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Strengths in Mentoring: Creating a Pilot Mentorship Program for Women in Sport and Recreation, Health and Wellness, and Media Literacy

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Strengths in Mentoring: Creating a Pilot Mentorship Program for Women in Sport and Recreation, Health and Wellness, and Media Literacy

By
Meghan Roney

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through The Faculty of Human Kinetics in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Human Kinetics at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2013

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 AUTHOR’S DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The Leadership Advancement for Women and Sport (LAWS) pilot mentorship program is intended to increase a sample of undergraduate female Human Kinetics students’ exposure to careers or avocations in the fields of sport and recreation, health and wellness, or media literacy. I explored three sub problems: how to effectively create a unique pilot mentorship program to provide occupational exposure and insights for women; what were the mentors’ and mentees’ perceptions of the pilot mentorship program and what is the recommended design of a mentorship program for LAWS.

This study was completed using participant observation, focus groups, and document analysis. Findings suggest that in order for the mentors to view the program as successful they must feel they are helping their mentee and personally experiencing professional development. In order for the mentees to view the program as successful they must feel they gained career information and experienced benefits through networking sessions.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Gender inequity has remained in sports for a lot longer than it should have, and to this day the competency of women in coaching, officiating, and commentating is still questioned (Mattila, 2010). In recent years there have been efforts to increase gender equity in many aspects of the sporting world (i.e., coaching, officiating, and governance). Many of these efforts have occurred with the support of mentorship programs for women (Cockburn, 2011; Mattila, 2010; Ragins, 1989).

Mentoring programs have traditionally been used to describe a relationship between a more educated, older individual and a younger, less experienced individual. These relationships can occur formally or informally and can last for 5+ years (Kram, 1983). The literature on mentoring is so diverse across academic fields that there is not one mutually accepted definition for mentoring, mentor or mentee. It seems that the means of deploying a mentorship program are just as diverse as its definitions. Mentoring programs vary widely, and can differ depending on the field where they are used (e.g., education, business, sport). However, Cockburn (2011), through a review of literature found that mentoring programs for women that worked included:

…peer mentoring and alternative models; chemistry in the mentor/mentee relationship; role modeling where the mentor models skills and approaches within the mentoring relationship with a particular focus on identified ‘skill gaps’; flexibility in terms of the formality of the relationship; relationships that assist women to develop networks; increased exposure and visibility for both mentors and mentees which legitimates the programme; challenging
assignments suggested by the mentor that directly impact on career development; and a mentoring process that is facilitative and nurturing (p.4).

In 2012, the Catalyst Census\(^1\) reported that 16.6% of board seats in Fortune 500 (United States) companies, and only 3.3% of board chair positions were held by women. Furthermore, “in 2011 and 2012, less than one-fifth of companies had 25% or more women directors, while one-tenth had no women serving on their boards”. (Catalyst Census, 2012, p.2) In Canada, Catalyst Census (2012) reports that:

- 47.5% of the labour market is women;
- 36.6% are in management positions;
- 14.5% are board directors;
- 18.1% are senior officers;
- 6.9% are top earners; and
- 5.7% are CEO’s/Heads

While there has been an increase in women and girls participating in sport, there has not been the same increase in women taking on leadership and decision making positions within the sporting world (Demers, 2009; Mattila, 2010). It is seen worldwide that women on average occupy less than 25% of leadership and decision-making positions on national and regional level sport boards. Recognizing this fact, The International Olympic Committee instructed the National Olympic Committee, National Federations, and other sporting bodies that at least 20% of decision-making positions on their boards must be held by women. In 2009, the majority of boards had reached the 2000 goal of 10%, but had not reached the 2005 goal of 20% (Mattila, 2010). While this may seem like a good initiative, it is also problematic. There were no policy initiatives put in place to make these outcomes possible, and furthermore, this attempt to increase women to 20% of decision making positions has been perceived as the finish line to gender

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\(^1\) Catalyst Census is an organization that is concerned about gender imbalances in organizations. They focus on measuring and identifying talent gaps and the best strategies that organizations and individuals can use to leverage the best talent. (Catalyst Census, 2012)
equality\(^2\) in sport leadership (Mattila, 2010). Furthermore, a recent publication by SportAccord\(^3\) (2013), shows that in February 2012 the “percentage of females within the decision making bodies of SportAccord members…remains static at 13% despite the creation of 71 new positions” (p. 1). In Mattila’s (2010) address at the Lausanne International Sports Management Conference, she suggested ways that individuals and organizations can work towards increasing women in leadership positions. For individuals she suggested:

…get[ting] involved in the national, regional or international Women in Sport Committee(s); identify[ing] and mentor[ing] women in your sport/country to promote for high level competition, coaching and leadership positions; lead[ing] by example; and conduct[ing] clinics or workshops focusing on training females to develop coaching or officiating skills and techniques (p.4).

For organizations, Mattila suggested: promoting positive images of women in leadership, providing opportunities for women to attend leadership training, and adopting a Diversity Policy. Through the development of a mentoring program, I hoped to expose aspiring women to careers or avocations in sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy in a manner that can help prepare and guide them towards leadership positions.

**Statement of Problem**

In this study I aimed to create a mentorship program that can facilitate opportunities for aspiring women to be exposed to careers in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy, through an examination of three sub-problems. In the first sub problem, I looked at how

\(^2\) There is often discussion around the difference between equality and equity. For the purpose of this thesis, equity is “being fair and impartial” and equality is “the state of being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities” (New Oxford American Dictionary).

\(^3\) SportAccord is an International Federation that provides services to unite and support its members; furthermore SportAccord is the “umbrella organization for both the Olympic and non-Olympic international sport federations as well as organizers of international sporting events” (SportAccord, 2013, para 2)
to effectively create a unique pilot mentorship program to provide occupational exposure and insights for women aspiring to work in the fields of health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy. In the second sub-problem, I examined the mentors’ and mentees’ perceptions of the pilot mentorship program. In the third sub-problem, I evaluated the pilot program and provided recommendations for creating a successful long term mentorship program for Leadership Advancement for Women in Sport (LAWS).

Main Research Problem

How can the process of mentoring facilitate opportunities for women to successfully take on more roles in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy?

Operational Definitions

• Mentor

In this thesis the term mentor is used to describe “individuals who go out of their way to successfully help their protégés4 meet life goals” (Schweiter, 1993, p. 50). In this study, mentors are affiliated with the University of Windsor or a community organization. These individuals are both female and male. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (n.d.) a mentor “facilitates personal and professional growth in an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights that have been learned through the years” (para 9). Furthermore, mentors gain, while also assisting mentees to gain professional connections in the form of networking.

• Mentee

Mentees are regarded as “individuals who [receive] special assistance from other persons in reaching their life goals” (Schweiter, 1993, p. 50). In this thesis the term mentee is used to

4 In this thesis, the term mentee is used rather than protégé. This choice was made to try and reduce the unequal level of power relations that the term protégé connotes.
describe participating female undergraduate students from the Faculty of Human Kinetics who applied and were successfully accepted into the mentorship program.

- **Mentorship**

  For the purpose of this research, mentorship is used to describe a relationship between a mentor and a mentee. An academic definition used to describe this relationship is as follows: “the practice of mentoring to advise and guide another, providing wisdom and inspiration as a result of experience” (Miller & Noland, 2003, p. 84)

- **LAWS**

  The use of the term LAWS in my study refers to an organization, Leadership Advancement for Women and Sport. LAWS is a non-profit organization located in Windsor, Ontario whose purpose is to “provide leadership, education and support to create equitable opportunities for females in sport and recreational physical activity over a lifespan” (LAWS, 2012). It was founded in the late 1990s and incorporated in 2004.

- **Sport and Recreation**

  The phrase “sport and recreation” in this thesis incorporates careers that are directly related to a sport (i.e., coaching, officiating, or refereeing) or recreation (i.e., campus recreation, community recreation, or leisure).

- **Health and Wellness**

  The phrase “health and wellness” in this thesis incorporates careers related to increasing or educating the population on health and wellness, such as health promotion, therapy, or nutrition.
• **Media Literacy**

For this project, the term “media literacy” incorporates any career that uses media (television, radio, newspaper, etc.) to talk about or to promote sport and recreation or health and wellness.

**Assumptions**

The following assumptions, which underpin this research, are based on prior knowledge and personal experience:

1. *Women desire equitable treatment in the workforce.*

Throughout history, women have fought for equitable treatment in many institutions (e.g., post-secondary education, sport, and employment). While we have been making steps towards equitable treatment, we still have not reached parity (Karukstis, 2009; Kerr & Ali, 2012; Mahood, 1999). Furthermore, Saleebey (2009) in his strengths perspective assumes:

   …that all humans, somewhere within, have the urge to…transcend circumstances, to develop their powers, to overcome adversity, to stand up and be counted, to be a part of something that surpasses the petty interest of self, to shape and realize their hopes and dreams (p. 7).

Therefore, based on personal experience and the above academic findings, I believe that there is an ongoing quest by women for gender equitable treatment in the work force.

2. *Networking leads to future opportunities*

Through personal experiences I have witnessed networking leading to opportunities. ‘Six degrees of separation’ or ‘small world phenomenon’ (Small World Phenomenon, 2009) exists when “two people $A$ and $B$, chosen at random, tend to be connected by a surprisingly short acquaintance chain, $A$ knowing someone who knows someone…who knows $B$” (para 1). This is how
networking typically leads to opportunities. I thus assume, based on the idea of ‘small world phenomenon’ and past experience, that networking contributes towards future work or professional opportunities.

3. The Windsor-Essex County community will benefit from a relationship with an organization specifically designed for the advancement of women in sport.

LAWS was developed by individuals in Windsor-Essex County who realized that while there was an increase in girls participating in sport, there was not an increase in women stepping into leadership positions (LAWS, 2012). For example, currently at the University of Windsor there is only one female head coach, and only 23% of our Athletics and Recreation Staff is female (Go Lancers, 2012). Furthermore, at St. Clair College, 5 of 29 coaching positions inclusive of head and assistant coaches are held by women (Saints Coaching, 2012) and only 1 of 5 athletics staff is female (Saints Athletics Staff, 2012). This strengthens my assumption that the greater Windsor-Essex County area needs and will benefit from the existence and the flourishing of a relationship with LAWS.

4. Women want to take on careers in leadership positions in the field of sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy.

