t-test of Mean Rankings of Important UPM characteristics by Students and UPM’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students ((N = 335))</th>
<th>UPM’s ((N = 12))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(M)</td>
<td>(SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one time</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>8.98</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable of writing process</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously enrolled in course</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior mentoring experience</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportiveness</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \(p < .05\)
** \(p < .01\)
*** \(p < .001\)

### Discussion

The results of this study indicated there were similarities and differences in what students and mentors considered to be important characteristics of a UPM. Common to both students and mentors was the perception that knowledge in the field of writing, and good communication skills were the most important characteristics of a UPM. Indeed, it seemed likely that these two concepts would rank high for both groups as teaching and learning are predicated on the ability to communicate what one knows to others. The students’ high ranking of previous enrollment in the course \(# 2\) for students vs. \(# 6\) for mentors) may have been because they attributed previous enrollment and prior academic achievement in a writing intensive course (two criteria for selection of the mentors) as reflective and integral to mentors’ knowledge characteristics. These findings were consistent with previous research that has cited expertise in the field and achievement of a level of academic success that gives mentors “credibility in the eyes of the students they will be mentoring” as important criteria for selecting mentors and establishing effective mentoring programs (Terrion & Leonard, 2007, p. 153). According to Mee-Lee and Bush (2003), sharing the same programs of study (teacher education) and, in this case, a body of coursework with intensive writing frameworks as a basis for demonstrating knowledge, leads mentees to attribute greater credibility to their mentor. Several open-ended student comments
noted mentors’ previous experience in the course as being particularly beneficial. One student wrote: “Having a student who has previously taken the course was the most significant benefit of the UPM program.” Another said: “Having someone who has already completed the assignments I am turning in to talk to is very helpful in making a good grade.”

Results of students’ and mentors’ bottom three rankings of UPM characteristics also indicated similarities in two out of three components. Students ranked prior mentoring experience (8th), trustworthiness (9th), and same gender (10th) as being the least important while UPM’s ranked availability (8th), prior mentoring experience (9th), and same gender (10th) as least important. The results indicated quite clearly that the UPM being the same gender is the least important of the 10 characteristics presented to students and mentors. Prior research has suggested that gender and race matching reflects conflicting findings and that these may actually be explained by contextual factors “such as the culture of the university, the characteristics of the student population served by the university, the structure of the mentoring program, and so on” (Terrion & Leonard, 2007, p. 153).

Careful consideration was required, however, when examining the ranking of prior mentoring experience (students 8th; mentors 9th). Although both students and mentors ranked it in the bottom three, significant differences were found between the two groups with students ranking it higher than mentors. Since students were of close proximity in age and classification to the mentors and most had not had any formal mentoring experience, these results were difficult to interpret. A qualitative analysis of students’ and peer mentors’ written responses regarding the program also did not offer any insight into why this difference occurred. However, it is likely that this finding may have been due to the recent implementation of the program on campus. Since virtually all of the UPM’s included in the study were in their first or second semester of working with the program, they may feel prior mentoring experience was not as important because they were all unlikely to have actually had any prior mentoring experience. However, a student seeking guidance from a peer mentor, may feel someone with prior mentoring experience would be better equipped to provide support and they would thus be more likely to give this characteristic a higher ranking.

Other differences in students’ and mentors’ rankings revealed areas that merited further consideration in structuring of this, and other, mentoring programs. Students rated “availability” in fourth place whereas mentors placed it at eighth. Student comments regarding improvements in the program and mentors’ availability were primarily directed to having more time to meet together. Examples included: “Have more hours available with them;” “Have her come to the actual class more often;” “More availability on several different days, instead of a ton of hours on a few days;” and “Use email more often to increase availability.”

Although qualitative feedback for the UPM program was overwhelmingly positive, the most often recurring theme written in the suggestions portion of the survey was a need for more office hours. Students noted that they were unable to make the UPM’s office hours due to class conflicts or work restraints. This is an important finding in that it indicates how crucial peer mentor availability is to students in order for them to get the most out of the program.

Differences were also found in how students and peer mentors ranked communication skills, supportiveness, and trustworthiness with peer mentors ranking these inter and intrapersonal
aspects of peer tutoring higher than students. In particular, there was a major contrast in how trustworthiness was ranked between the two groups. Students ranked it very low, at number 9, while peer mentors ranked it fairly high at number 3. However, there was no mention of these specific characteristics in the qualitative analysis of students’ and mentors’ comments. These differences may indicate that mentors felt strongly about the social and emotional role they played in students’ learning experience while students were more focused on the academic outcomes.