From my experiences I operate under the assumption that women desire to gain and work in leadership positions within their chosen field. Chliwniak (1997) as cited in Growe & Montgomery (2000) defined leaders as “individuals who provide vision and meaning for an institution and embodies the ideals toward which the organization strives” (p.1). This definition does not limit a leader to being either male or female, therefore allowing leaders to be both male and female. Furthermore, I believe that women want to advance their careers at the same pace and level as males.
**Theoretical and Practical Justification**

Literature has supported the notion that mentorship programs are one way to increase women in leadership positions. Results of this thesis expand the literature in both a theoretical and practical sense.

**Theoretical Justification**

Literature shows that the majority of researchers examining mentorship programs in the past have used social exchange theory as their framework to understand human interactions that occur in mentoring relationships. My research uniquely contributed to the literature about mentoring by using the strengths perspective (Saleebey, 2009) and duality of structure (Giddens, 1984) as the framework to understand, develop and evaluate the mentorship program. The outcomes of this pilot program identify another approach to mentoring women in sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy. My research thus further advances the literature because there are no documented programs that have taken this theoretical approach.

**Practical Justification**

Sport and gender equity are both critical to our society. Sport historically has been related to and meant for men. As women have moved into other traditional male domains, they have also begun to move into the sporting world. My experiences in sport have pushed me to want to advance women’s careers in sport and leisure. My research may assist organizations to increase the number of females in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy. It is my desire to heighten the awareness in female undergraduate students from the University of Windsor about career options available to them, prior to graduation. Furthermore, this research further assists LAWS in developing a relationship with the community and the University of Windsor. By having the mentees associated with the University of Windsor, the mentors as
community specialists, and the program associated with LAWS, I feel as though the once distant connections will become stronger and more sustainable into the future. Furthermore, I feel that the mentor program will further spread the word about LAWS into the community, which can help to further establish community relations.

**Theoretical Framework**

*Duality of Structure*

Anthony Giddens (1984), developed Structuration Theory, which outlines the duality of structure as an extension to Karl Marx’s explanation of human behaviour. Giddens explained that social practices are constantly being created and reproduced, most frequently by powerful people. Duality of structure assumes that rules and resources (structures) shape people’s (agent’s) practices, and that people’s practices usually reproduce rules and resources. Furthermore, ‘knowledgeable’ individuals, as labeled by Giddens, are people who know what they are doing and know how to put their knowledge into practice. Therefore, if these individuals act in unconventional ways, going against the social norms, their actions may have the outcome of transforming the very structures that gave them the ability to act (Sewell, 1992). However, ‘knowledgeable’ individuals can also continue to reproduce the structures they have naturalized. Structures should not be perceived only as constraining; they are both constraining and enabling at the same time.

*The Strengths Perspective*

The strengths perspective, initially developed in social work by Dennis Saleebey (2009) and others, was created to counter traditional social work practices. The strengths perspective takes the focus away from a negative, victimizing view, and places focus instead on the individual’s strengths as a human being. This perspective focuses on the resources available to
individuals and how those resources can further strengthen the individual’s abilities and skills.

The strengths perspective has six key principles:

1. every individual or group under discussion has strengths;
2. all challenges have also been opportunities to develop strengths;
3. the upper limits of growth are unknown;
4. we best help individuals by collaborating with them;
5. all environments are full of resources, and;
6. our relationships must include caring, caretaking and context (pp. 15-18)

One of the key concepts of the strengths perspective that ties in with women in sporting organizations is the concept of empowerment. Empowerment as outlined by Saleebey is: “the intent to, and the process of, assisting [individuals] to discover and expend the resources and tools within and around them” (p. 11).

Working in the strengths perspective orientation means that a mentor in this pilot program would focus on “helping to discover and embellish, explore and exploit clients’ strengths and resources in the service of assisting them to achieve their goals, realize their dreams, and shed the irons of their own inhibitions” (Saleebey, 2009, p. 1). This perspective challenges the focus on negative boundaries that women are used to experiencing in sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy environments. Furthermore, I believe that a focus on an individual’s strengths may allow new ideas to be formed, which allows for future possibilities to be considered. For example, if a mentee experiences a shift in her thinking pattern to focus more on her strengths, she may start looking for strengths in other areas of her life. This

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5 Client in this case would mean mentee.
may create opportunities for her to seek out new experiences previously thought to be unattainable.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sub-Problem 1

How is a mentorship pilot program created and deployed using the duality of structure and the strengths perspective as its foundation?

Historically mentorship programs in sport and recreation have commonly fixated their framework around the social exchange theory\(^6\) (Bower & Hums, 2009). The LAWS pilot mentorship program was created using the strengths perspective and a duality of structure framework as its foundation. This sub-problem links to literature about the development and evaluation of mentorship programs. In this section, I begin by explaining the program structures and approaches historically used in mentoring programs. I then apply relevant literature to the LAWS mentorship program.

Mentorship Programs

Before I began to examine current mentorship programs in the literature, I looked at previous definitions of mentoring in order to fully understand the scope of the field. Mentoring has been explored in many different fields (e.g., education, business, sport) and they all have had varying approaches for how a mentoring relationship is defined. Jacobi (1991), for example, compiled 15 different definitions of mentor and mentoring that had previously been used in academic literature. Researchers since Merriam (1983) have been discussing the lack of consensus across definitions and fields. Some academic definitions of mentoring carried

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\(^6\) Social exchange theory is based on the idea and understanding that people expect rewards and costs from social exchange to be equitable (Colman, n.d.). This means that in mentoring relationships, those involved expect that the amount they are giving up (e.g., time and money) will be adequately reflected in what they receive (e.g., networking connections).
traditional undertones; they implied a superior individual with power dictating to a subordinate (Fagenson, 1989; Kogler-Hill, Bahniuk, Dobos & Rouner 1989; Moore & Amey, 1988). Other definitions had a heavily informal tone, which implied a relationship built off common interests and friendship (Pitney & Ehlers, 2004; Roche, 1979). Furthermore, some definitions had a reciprocal feel to the mentoring definition; these definitions suggested a relationship where both the mentor and mentee benefitted from the relationship (Miller & Noland, 2003; Zey, 1984).

Two definitions of mentoring I considered using in this research were Moore & Amey’s (1988) and Miller and Noland’s (2003). These two definitions featured important parts of a mentoring relationship. Moore & Amey’s definition reinforced the traditional feeling of a mentoring program in which the older mentor leads and teaches the younger mentor by way of unequal power relations. Their definition outlined mentoring as:

…a form of professional socialization whereby a more experienced (usually older) individual acts as a guide, role model, teacher and patron of a less experienced (often younger) protégé. The aim of the relationship is the further development and refinement of the protégé’s skills, abilities, and understanding (p. 45).

The mentoring definition by Miller & Noland highlighted similar ideas to Moore and Amey, but with a less obvious theme of unequal power relations. Their definition stated: “the practice of mentoring [is] to advise and guide another, providing wisdom and inspiration as a result of experience” (p. 84). For the purpose of this research paper, I decided to use Miller and Noland’s definition; this definition provided the project with a solid base of understanding, without placing the focus solely on unequal power dynamics.
Traditional Mentoring Relationships

Since the onset of mentoring research, relationships have traditionally been viewed in a hierarchical fashion, and therefore have had unequal power relations embedded into them. The traditional view of mentoring occurred with a top down approach (figure 1), wherein the mentor is viewed as the older, more experienced individual and the mentee is seen as the younger, inexperienced individual seeking assistance.

**Figure 1: Traditional Mentor Relationship**

These relationships were socially constructed into traditional mentorship perspectives, which may not have been the most beneficial for all parties involved. Due to these socially constructed views, traditional mentoring relationships often aligned with the social exchange theory. This theory explains that human relationships operate on “an exchange of activity that can be rewarding or costly to one or both of the individuals” (Bedini & Anderson, 2003, p. 242). Social exchange theory explains that social interaction is built on an exchange process. Individuals engage in relationships that will give them the maximum number of benefits with the least number of costs. Furthermore, individuals will end relationships if the costs begin to outweigh the benefits for them. In formal mentoring programs, this can sometimes be an issue. When individuals are matched in an organization, they often are not compatible as people, and one or both may begin to resent the other. Traditional mentoring relationships can occur
formally\(^7\) or informally\(^8\) depending on the structure of the organization to which the mentor and mentee belong. In order to combat this issue of social exchange imbalance, the LAWS mentorship program was created to have a component of formal mentoring using matching techniques, but with a focus on a reciprocal model of mentoring developed using a strengths perspective and duality of structure foundation.

*Reciprocal Mentorship Programs*

In light of the lack of success sometimes seen in traditional formal mentoring programs, the creation of reciprocal mentorship programs has emerged. This differs from the traditional model because of the horizontal approach taken (figure 2). In some literature this type of a relationship is also called information seeking.

**Figure 2:** Reciprocal Mentorship Model

In the reciprocal programs, mentors and mentees are seen as equals, with both having something to contribute to the relationship. This reciprocal relationship provides the opportunity for both individuals to contribute equally to the relationship (Rabionet, Santiago & Zorilla, 2009). A complimentary model is the model of information seeking (figure 3).

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\(^7\) Formal mentoring is a systematic set up where organizations match individuals to mentorship relationships. It has been shown that formal mentoring relationships are not as beneficial as informal relationships (Armstrong, Allinson & Hayes, 2002).

\(^8\) Informal mentoring relationships occur naturally between individuals. These relationships typically have more successful outcomes, as individuals are attracted to each other initially (Armstrong, Allinson & Hayes, 2002).
Information seeking comes from the idea that both mentors and mentees experience the benefits of acquiring information. (Mullen, 1994). This model implies that the mentoring relationship provides valuable information for both parties. The information seeking model takes the focus away from the benefits of the relationship, and places importance on the information exchange. According to Mullen (1994):

This model takes a perspective that is novel, suggesting that besides serving as a source of developmental information for the protégé, the mentor may act as a seeker of information from the protégé as well. This indicated a delicate balance of information, each party holding unique information the other desires. (p.276)
This idea is complementary to the strengths perspective developed by Saleebey (2009), as well as the duality of structure model by Giddens (1984). Additionally, this relationship allows for growth in knowledge for both mentors and mentees, which may eliminate the termination of relationships based on social exchange. Ragins and Scandura (1994), found that the intention to serve as a mentor was positively related to expected benefits and negatively related to the expected costs. Therefore if both mentor and mentee are actively working towards an increase of knowledge, there is less likelihood that one individual (historically the mentor) feels that she/he is giving more than she/he is receiving.

*Group Mentoring*

Group mentoring is a unique approach to mentoring that can also be viewed as a reciprocal relationship between individuals. Clifford (2003) speculated that a facilitated group-mentoring program would assist females to ease barriers in their careers. Due to the lack of females in leadership positions, and the perceived limitations with cross gender mentor pairing, women typically turned to peer mentoring or group mentoring (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Burke, McKeen & McKenna (1990) found that 83 percent of mentoring relationships they examined were same sex relationships; over 69% of these relationships were male-male. Benefits that have been attributed to group mentoring are as follows: a nurturing environment for personal growth, a safe place to disclose and work through individual issues, an increased sense of belonging, acknowledgment and validation, and progression through careers (Glass & Walter, 2000; Jones, Walters & Akehurst 2001; Wolak, McCann & Madigan, 2009). The use of group mentoring by women, would in theory spread limited resources to more women. There are many different types of group mentoring: peer, one-to-many, many-to-one, and many-to-many, as highlighted by Huizing (2012).
In New Zealand, a women’s networking organization developed a peer-mentoring program that was informally based. Participants did not develop a formal relationship with a mentor or mentee, but were able to use the expertise of each other in confidential meeting situations. Participants came and went to meetings as they pleased. The program was in operation for approximately 14 years, with participants attending regularly for approximately 4 years (Mitchell, 1999). The women who participated in the informal mentoring program indicated that the benefits of the group were the varied opinions, advice, inputs, and perspectives they gained from the many different participants. Furthermore, individuals indicated their reasons for leaving the group were a decrease in group size, and the receiving of support from outside the group. Participants in the group expressed that they enjoyed the program, but felt it needed more structure and rules for the group to function effectively.

**LAWS Mentorship Program**

As stated previously, the purpose of the LAWS pilot mentorship program is to assist with the preparation of women in leadership roles within sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy. The literature suggested that mentoring is one way to increase women in leadership positions (Cockburn, 2011; Mattila, 2010; Ragins, 1989). Mentoring programs for women need to start looking past what has historically been done, and work instead to intentionally enhance the strengths of its participants. The program in this thesis challenges the traditional model of mentoring by focusing on a strengths perspective and duality of structure framework using the reciprocal model of mentoring. As a shift has occurred from traditional to reciprocal, there has been less emphasis placed on the unequal power relations that frame the relationship; instead a greater focus is placed on providing opportunities for insight and growth, based on their strengths, for each other.
By structuring the pilot mentorship program around the six principles of the strengths perspective, I set out to facilitate personal and professional growth in our participants. Furthermore, placing emphasis on the strengths of individuals was meant to challenge both mentors’ and mentees’ practical consciousness\(^9\). In contrast to a focus on deficits, which is the naturalized approach, the strengths perspective will challenge their boundaries. As previously outlined, the strengths perspective takes the focus away from what an individual cannot do, and places focus on what she/he is capable of doing. In this pilot mentorship program for LAWS, I intended to uniquely develop the reciprocal model of mentoring (using these two frameworks) by using both one-on-one mentoring and group mentoring as its structure. The typical ‘formal’ one-on-one mentoring relationship occurred in the daily relationship between mentor and mentee. However, in order to eliminate the pressures potentially experienced within the social exchange theory, the program built in mandatory workshops that facilitated group mentoring. The group mentoring addressed how using the resources, previous experiences, and strengths of other people can further develop her/his inherent strengths. As well, in the reciprocal mentorship relationships, mentors and mentees were working with each other to further enhance their skills on a variety of topics during the workshops. As mentors and mentees worked together, they were helping each other to develop their skills through a variety of experiences. For example, perhaps the mentee had taken undergraduate courses in finance, whereas the mentor had limited experience in her/his career balancing budgets. This gave the mentee an opportunity to help share her knowledge with the mentor in a safe and encouraging environment, which helped the

\(^9\) Giddens (1984) notes that “practical consciousness consists of all things which actors know tacitly about how to ‘go on’ in the context of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression” (p. xxiii). In more simple terms, practical consciousness is the knowledge an individual has and uses on a daily basis. It is so “normal” that she/he does not even recognize it.
mentor further develop her/his financial skills and knowledge.

Overall, by building the program using a framework of the strengths perspective and duality of structure, I was taking the focus away from the social exchange theory and placing greater focus on the strengths of both the mentor and mentee. This shift in thinking was expected to challenge the practical consciousness of many of the participants. By challenging their practical consciousness, I was creating ‘knowledgeable’ individuals who have the capabilities to affect the structures that allowed them to get to where they are today.

*Directional Proposition*

I expect that my assessment of the creation of the LAWS pilot mentorship program will support the combination of a one-on-one relationship and peer mentoring as an effective approach to this pilot. Both forms of mentoring have been documented as being successful approaches to advancing women in leadership positions. By combining these two approaches, I feel that both mentors and mentees will gain networking and technical skills. Furthermore, I feel that designing the program on the foundation of duality of structure and the strengths perspective will improve the quality of the mentoring relationships, and reduce unequal power relations. With a reduction of unequal power relations, I feel that the mentors and mentees will be able to have a more open and comfortable relationship with each other, as well as with other mentors and mentees.
Sub-Problem 2

What are the mentor and mentee perceptions of the pilot mentorship program?

The LAWS pilot mentorship program was evaluated partially based on perceptions of the program from the mentor and mentee perspective. Literature related to this sub-problem focused on formal and informal relationships, gender and mentoring, qualities in good mentors and mentees, and the benefits and outcomes of mentoring programs for the organization, mentor and mentee.

Formal and Informal Relationships

Mentoring relationships can either be formed through a formal program, or informally through a mutual connection between two people. Both of these types (formal and informal) have their benefits and drawbacks. Formal mentoring occurs when an organization identifies two people based on similarities in their interests and experiences, and facilitates a relationship between them (Kram, 1985). Formal pairings are often found in organizations where companies are looking to reduce turnover, and to mold junior personnel into lifelong employees (Block, Claffey, Korow & McCaffrey, 2005; Halfer, Graf, & Sullivan, 2008). Benefits linked to formal mentoring included conformation, acceptance, and feedback (Scandura & Williams, 2001), however these relationships were sometimes perceived as ‘forced’ (by both mentor and mentee), which may have decrease the effectiveness of the mentoring. Some mentees in formal pairings experienced anxiety, which decreased the benefits (Noe, 1988). Informal mentorship usually occurred when two individuals in a work setting (usually a superior and subordinate) created a mutual bond that turned into a relationship where counsel and advice could be sought freely (Armstrong et al., 2002). Informal relationships sometimes were perceived as voluntary, which may have lead to greater success (Scandura & Williams, 2001). Chao, Waltz, and Gardner
(1992) found that mentees who entered into informal relationships felt greater career related support than those in formal relationships. In both formal and informal mentoring relationships, the relationship may be very successful, and the mentee may experience career and psychosocial growth, or the relationship may be unsuccessful, often caused by personality clashes (Kram, 1985).

Formal mentoring programs have been used to examine ways to decrease the chances of mentors and mentees having personality clashes through a variety of matching procedures and tools. (Rose, 2003; Bower, 2008). For example, organizations have started to: utilize profiles to match the individuals (Australian Sport Commission, 2005), give mentees the option of mentor (Coley, 1996), and use scales such as The Ideal Mentor Scale (IMS)(Rose, 2003). All of these techniques are viable options for matching mentors and mentees; some are significantly more scientific, while others are less structured. Regardless of the scientific nature of the tool, what is most important is that both mentor and mentee share common interests and goals for the pairing, and share a similar set of attributes (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999).

**Gender and Mentoring**

Mentoring has been explained as important for men, but essential for females (Ragins, 1989). While there has been an increase in women entering professional jobs, few are actually making it to senior management positions (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990). Furthermore, women believe that there are more barriers for them to enter mentoring relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1991), which has been shown to be an accurate belief. Barriers women face when trying to enter a male dominated workforce that become relevant to a mentoring pairing, as stated by Bower & Hums, include: “exclusion from the old boys’ network, lack of female representation, not being taken
seriously enough, time spent at the workplace, and a non-female friendly environment” (2009, p. 4).

The majority of upper management positions are held by males, which therefore would require aspiring females to have male mentors. In a study of 510 individuals who reported having mentors, only 18 females, and 11 males reported that their mentor was a female. In Burke & McKeen’s (1997) study, they found that female mentees had no preference between male and female mentors. This goes against the majority of literature, which finds that cross-gendered mentor pairings are valuable, but have many barriers associated with them (Bower & Hums, 2009).

One of the large issues in cross-gender mentoring is the potential for sexual relations/involvement, or rumours pertaining to that possibility. Furthermore, these perceptions often restrict opportunities for the ‘friendship’ component of mentoring to develop, and also limit the opportunity for networking outside of the office environment (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). The rarity of incidences where a female is mentoring a male can potentially be attributed to perceived power and gender role expectations. In situations where a male and female have equal organizational position power, gender role expectations lead people to believe that the male has more power, which delegitimize the female’s power, which in turn makes her less desirable as a mentor (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990).

Qualities that make a good mentor and mentee

Just as we choose our friends based on compatible qualities and attributes, we must select a mentor or mentee in the same way. While there is some fluctuation in personally desired

10 Gender roles are defined as “A set of behaviour patterns, attitudes, and personality characteristics stereotypically perceived as masculine or feminine within a culture” (Gender Roles, 2013)
characteristics (i.e., a sense of humour), there are overriding qualities that are highly desired and actively sought when selecting possible mentors and mentees.

Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) suggested three general characteristics that are attributed to being a good mentor: age and experience, organizational position and status, and traits and abilities. Furthermore, in 2008, Bower examined successful mentoring relationships between females (N=480) in the health and fitness industry from the perspective of the mentees. In the study she examined ideal characteristics of mentors. She found 14 ideal characteristics of mentors as stated by their mentees: “knowledge of the field, provided feedback, genuine interest, role model, leadership qualities, personable, shared career advice, guidance/support, communication skills, encouraging, passion for the field, willing to share information, caring and challenge” (Bower, p. 7). The important information that these women reported was that their ideal mentors had characteristics that included both psychosocial and career functions. Kram (1983) derived two sets of mentoring functions: career and psychosocial. Career functions included: sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. Psychosocial functions included: role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship. Both sets of functions have value, and together, can create the opportunity for mentees to advance and learn in their career.