Further qualitative analysis of students’ comments regarding the peer mentoring program supported the idea that a peer mentor program offers an attractive alternative to approaching course instructors for assistance. Students repeatedly mentioned feeling more comfortable going to their peer mentor for help and feeling less intimidated than if they had asked their instructor. One student wrote: “I much prefer going to the UPM than the professor to talk about assignments.” Other comments included: “It’s great going to someone who has prior experience and can relate to the assignments you’re doing;” and “They have been where you are and can give hints and tips about what the professor expects.”

Although both students’ and mentors’ comments on the surveys were overwhelmingly positive regarding the mentoring program, some of the participants offered specific suggestions for how the program could be improved. The most frequent suggestions were to extend or provide more office hours at varied times and to expand email conferencing. Several students noted that being required to consult with a UPM worked as a disadvantage to them because their class or work schedules did not match well with office hours of their UPM. One student wrote: “In our class we had a chance to talk with the UPM during the class hours about our progress with the paper. This helped a lot. People have busy schedules and since we were already in the class, we could meet with the UPM during that time.” Other suggestions noted the limited office space for meeting with the UPMs. One student wrote: “Give the UPMs a larger office where they can meet with more than one student at a time, yet still offer privacy;” and one UPM noted: “We needed more office space. It was often noisy and overcrowded when we worked with the students.”

**Limitations of the study**

Limitations of this study are due to the sampling techniques and sample size. The samples obtained for the study were obtained by means of convenience, as the participants were selected from the writing-intensive courses in the university based teacher preparation program in the Southwest United States, and the school of the researchers.

Additionally, although the sample of students was a good size (n=335), the number of mentors sampled was rather small (n=12). This was a result of only having one to two peer mentors per course section. Therefore, we feel the results of the study are valuable but should be interpreted with caution. A replication of our procedures with a larger sample may be beneficial for future research.

**Conclusions**
Based on the students’ and the mentors’ qualitative feedback, the undergraduate peer mentoring program established at this university appears to have been successful during its first year of implementation and worthy of continuation. The concerns expressed by students and mentors can be easily addressed in the future and should not prevent the program from continuing to benefit both students and mentors in a substantive way.

Peer mentoring programs offer considerable potential in achieving positive academic results for university students learning how to use written communication more effectively in required coursework. These benefits appear to be enhanced when students are linked with mentors who have previously taken the courses they are mentoring and who have career fields common to the mentees. Recognizing and understanding mentor characteristics that are critical to developing mentees’ capacities to benefit from the relationships, while also providing mutual benefits to the mentors are important considerations for institutions interested in creating effective peer mentoring programs.

References


Appendix
Undergraduate Peer Mentors Ranking Survey (UPMRS)
Undergraduate Peer Mentors Ranking Survey (UPMRS)

1. Classification
   a. Sophomore
   b. Junior
   c. Senior

2. Gender  M  F

3. Ethnicity
   Black
   White
   Hispanic
   Asian
   Other

4. Major
   Interdisciplinary Studies
   Other

5. Why did you take this course?
   a. Required for major
   b. Met requirement for writing intensive course
   c. Recommended by advisor
   d. Elective
   e. Other

6. What grade do you expect?
   a. D or F
   b. C
   c. B
   d. A

7. My overall GPR
   a. 3.5 or above
   b. 3.0 to 3.4
   c. 2.5 to 2.9
   d. Below 2.4

8. This course was taken...
   a. online
   b. face-to-face
   c. hybrid (both online and face-to-face)

9. I am...
   a. a student enrolled in a writing intensive course
   b. an Undergraduate Peer Mentor

Please rank each of the following mentor characteristics from 1-10. One would be the characteristic you find most important in a peer mentor and ten would be the characteristic you find least important.

_______ Mentor’s availability
_______ Mentor’s ability to spend one-on-one time with me
_______ Mentor is the same gender as me
_______ Mentor is knowledgeable of the writing process
Mentor has been previously enrolled in the course he/she is helping me with
Mentor has prior mentoring experience
Mentor has good communication skills
Mentor is enthusiastic about the writing process
Mentor is supportive
Mentor is trustworthy

What, do you believe, are the primary benefits of working with a UPM?
What suggestions would you make to improve the UPM program?
Please provide any additional comments.