Just as important to the relationship, mentees must be examined for qualities that make them a good fit for mentoring relationships. Literature is much harder to find regarding qualities of a good mentee in comparison to a good mentor. Qualities listed by both mentor and mentee that were important for mentees to have were: “desire to learn, people-oriented, goal oriented, conceptual ability, and introspective” (Cunningham & Eberle, 1993, p. 58). Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) also addressed common attributes that can lead to quality mentoring
relationships: personality traits, caliber of mentee (potential for advancement), and gender.

Interestingly, Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) further explained that women are often too passive, and do not have enough faith in the mentoring process for it to be beneficial. However, Turban & Dougherty (1994) found that gender did not influence the initiation or the quality of the mentoring relationship.

**Benefits for the organization, mentor, and mentee**

Mentoring can be very positive for organizations, mentors, and mentees, none of which are mutually exclusive. All aspects of mentoring are interconnected; for example, a positive mentoring relationship can reduce turnover in an organization (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). However, it is important to outline the benefits that organizations, mentors, and mentees specifically receive.

Mentoring can help facilitate the development and continuation of organizational culture and common values of an organization (Wilson & Elman, 1990). Furthermore, literature shows that mentoring programs can be useful for increasing the female presence in an organization (Bower, 2008; Bower & Hums, 2009; Burke & McKeen, 1997; Cockburn, 2011). However, when an organization has more men than women, the organizational culture tends to assume elements that favour the dominant gender (Bower & Hums, 2009; Gilbert & Rossman, 1992). This means that some mentoring programs may not facilitate the acceptance of women into these organizations. As outlined by Giddens (1984), individuals work within their boundaries; therefore, organizations that reproduce traditional gendered norms will continue to do so. This, in turn, produces an organizational culture that can be cold, masculine in its values, and uninviting to women. While mentoring can help organizations facilitate a good culture, it may also
reproduce a poor culture. It is essential that individuals offering mentorship programs examine their process for delivery and evaluate how their program is affecting mentees.

Burke & McKeen (1997) found in their study of 280 managerial women, that mentors provided three overall benefits to mentees: role modeling, career development functions, and psychosocial functions. Furthermore, Fagenson (1989) found that both men and women who had been mentored scored themselves higher than non-mentored individuals in: achieving more promotions, getting greater recognition within the organization, and greater job satisfaction. In a study by Campbell & Campbell (2000) they identified different benefits for both mentors and mentees. On average, mentors and mentees were able to identify a similar number of benefits for mentees. Benefits included: receiving advice, guidance and information, friendship, and support (Campbell & Campbell). However, when mentors and mentees were asked to identify benefits to mentors, 31% of mentees were not able to list a single benefit for the mentors (Campbell & Campbell). On average, mentees were only able to list 0.75 benefits per questionnaire in comparison to the 1.10 benefit per questionnaire given by mentors.

Benefits to mentors were listed as: “satisfaction with helping and developing relationships with students, and staying in touch with students” (Campbell & Campbell, 2000, pp. 522). Reich’s (1986) sample of managerial women, stated that benefits to the mentors included: improved performance of subordinates, awareness of others’ needs, satisfaction from helping others, improved managerial skills, and idea stimulation. LaFleur & White (2010) completed a meta-analysis on nursing literature surrounding the benefits of mentoring for the mentor. Their literature review showed that mentors and mentees had similar experiences in relationships, but mentors specifically identified benefits in four categories: positive impact on person or practice, personal satisfaction, professional success, and organizational and professional contribution...
(LaFleur & White, 2010; Nettleton & Bray, 2008). In regards to a positive impact on the person or practice, Dryer (2008) found that those individuals who had previously been mentored, found the most benefit when they themselves were a mentor. Furthermore, Wolak et al., (2009) found that mentors enjoyed being in relationships because they were able to teach and increase their knowledge base. Personal satisfaction was seen when mentors facilitated the development of another individual (LaFleur & White). Individuals who had been both a mentee and a mentor were documented as having greater professional success in relation to earnings, career satisfaction, and career success (Collins, 1994). Finally, mentoring can assist with retention rates. A decrease in turnover means a decrease in costs to the organization for recruitment of new individuals (Block et al., 2005; Halfer et al., 2008). Mentoring programs contributed to organizations and professions by retaining staff, and allowing them to be further educated.

**Directional Proposition**

I expect that my analysis of the perceptions of mentors and mentees from the LAWS mentorship program will align with the literature. Researchers in general seem to be in agreement about the benefits related to mentoring relationships. It will be interesting to see how the mentors and mentees respond to cross-gender mentor pairings. Literature reveals a slight negative view on cross-gendered relationships; it will be interesting to examine these relationships in a non-organizational situation. I used the Australian Sport Commission’s tool for matching participants; I am interested to see if this will work on a small pilot program scale.
Sub-Problem 3

What is the recommended mentorship program for increasing women in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy?

In order to provide recommendations from the pilot mentorship program, I must be able to effectively evaluate the program. Accordingly, I reviewed the history of LAWS in order to determine the goals and desired outcomes of the program. Furthermore, I examined multiple ways to evaluate programs in order to determine the best approach for the LAWS mentorship program. The following literature covers the history of LAWS, approaches to evaluation taken in mentorship programs, and my preferred approach to evaluation.

History of LAWS

LAWS was incorporated in 2004, after previously being known as Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) and County of Essex Women in Sport (CEWS). The organization came together after key individuals noticed that while there was an increase in female athletes there was not a carry over into women taking on leadership positions in sport and recreation. (LAWS, 2012). Since 2004, LAWS has run multiple programs and events, the most successful being Girls In Motion (GIM), Girls are Learning Sport (GALS) and a provincial conference titled ‘Empowerment of Females in Sport’. LAWS applied for and received a two-year trillium grant in May of 2011 that allowed them to fund one individual as their project coordinator. This project coordinator was hired to increase the capacity of LAWS and its presence in the community.

On the website, LAWS lists its mission as: “to provide leadership, education and support to create equitable opportunities for females in sport and recreational physical activity over a lifespan” (LAWS, 2012, para 4). The website further goes on to explain that their vision is: “to
provide all females in our community with equitable access as participants and leaders in sport and recreational physical activity, both locally and beyond the boundaries of Essex County” (para 5).

Program Evaluation methods from other mentoring programs

An important part of any program is the evaluation process that is completed during and at the completion of a project. There are multiple ways to evaluate a program, as I have seen through an examination of mentorship programs that have gone through such processes.

The Wellington Centre (2012) evaluated the Women and Mentoring Program, which was a program that was created in 2009 to support women faced with a criminal offense. An evaluation framework was created that focused on: the overall pilot program, program implementation, and program outcomes. Within these areas, there were specific questions asked to gain a complete understanding of the program. They acquired the data through the use of 10 semi-structured interviews and 2 group discussions. Following the analysis of the data, they provided a document that included findings and areas of improvement for all three sub-questions.

The National Center for Women and Information Technology (2011) created an evaluation document for organizations to evaluate their mentorship program. This process of evaluation included formative evaluations and summative evaluations. Formative evaluation is defined as: “information that is collected during the course of the mentoring program and will be used to help improve the program” (p. 3). Summative information is collected at the end of the mentoring program and will be used to determine whether or not objectives of the programs were met. The authors of this document highlighted that you do not have to complete both types of evaluations during one program. If a program is in its early stages, the organization may be more concerned with formative evaluation, while a more mature and stable program may be more
concerned with summative evaluations. Regardless of the type of evaluation completed, the document suggests a few areas where information could be gathered: descriptive statistics, characteristics of mentor-mentee relations, program goals, program process, and participant experience.

The Coaching Association of Canada created ‘We Are Coaches’, as an initiative to increase female coaches in community sport. This program ran a pilot program starting in 2006 and finishing in 2008 (Demers, 2009). This program distributed surveys to its participants six months after each training session was completed. A total of 884 women had participated in the coaching training, and at the date of publication, the researchers had only received 91 returned surveys. Of the returned surveys, they indicated that 63% of individuals decided to become community level coaches, and another 11% took on a different responsibility in sport. The end of the report included suggestions for the next stage of the program, however no suggestions were provided to address the low return rate for the survey. While this may have been considered the best approach for this program (they were looking to see whether or not women pursued coaching after the training), it may not be the best approach for other programs.

*Evaluation using Process and Outcome measures*

Grossman (2005) in his book, *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, discussed evaluating mentorship programs by using process and outcome measures. Process measures refer to describing the program’s actions, while outcome measures refer to effects of the program. These are both important areas to look at when evaluating a project, as each one contributes towards answering a question all stakeholders want to know: the program’s impact.

There are two questions frequently asked when stakeholders are inquiring about process measures. First, what exactly is the program as experienced by participants? This is an important
question to examine as our desired outcomes as program creators do not always match the realities of the program. Furthermore, this helps us in determining whether or not we recruited the appropriate people, had the best structures in place, and whether or not all components of the program happened (Grossman, 2005). Secondly, stakeholders are curious to know how ‘good’ the relationships were that formed during the program. This is important for program designers and stakeholders, as the quality of the mentoring relationship often plays a large part in the perceived outcomes of the relationship. When trying to answer this question it is key to look at the match between the mentor and mentee, and to assess how effective they found the content (i.e., workshops) of the structured program.

Outcome measures “must be concrete, measurable and likely to change enough during the study period to be detectable” (Grossman, 2005, pp. 257). As he states, it is important that outcome measures represent a testable measure. Depending on the program goals, one must delve deep and determine what testable variables best answer the program’s goals. I feel that Grossman’s (2005) approach to evaluation, process and outcome measures was best suited to the nature of the LAWS mentorship program. This evaluation procedure is best suited to the pilot mentorship program because aside from being a mentoring program evaluation technique, the components assisted me in the design of the program as well as provided me with a format for giving recommendations in moving forward. Based on both process and outcome measures, I was able to provide a quality evaluation, which would enhance the recommendations provided to LAWS.

**Directional Proposition**

I believe that Grossman’s (2005) approach to evaluation is an important foundation for evaluation and feedback to the organization. Based on my review of literature, I feel that he
provides the best approach for the LAWS mentorship program in its current state. The Grossman (2005) approach was created for the evaluation of mentoring programs specifically, however it also directed me to answer important questions in regards to the outcome of the program. By examining the process and outcome measures of the program, I will be able to develop a fuller understanding of the participants’ experiences and opinions, which I can then report to LAWS through recommendations for future consideration.
CHAPTER 3

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

In this thesis, I created, ran and evaluated a pilot mentorship program for LAWS. I created the pilot program, assessed mentor and mentee perceptions of the program, then evaluated and provided recommendations for the future of the program. In order to best interpret the data I collected, I believed that I should be close to my participants and engaged in as many aspects of the process as possible. For this reason I chose Kirby and McKenna’s (1989) suggested research method of participant observation. Participant observation as a research method was flexible and allowed for varying levels of engagement as both a participant and an observer. The optimal level of participant observer involvement falls somewhere between completely involved and non-interaction. For example, I was not able to be a part of each individual mentoring relationship but I was able to participate in the workshop presentations and networking sessions that occurred during the program. Based on Kirby and McKenna’s (1989) participant observer model (Figure 4) I would consider myself an active participant and a moderate observer.
Furthermore, Li (1981) described participant observation as: “a research method whereby a researcher assumes the role of a participant observer, and gathers data on a group or an organization through involvement in it” (p. 57). A participant observer is an active participant in the research she/he is doing, who then combines multiple ways of collecting data (e.g., personal accounts, surveys, document analysis, recording) and gives a full account of how participants make sense of their experiences.

This study was completed using three data collection styles: participant-observation, focus groups, and document analysis. These three forms of data were analyzed and then used to provide a comprehensive account supporting recommendations for future program development.

**Selecting Participants**

The participants (N=12) for this mentorship program were female undergraduate Human Kinetics students (n=6), and community specialists (n=6). I initially established a total target of 16 participants for the pilot mentorship program: eight female or male community specialists (mentors) and eight female undergraduate students (mentees). However, due to limited availability of mentors, the program ran with a total of 12 participants. The pilot mentoring program was intended to have two mentorship pairings in each of the health and wellness, and
media literacy sections and four mentor pairings in the sport and recreation category. However due to mentee interests, there final structure was five mentor pairings in health and wellness, one in sport and recreation, and zero in media literacy. Each participant engaged in 6 week pilot mentorship program, which included four communal workshops on varying topics, in addition to her/his personal mentoring relationship. The original plan for the program was for it to run over three months, however due to unforeseeable issues with securing mentors, the program start was delayed and thus was shortened substantially, since it needed to be completed before students (the mentees) began their exams.

*Mentee Recruitment*

The six female mentees for the pilot mentorship program were from the University of Windsor’s Kinesiology program and were in varying years and streams of the program. The recruitment phase for these individuals occurred following Research Ethics Board (REB) approval and was a singular phase.

Recruitment occurred by utilizing the e-mail database through the Department of Kinesiology. I created and sent an e-mail and flyer (Appendices A and B) to female kinesiology undergraduate students. Any female student who was interested in applying to be a mentee or looking for more information was asked to contact me using the e-mail address provided. Once the students e-mailed me, I replied by explaining the details of the program, answered any questions they had, and provided them with the mentee profile form to complete and send back. The reason for having University of Windsor Kinesiology students as mentees for the pilot program was to allow them to increase their knowledge of sport organizations, along with possible career opportunities available to them. Furthermore, using this cohort of undergraduate
students provided a large population of students who were easily accessible to me as the researcher.

*Mentor Recruitment*

In this program the mentors were individuals from Windsor-Essex County who were identified by LAWS as resources representing the following fields: sport and recreation, and health and wellness. The areas that the pilot program focused its mentor pairing on derived from the LAWS leadership focus diagram (Figure 5). The fields in this diagram were identified by LAWS as areas where they could have a great impact in the community, as well as those areas that had a visible minority of females present in the associated careers.

**Figure 5: LAWS Leadership Focus**
Following the completion of the mentee profile forms, the LAWS chairperson identified and invited specific individuals to join the pilot program because of their career success and promising practices\textsuperscript{11}. The LAWS chairperson e-mailed identified individuals (Appendix C) to explain the program and to express LAWS’ desire to have her/him be a mentor in the program. Following the initial e-mail the chairperson put the potential mentor and me in contact with each other to discuss the program details. The chairperson continued contacting community specialists until the majority of the positions had been filled. The chairperson and I continued to try and find community specialists to partake in the pilot program, however due to time constraints, I eventually continued with only six mentors.

\textbf{Procedures}

\textit{Matching}

Following the recruitment of mentees, each mentee was asked to fill out a profile of herself. The profile (Appendix D) outlined her past experiences in sport, desired career path, skills and attributes, and why she would like to be a mentee. Due to time constraints, individual mentors were sought to fill the desired occupations and fields of the mentees. Following their recruitment and agreement to participate in the program, mentors were asked to complete a profile that outlined their professional background and experience, skills and attributes, why they want to be a mentor, and desired future career or avocation growth (Appendix E). The mentors and mentees met at the first group meeting, which was initiated by the researcher. If the pair was not able to meet together during that time, then I met with the pairs individually in order to explain the program and the process.

\textsuperscript{11} Promising Practice refers to “an action, program, or process that leads to an effective and productive result in a situation” (Fels Research & Consulting, 2009, p.3)
Orientation

I facilitated the first official meeting between mentors and mentees in the first workshop. This orientation was held Friday March 1st, 2013. The purpose for having the orientation was to allow mentors and mentees to meet each other for the first time, to educate the group as a whole on the details of the program. During the first half of the orientation, I spoke briefly on details about and the reasons for running the pilot mentoring program. Following the explanation and signing of the consent forms, all mentor-mentee pairings who were present completed a mentoring agreement (Appendix F). This agreement outlined the goals the mentor and mentee had for the relationship as well as steps to help achieve those goals. Also included in the document was the time commitment agreed upon for their mentoring relationship. During the final half of the orientation, individuals participated in ice breakers, followed by a group networking activity. This group networking activity was where participants engaged in a discussion initiated by one of the conversation starters (Appendix G).

Workshops

Throughout the month and a half pilot mentorship program, there were four workshops delivered. Each workshop was 1 hour in length. LAWS initially identified the individuals who would facilitate these workshops prior to the creation of the mentorship program; however, due to unforeseen circumstances, some of the presenters had to drop out. Each of the workshops had a theme; the themes, presenters, and dates were as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Presenter:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;, 2013</td>
<td>Orientation, LAWS &amp; Networking</td>
<td>Meghan Roney (LAWS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 2013</td>
<td>Gender Issues in Sport</td>
<td>Marge Holman (LAWS &amp; University of Windsor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of March 22nd, 2013</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Meghan Roney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;, 2013</td>
<td>How to Hold Alternative Meetings</td>
<td>Sarah Woodruff Atkinson (University of Windsor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 2013</td>
<td>Systemic Barriers &amp; Issues</td>
<td>Meghan Roney (LAWS)-Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week of April 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 2013</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Meghan Roney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each workshop was broken down into four main components:

1. Presentation (20 minutes)
2. Activity/ Discussion (20 minutes)
3. Speed Networking (10 minutes)
4. Informal Networking/Group Discussion (10 minutes)

A community specialist delivered 2 of the 4 presentation segments of the workshops, and I facilitated the other two presentation segments. The topics of the presentations related back to key areas of concern being facilitated within the mentor-mentee relationship. Furthermore, the topics were all related to the sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy fields.

Following the presentation, mentors and mentees participated in a discussion relating to the topic presented. The discussions took approximately 20 minutes of each session and built on
the information learned in the presentations. These discussions allowed the mentors and mentees
to work together, discuss, and develop skills that were complimentary to their field.

Speed networking was an activity modeled on the practice of speed dating\textsuperscript{12}. During this 10-minute period, depending on the number in attendance, the group was divided into 2 or 3 smaller groups. The purpose of these quick sessions was to increase the number of connections each person made. The mentors were each in charge of their own group; the mentees then divided themselves equally (when possible) into the groups. It was suggested that the mentee not go to the group where her mentor was speaking. Each week, mentees were encouraged to join a group that had a different mentor. The speed networking occurred in all four of the workshops; this allowed all participants to interact and talk with each other. I provided conversation starters to my research assistants, who were recording the content of the discussion. These conversation starters were presented to the mentors and mentees as optional topics and ideas. The research assistants for this program were 2 volunteers. Each week that the program ran they attended the sessions and recorded the direction of the conversations during the speed networking sessions. The research assistants were trained to complete a one-page document (Appendix H) during the session. The training took place between the three of us, where one research assistant and myself had a discussion and the other research assistant recorded the pertinent details. Following the discussion I reviewed what the research assistant had recorded, and indicated where I would require more or less detail. Both research assistants underwent this training.

Finally, the last 10 minutes of each workshop involved informal networking/group discussion. During these final 10 minutes participants were encouraged to discuss things they

\textsuperscript{12} Speed dating is defined as “an organized social activity in which people seeking romantic relationships have a series of short conversations with potential partners in order to determine whether there is mutual interest (Speed Dating, 2012).
talked about during the speed networking, as well as speak one on one to anyone in the room. The purpose of this segment was to allow participants to further increase their networks.

*Mentor-Mentee Relationship*

In addition to the workshops, the mentor and mentee pairs had a relationship linked to the professional setting of the mentor during the pilot program. This relationship was unique to each pairing, and occurred in many fashions (e.g., in person, over e-mail, over the telephone). These relationships were documented using the mentorship agreement developed in the orientation workshop as well as through the completion of a weekly report. The mentor and mentee were required to complete a weekly report (Appendix I) that was submitted to me via e-mail. This report highlighted the meetings, deviations or amendments from the mentoring agreement, as well as what steps they took towards the completion of any goals.

*Data Collection*

*Participant-Observation*

The first research method I used was participant-observation. By being the creator and main facilitator of the LAWS mentorship program, I had the unique opportunity of being fully immersed in all aspects of the program (i.e., recruiting, matching, workshops, focus groups, and evaluation). This is important as Kirby and McKenna (1989) state that “direct participation and observation by the researcher is thought to provide meaning for the behaviours and attitudes expressed by individuals being researched” (p.76). During this research project, I participated as a participant observer in all workshops and served as the facilitator for all focus groups. This allowed me to observe the mentors and mentees interacting with each other, which provided me with important additions to the data acquired from focus groups and documents for analysis.
During the program, I recorded my observations and thoughts during each workshop by using a journal template (Appendix J). This journal template allowed me to record my observations and thoughts in a systematic fashion every time I held a workshop. I amended the journal after the first workshop as I required additional space to record any interesting content or ideas that came from the group discussions. I was able to record my observations and thoughts during the presentation aspect of the workshop. However, during the speed networking and group discussion segment I was helping to facilitate and participate in conversations; therefore I was only able to record quick notes during these sessions. Immediately following the workshops, I recorded the rest of my thoughts using my notes as a guide.

I recorded my conceptual baggage\(^{13}\) (Appendix K), including my thoughts occurring outside of the program on an ongoing basis as I worked through the remainder of my thesis, the program and my data. This information provided important and insightful material that added to my understanding of the data and research process (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). This type of journaling allowed me to write down any ideas I was having as I read additional information (related or unrelated) and also allowed me to express my challenges with the process. For example, as I was working through matching my participants, I noticed that no one had expressed an interest in the media field. This made me wonder if the reason females are not pursuing careers or an avocation in the media field is because at a younger age (before university) they are being discouraged from participating or exploring this career option. This reflection made me question whether the pilot mentoring program should be offered to even younger females in high school in order to give them exposure to careers in the media field prior to them making academic decisions for their futures.

\(^{13}\) Conceptual baggage as defined by Kirby and McKenna (1989) is: “a record of your thoughts and ideas about the research questions at the beginning and throughout the research process” (p. 32). This gives me, as the researcher, an opportunity to express my biases and personal assumptions about the topic.
Focus Groups

I conducted focus groups at two points during the program. Focus groups, according to Krueger & Casey (2009), are used to listen, share, and gather information in an environment that allows participants to feel safe and encouraged to express their personal opinion without being ostracized or judged. Krueger and Casey further explain that the ideal number of participants per focus group is 5-10 people. The focus groups conducted in my study was anticipated to contain six people each, however on average, there were 4 participants. There was a total of four focus groups: mid-point focus groups for mentors, and for mentees; and focus groups at the completion of the program; one for mentors, and one for mentees. The reason why I broke up the mentorship pairings to complete the focus groups was to get a candid evaluation of the current mentoring relationships and the program. It is my belief that in some situations the presence of certain individuals (usually those in a position of power over others) can affect responses. Therefore, I tried to eliminate this as a possibility and separated the mentors and mentees for the focus groups. Using an online scheduling tool, I worked with both the mentors and mentees to schedule times for the focus groups that would allow for the greatest attendance. Focus group times were picked that worked for the largest number of participants.

All focus groups were approximately 40-60 minutes in length. I conducted my focus groups on Fridays, as this kept them consistent with the planned workshops. The focus groups occurred in the Human Kinetics building in one of the seminar rooms. All focus groups were recorded and then transcribed. Due to the small size of the focus groups I was able to differentiate the voices of the mentees and mentors based on my familiarity with them. During the focus groups I was aware of participants’ body language and monitored when they were

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14 While ideally, I would be able to have all mentors and mentees present for the focus group sessions, working professionals and students do not have completely flexible schedules. Therefore, concessions were made to have as many in attendance as possible.
indicating that they were feeling uncomfortable due to a topic; for example, some mentees indicated feeling uncomfortable when I asked them to talk about the state of the relationships. Furthermore, mentors seemed hesitant to provide constructive criticism when asked. I also took short notes that accompanied my transcribed data for analysis. By having two sets of focus groups I had the ability to alter and/or assist any relationships that may have not been fully positive or beneficial to the individuals involved after the mid-point of this pilot program. When completing the mid-point focus groups I did not notice any relationships that needed assistance, however I was able to alter the final workshop based on feedback received from the mentors. A final list of focus group questions for both the mid-point session and final session is provided in appendix L; these were altered from their original state after feedback from the mid-session focus group.

Document Analysis

The systematic review of documents generated in the mentoring program by its participants were analyzed throughout the study. Throughout the duration of the pilot program, I also collected and analyzed documents that were directly related to the participants and the LAWS mentorship program; this aligned with Kirby and McKenna’s (1989) suggestion of bringing together different sources of information to better understand what you are studying. In order for me to familiarize myself with all aspects of the LAWS mentorship program, I used mentor and mentee profile forms, the mentoring agreement, and the weekly reports they submitted to further immerse myself in the program, and to understand my participants and their progress. I also reviewed weekly the speed networking content collected by my research assistants.

1. Mentor and Mentee Profiles - As stated previously, these documents were completed prior to
the beginning of the program. I reviewed the mentor and mentee profile forms at the beginning of the program in order to familiarize myself with my participants.

2. The Mentoring Agreement - This document was completed in the first workshop, and outlined the mentors’ and mentees’ goals for their relationship during the mentorship program. These documents, in combination with weekly reports allowed me to track the progress of the mentors’ and mentees’ goals.

3. Weekly Reports - The weekly reports were submitted to me each week via e-mail by the mentor and mentee (one document per pair). These documents contained a summary of their meetings during the week, what they accomplished, and what goals they set for the following week/next meeting. These documents helped me track the relationship throughout the duration of the program.

4. Speed Networking Content - During the speed networking events in all workshops, I had 2 volunteer students scribing the discussion. The students were asked to take notes during each rotation in order to capture what was said during each session. It was expected there would be quality information exchanged during these times, and I wanted to have notes on the content discussed. The research assistants were asked to complete a one-page document during the session. These one-page documents were compiled and typed into a summary document, and then analyzed for themes.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the participant observation, journaling, focus groups transcriptions, and documents for analysis (mentoring agreements, mentoring profiles, weekly reports and speed networking content) was collected and used to analyze and address each of the
three sub-problems. A detailed description follows of how each methodology was analyzed and used to answer each sub-problem.

Data collected using the journal template, speed networking form, and focus group audiotapes was first typed and saved as password protected word files. Once this data was transcribed it was analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive coding on a thematic basis. I coded the information based on pre-existing themes drawn from the review of literature, as well as emerging themes that provided additional insights on the sub-problems. I initially coded the focus group transcripts based on any idea put forth; I then collapsed related ideas into ideas until I established themes. I selected this approach to allow myself some freedom while examining my data, but also to look for themes that helped me to answer my sub-problems in relation to the existing literature. Themes that I looked for in my data included but were not limited to: same-sex vs. cross-sex relationships, the structure of the program, and the matching process.

During the coding process, I also used memos to add depth to my personal notes and to my data. Taking memos is the process of further explaining a code, or why a certain passage has been coded into that theme (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). These memos were used in addition to my journaling to provide a fuller understanding of how I interpreted the data as the analysis progressed. For example, during the coding process for the first focus group’s transcripts I noticed that one of the mentees alluded to the fact that as mentees they may not have a good approach to initiating conversations with mentors they do not know. This memo led me to ponder and attempt to solve this problem for the future program.

The mentoring agreement, mentor and mentee profiles, weekly reports and speed networking content were analyzed based on the level of completion and content in the
documents. Content from the weekly reports was compared to the mentoring agreement forms. This allowed me to track the progress of the relationships in comparison to their stated goals at the beginning of the program. As I reviewed those documents, I took notes that I added to my personal journal on my feelings and understanding of the documents as they related to the sub-problems.

Sub-problem #1

*How is a mentorship pilot program created and deployed using the duality of structure and strengths perspective as its foundation?*

Personal observations and reflections from my involvement in the LAWS pilot mentorship program, combined with a systematic analysis of the duality of structure and the strengths perspective in this program, allowed for me to report on how a program is created and deployed using these two foundations. The results from this sub-problem, contributed to the recommendations provided in sub-problem #3.

Sub-problem #2

*What are the mentor and mentee perceptions of the pilot mentorship program?*

Data collection from the focus groups provided me with my data surrounding participant perceptions of the program. This data provided a full look at the mentoring relationships themselves, as well as how the mentors and mentees felt about the program.

Sub-problem #3

*What is the recommended mentorship program for increasing women in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy?*

After analyzing all of the data collected from the mentoring program, focus groups, and document analysis, I provided recommendations to LAWS regarding the mentoring program.
These recommendations may be taken into consideration and used for the development and deployment of the mentoring program in future years.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

1. *A delimitation of this study is the hand-selection of mentors.*

The Chair of LAWS and I decided to hand-select mentors for the pilot program due to the limited amount of time I had to run the pilot. The Chair and I were also looking for individuals who we knew were fully on board with the LAWS mandate, and who would be positive role models. This hand-selection of mentors allowed me to be more confident I could provide a quality experience. However, there are many other great mentors in Windsor-Essex county, and by delimiting the project this way, I eliminated the possibility of having other great mentors take part in our mentorship program at this time. It also limited the scope of the responses I may have received from data collection. Since these individuals are all currently in agreement on the importance of gender equity, I will not be able to generalize my results to all community specialists.

2. *This study will be delimited to only include three broad categories: sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy.*

The professions of mentors selected for the pilot program does not completely cover the scope of all the fields related to Kinesiology. In order to make the pilot program manageable and comprehensive, LAWS delimited the mentorship program to three target areas as their basis for mentoring relationships: sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy. While this is a fairly broad scope, the delimitation creates only pockets of data, which may not capture the breadth of opportunities in these fields, such as ergonomics, biomechanics and sports accountant. Furthermore, the scope of the research project was greatly limited by the interest levels of my
mentees. When the mentees applied to the program they indicated their area of interest, and what types of careers they were interested in looking towards in the future. As previously stated, I had no mentees who were interested in the media literacy component of this pilot mentorship program, which therefore restricted my project to only sport and recreation and health and wellness.

3. *This study will be delimited by the number of participants in the program.*

Due to the nature of the pilot, only 12 participants were selected to participate. This limited the number of people the program can reach in its pilot phase, and also imposed boundaries as to where mentor pairings could occur. When recruiting mentees, a possible limitation was that they all had the same interest, which made it difficult to provide satisfying and fulfilling mentoring relationships due to a limited number of available quality mentors in the Windsor Essex area.

4. *Research suggests that the barriers outweigh the benefits in cross-gender mentoring* (Bower, 2009). In this pilot study, the mentors (male and female) were selected by LAWS, which limited my opportunity to eliminate such a risk. However by including male mentors in my study, I was able to examine the workings of both same-gender and cross-gender mentoring relationships.

There was only one male mentor who participated in my research project. I was able to examine the relationship a bit more in the focus groups, however, having only one male-female mentor mentee pairing, did not allow me to assess this question fully.

5. *This study was delimited to a length of six weeks.*

This pilot program, initially planned for 3 months was in the end limited to a month and a half. This greatly affected the amount of times my mentors and mentees were able to interact with
each other. Research has shown varying lengths of time are needed for establishing mentoring relationships, and this short time period may, in the end have affected my data. For example, some mentoring relationships were extremely slow to start due to the mentors being away for work related commitments. These relationship may not have been as strong as other pairings who were able to meet consistently over the six weeks.

6. My choice of research approach delimits my research. My role as a participant and observer in this research project, along with my previous experiences and beliefs affect my interpretation of the data.

Due to my heavy involvement as the program designer, and participant and observer in the entire project, I without a doubt have influenced the project as I went along. As previously stated, I addressed this by accounting for my conceptual baggage through my personal journaling in the data analysis.

7. A delimitation of this research project is the use of only Kinesiology undergraduate female students.

This delimitation may have limited my research in multiple ways. First, this thesis involved self-selection of mentees to volunteer. This would have biased my data as people with passive traits, generally are not as forth coming in regards to volunteering. Additionally, the delimitation of Kinesiology students may have limited interested parties from other faculties from participating. For example, while kinesiology may not attract many media related students, departments such as communications may have more individuals interested in sport media.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Results presented in this chapter have been collected during the pilot mentoring program using three sources - participant observations, focus groups, and document analysis. I begin this chapter by reflecting on the data collection process, followed by a complete look at the mentoring pairs that participated in the pilot program. The rest of the results sections will be broken down based on the sub problems and the data required for each. These results will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5, in order to answer my three sub-problems and to provide ideas for future studies.

Reflections on Data Collection Process

Participant-Observation

During this pilot program, participant observation has been an important part of my data collection. By operating in this role, I was able to look at the program from my own perspective, but also as if I were participating in certain aspects of the program. During this research program, I was the sole organizer of the pilot mentoring program, which required me to attend all group workshops and focus groups. This allowed me to take a critical look at how I planned the program, and how, when facilitated, it actually ran. This position also allowed me to observe the mentors and mentees together, which gave me insights into their relationships. Moreover, by being so heavily involved, I experienced any frustrations the mentors or mentees had along with them, allowing me a different perspective than if I were solely the program designer.
Document Analysis

The document analysis portion of my research project provided varying results. Some of the documents were not as useful as I had initially intended them to be, or thought that they would be. For example, the mentoring agreement form, while important to the mentoring relationship, did not provide me with as much useable information as I thought it may have. On the other hand, the mentor and mentee profile forms provided great insight into the beliefs of the participants at the beginning of the program. These results will be further discussed in this chapter.

Mentoring Profile Forms

The mentor and mentee profile forms were very useful for both my research and for the program itself. The mentor and mentee profile forms allowed me to best match, or seek a match for the mentee, while providing me with details about each individual. Furthermore, this provided me with a starting point on mentors’ and mentees’ perceptions going into the relationship (i.e., the reasons for them to be a mentor/mentee give insight on what benefits they believe they will get from the program). I felt in general that these documents were very well completed; all sections for each individual were filled out, and adequate detail was provided.

Speed Networking Content

The speed networking content provided an interesting base of knowledge for me moving forward on what types of conversation topics allowed for optimal discussion between the mentors and mentees. The content recorded by my research assistants was detailed and comprehensive based on my personal auditory observations while moving around the room. In general I felt it was useful to track the types of conversation, however I would not suggest it be a
requirement of the program in future because it required a commitment of research assistants, and did not provide my research with much additional data.

*Mentoring Agreement Forms*

These forms proved to be somewhat useful for me in terms of my research, but extremely valuable in terms of the program itself. The documents did not provide much additional information, other than clear goals for both the mentor and mentee. However, the mentoring agreement form proved to be of assistance for the mentors and mentees when it came to detailing their relationship. In general, these documents were filled out somewhat adequately. The sections that detailed the goals of both the mentor and mentee were completed in detail, however the section on establishing agreed upon meeting times was not completed on the majority of forms. I believe this was due to the perceived flexibility of the program.

*Weekly Reports*

These forms provided me with a good understanding of where the mentoring relationships were going, and what was being achieved. These documents provided me with tangible proof that the mentors and mentees were meeting and working towards the completion of their goals as outlined in the mentoring agreement forms. In general, these documents were completed relatively well; some mentoring pairs included more details when completing them, however, all participating pairs provided weekly reports for the weeks that they met.

*Focus Groups*

I conducted two mid-point focus group sessions during the month of March, and two final focus group sessions during the month of April. At the mid-point focus group sessions, I
had 5 of 6 mentees attend, and 4 of 6 mentors attend. Despite my efforts to get all individuals together at the same time through the use of an online schedule tool, I was not able to do so. In turn, I picked the best date for the majority of participants. The aim of the mid-point focus groups was to understand how the process had been going thus far for participants. The same focus group script was used for both the mentor and mentee mid-point focus group questions, however a few different unscripted probes, and topics worth discussing came up in each of the sessions. By the time I conducted my final focus groups I had one mentor pair formally withdraw from the program, and another pair who failed to respond regardless of my constant attempts; this left my focus groups with small numbers. The final mentee focus group had 4 of 4 attend, and the mentors had 3 of 4 attend. The aim of the final focus groups was to confirm some of the material brought forth in the mid-point focus groups, and to also discuss the program as a whole as well as to provide suggestions and recommendations for moving forward.

General impressions of the focus group process

In general, the focus groups proved to be a good source of information for sub-problem #2 as well as providing addition ideas for recommendations. During the mid-point focus groups I did notice a difference between the focus group with the mentors versus the mentees. I had a much better and easier flowing discussion from the mentees in comparison to the mentors. I am not sure why exactly this was, but in order to get the mentors to talk I had to do significant probing and encouragement. The mentees seemed to understand the necessity for the focus groups both in terms of my thesis as well as the functionality of the program. This, in turn, made me feel that the quality of the conversation and information I gained from the mentees was more accurate and honest than the mentors. The final focus groups seemed to have equal participation from both the mentors and mentees. The mentors were much more engaged and receptive to this
focus group than in the mid-point session. The conversation flowed much easier, and I sensed that the content they provided was honest and accurate. The entire process of doing the focus groups provided some interesting challenges when it came to scheduling. For example, no matter how far in advance I informed people of the focus groups, and regardless of how much flexibility I gave them in regards to times, some individuals were not accommodating in any fashion. Overall, the focus groups provided me with good information regarding the perceptions of the program, and also ideas to use for recommendations and the program in the future.

**Mentoring Pairs Profiles**

In order to enhance understanding of the mentor pairings in my research study, I created mentoring pair profiles as seen below. Individuals are referenced throughout the remainder of the research paper in keeping with their place within the mentor pairing (i.e., Mentor #1, Mentee #2). I included five mentoring profiles in the following pages. By the end of the program I had only four mentoring pairs that completed the entire program. I have included the profiles of the pair that withdrew (with permission) as they withdrew after the mid-point focus group, and the mentee participated in discussion during the focus group session.

**Mentoring Pair #1 (Sport and Recreation)**

*Mentor #1:* This individual has been an Athletic Therapist for 25 years in multiple University sports. He wanted to become a mentor to help others gain experience in the field and to allow them to see what is involved in a career in Athletic Therapy.

*Mentee #1:* This individual is a 2nd year Movement Science student. She is interested in becoming an athletic therapist, and wanted to become a mentee because she has never had the
opportunity to be mentored by anyone before. She also felt that this experience could help her in her future schooling towards becoming an athletic therapist.

*Mentoring Pair #2 (Sport and Recreation)*

*Mentor #2:* This individual has been a Campus Recreation Manager for 20 years. She aspires one day to become an Associate Athletic Director at a University. She was interested in becoming a mentor to encourage and assist more females to assume leadership roles in recreation.

*Mentee #2:* This individual is a 5th year Sport Management student. She is interested in the broad field of recreation, and wanted to become a mentee in order to learn skills, receive advice and have the opportunity to network with individuals in the sport and recreation field. She also feels that building a close relationship with someone in the sport and recreation field could help her as she begins her career.

*Mentoring Pair #3 (Health and Wellness)*

*Mentor #3:* This individual is a physiotherapist who has had 27 years of experience in orthopaedic physiotherapy, including treating elite athletes (University, OHL, Professionals, and Olympic). She was interested in becoming a mentor because she wanted to pay back the experiences she has had being mentored by “brilliant physio’s”.

*Mentee #3:* This individual is a 2nd year Human Kinetics student, who is interested in a career in either physiotherapy or athletic therapy. She wanted to become a mentee because she feels that it provides the opportunity to talk one-on-one with professionals in the health and wellness field. She was also interested in determining the right pathway for her future career.
Mentoring Pair #4 (Health and Wellness)

Mentor #4: This individual is a Health Promotion Specialist and has been for the last 5 years. She was interested in becoming a mentor to help young females with career aspirations and professional opportunities. This includes helping her mentee make good professional career decisions.

Mentee #4: This individual is a 3rd year Movement Science student, who is interested in careers in public health and health promotion. She was interested in becoming a mentee to be exposed to health promotion in a “realistic and applied” setting. She felt that this exposure would help to determine what her future career path would be.

Mentoring Pair #5 (Health and Wellness)\textsuperscript{15}

Mentor #5: This relationship terminated prior to the mentor providing me with a mentoring profile.

Mentee #5: This individual is a 4th year Movement Science student interested in a career in Health Promotion specifically related to young children. She was interested in becoming a mentee because she was looking forward to having the opportunity to learn from professionals and perhaps improve her resume. She also felt that the mentoring program could help expose her to different career paths she may not yet know about.

Sub-Problem #1

In the first sub-problem, I explore how a mentorship pilot program is created and deployed using the duality of structure and strengths perspective as its foundation. Using my personal

\textsuperscript{15} This relationship terminated part way through the program, however the mentee participated in the mid-point focus group, which is the reason this profile is still left in.
observations, written notes, and active engagement in the program throughout its duration, I was able to analyze how the program was created and deployed.

This mentoring program was built on a strengths perspective within a duality of structure framework. As stated previously in the theoretical framework section, duality of structure states that rules and resources (structures) shape people’s (agent’s) practices, and that people’s practices usually reproduce rules and resources (Giddens, 1984). Furthermore, the strengths perspective has six key principles that I used to created and deploy the mentorship program. The principles are as follows:

1. Every individual or group under discussion has strengths;
2. All challenges have also been opportunities to develop strengths;
3. The upper limits of growth are unknown;
4. We best help individuals by collaborating with them;
5. All environments are full of resources, and;
6. Our relationships must include caring, caretaking and context (Saleebey, 2009, pp. 15-18).

Based on these six principles of the strengths perspective, and rules and resources, I have analyzed the program, and therefore am able to comment on the creation and deployment of the program.

The overriding framework for the program, as stated above, was duality of structure. Recognition that rules and resources are shaping people’s actions and perspectives was considered through the creation of all documents, as well as the deployment of the program. For example, while trying to instill the fourth principle of ‘we best help individuals by collaborating with them’, I made sure to create all documents that the participants had to complete with
sections for both mentor and mentee goals. The following strength perspective principles were all incorporated into the program, within a duality of structure framework.

The first strengths principle is, “every individual or group under discussion has strengths.” I was able to build this idea into the program through the creation of the mentoring agreement, the mentoring profile form, as well as the speed networking sessions. When the mentor and mentee first met to complete the mentoring agreement, I included a section for both mentor and mentee goals. Furthermore the mentoring profile form was created to have the mentors and mentees speak about what skills or attributes they could contribute to the mentoring relationship. By requiring them to think about their strengths, how they could contribute to their relationship, and what they wanted from the program, I believe I created a welcoming environment for everyone to contribute. Furthermore, when I led the first workshop session and informed participants about the fine details of the program, I emphasized that my intention for the program was to be a reciprocal program (tied to principle four) and that I believed everyone in the room was able to contribute to the program in their own unique way. Throughout the program, as I was receiving and reviewing weekly reports from the mentors and mentees, I was able to point out positive things that certain pairs were doing; this further emphasized my focus on a strengths approach.

The second principle of the perspective is “all challenges have also been opportunities to develop strengths.” I was able to incorporate this principle through the facilitation of discussion sessions at the workshops. When I was creating the program, I intended for the presentation sessions to be learning opportunities for both the mentors and mentees. Throughout the program, mentors and mentees were invited to participate in discussion following a short presentation, as well as to participate in networking sessions. During these conversations, topics relating to
challenges individuals had experienced in the workplace arose; I attempted to direct the conversation in these instances to talk about what they learned in the situation and how it had, or would, help them in the future. For example, the final workshop was an open forum for discussion of ‘case studies’. I asked the participants to prepare a case study of a situation they had encountered either in work or school, or come with questions that they could ask the rest of the group. This facilitated discussion on topics including; sexual harassment, working in a union environment, and dealing with conflict between employees. These discussions allowed both mentors and mentees to present challenges that they had faced, and to explain how they were able to overcome them, in turn assisting the other group members by sharing their stories.

The third principle of the perspective is “the upper limits of growth are unknown”. This principle was a little more difficult to build into the creation of the program as well as the deployment of the program. The way I framed this perspective was to allow the mentors and mentees to dictate the bounds of their relationships. When I asked the mentors and mentees to be part of the program, I stressed that aside from the four mandatory workshops the rest of the relationship was to be determined by the mentor and mentee. By allowing the participants this freedom, I was not dictating what I believed their “upper limit” should be, but rather gave them the option of meeting as frequently or as little as they wanted. Furthermore, when the program started I stated that once the pilot mentoring program was completed, the relationships could continue if both parties agreed. During the program itself, I attempted to remove my bias from the workshop presentation discussion by allowing the discussions to flow. Not suggesting questions, or providing talking points, I allowed the participants to direct and lead the conversation. This removed my perceptions of their “upper limits” tied to the conversations, letting the participants create their own limits.
The fourth principle of the strengths perspective is “we best help individuals by collaborating with them”; this principle was the basis for the entire creation and deployment of my program. When creating the program, I had to determine the type of relationship I wanted participants to experience; this perspective was one of the reasons I selected the reciprocal model of mentoring. The traditional model of mentoring (top down approach) does not allow for collaboration with an individual, but in fact would create a system of mentoring on the mentee. The reciprocal mentoring approach supports the mentor and mentee working with each other, and encourages them both to contribute to the relationship. When the mentors and mentees were required to complete the mentoring agreement form, I included boxes for mentor and mentee goals; I was building in the values of the program by allowing both individuals participating to have goals moving forwards. To support the mentoring agreement forms, the weekly reports allowed for both mentor and mentee to comment on how they took steps towards their stated goals, as well as next steps they could take to achieve those goals. Throughout the workshops, I encouraged both mentors and mentees to participate in group discussions. Furthermore the facilitation of the speed networking was supposed to allow an opportunity for both mentor and mentee to share information and network with each other. In the end, the speed networking sessions seemed more directed towards the mentees than the mentors, however, focus group results showed that the mentors still benefited from the sessions and enjoyed hearing the mentees’ experiences.

The fifth principle of the strengths perspective is “all environments are full of resources”; this principle ties closely into duality of structure (resources). This principle was also a strong basis for the creation and deployment of the pilot mentorship program. Just as I believe that all individuals have strengths, I believe that all environments are full of resources. Through the
creation of the program, the initial plan was to have mentors apply to the program, however
given the nature of the pilot, mentors were sought from the community by the Chairperson of
LAWS and myself. Taking this approach, we drew upon our resources, our connections. We
contacted key people with whom we have had positive experiences in the past who we believed
would be supportive of our initiative. Furthermore, we asked other key individuals (i.e., my
Master’s supervisor) to recommend individuals who would be good for the pilot program. The
second way I used my resources to create the program was through the securing of presenters for
my program. I used my knowledge and resources (connections) to secure excellent and
appropriate speakers for the workshops presentations. Throughout the deployment of the
program I used resources available to me as a graduate student at the University of Windsor. As
a graduate student, I was able to secure rooms to complete my workshops as well as my focus
groups. I was also able to secure thank you gifts (research day t-shirts) for the mentees of my
program. I purchased thank you gifts for my mentors using some of the grant money I received
to run this pilot program.

The sixth and final principle of the strengths perspective is “our relationships must
include caring, caretaking and context”. This principle was unconventionally built into the
program. Throughout the duration of the program I attempted to remain in constant contact with
my participants. I sent one e-mail per week so as not to overwhelm them with e-mails. This e-
mail contained housekeeping details (e.g. reminders to submit weekly reports), important
upcoming meeting dates, and general social banter. I always included a sentence that indicated if
they had any comments or questions about the program that they could contact me via e-mail or
phone (I provided my number in each e-mail sent to my participants). Furthermore, if I happened
to meet a mentee in the halls of the Human Kinetics Building I always said “Hello,” and asked
how things were going with the program. During the workshop presentations I also provided healthy food options (e.g. fruit), in case any participants attended without having a chance to eat breakfast or needed a snack. I believe that these small things allowed my participants to be more open, and comfortable with both the process of the mentoring program and myself.

**Sub-Problem #2**

In the second sub-problem, I documented mentor and mentee perceptions of the pilot mentorship program, then analyzed transcriptions from the focus groups. Using the mid-point and final focus group transcripts, I was able to analyze perceptions of mentors and mentees throughout the program. As indicated earlier, the purpose of the mid-point focus group sessions were to gather information on participant beliefs, and information regarding the process of the program. Furthermore, the final focus groups were intended to gather information and confirm some of the material brought forth in the mid-point focus groups, and to discuss the program as a whole, garnering recommendations for moving forwards. The mid-point and final focus groups were broken into a mentee group and a mentor group. Both groups were asked the same questions, with additional questions and probes used as required in conversation. The focus groups results have been presented as mid-point focus groups and final focus groups. All of the results have been framed around the question of “what are components required for a successful mentoring program”. This allowed me to break down the results into themes for both mentors and mentees, and to see what was different and similar about their results.

**Mid-Point Focus Groups**

The mid-point focus group results showed that in order for the mentee to have a successful mentoring program, they required the inclusion of components on career and networking. The mentors indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring program, they
needed to help the mentee and experience professional development. Furthermore, both mentors and mentees indicated that to have a successful program there needed to be: a mentoring agreement, an amended mentoring reporting system, mentor and mentee only sessions, program and relationship flexibility, increased length of program, and a mentoring relationship driven by the mentees’ goals. The only item that the mentors and mentees verbally disagreed on in the mid focus group session was the gendered nature of the relationships. Mentors felt that there should be cross-gendered relationships, and mentees felt that the mentoring relationships should be female-female.

**Mentee Success Themes**

Through systematic analysis of the results, two themes arose from the mentee mid-point focus groups. Mentees indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring relationship they needed career related information/advancement and networking opportunities. In regards to the career theme, one mentee indicated that ‘opportunities’ were important components; “opportunities too, like I know Dan* told me they are looking for athletic therapy assistants or whatever for the varsity teams next year… I probably wouldn’t have gotten to do that if I didn’t do this” (Mentee #1). Another mentee also explained that her mentor had begun to send her job opportunities, “…[she] has actually sent me some job opportunities because she knew that was what I was looking for” (Mentee #2). Additionally a mentee indicated that the career aspect also related to on the job experience and exposure that University students do not typically receive:

Yah, what I have noticed, um, is they are finding in the work place, at least at the, where she works, um, is that a lot of people come out of school and don’t really know anything

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16 Successful was not defined by each individual in the focus group, and thus may have been viewed in differing lights.
17 *Name changed
about the actual work force, so I think a lot of, I can’t speak for other mentors, but I feel like, they are trying to expose us to just what like a real work place, application stuff. I feel like that’s what they are trying to [do] expose us to what they really do, as opposed to a little more theoretical stuff. (Mentee #4)

At a later point in the conversation, it was suggested that the program be marketed with an emphasis on the career aspect: “I know a handful of people that would have done something like this, because they have no idea what they want to do, so they want to learn like more about stuff…” (Mentee #4)

One mentee encompassed both themes of networking and career into one of her responses: “Yah, I was going to say exposure … she has really exposed me to like the whole field, and like different careers in the field and stuff I didn’t know previously” (Mentee #4); she went on to explain that the ‘exposure’ part was also related to networking. This was not the only occurrence where the networking was tied directly to career advancement. Mentee #3 explained that she has got to “talk to a lot of people, even in [omitted] where she works, over e-mail, everything else, I have heard a lot of people’s perspectives and their opinions of going to into the program, and um, they just they had a lot of different ideas about how to go about it”. Mentees agreed that “just getting to know the people, like even though they may not be in my area, you never know who they know…or what they can offer you, and even advice, even just advice” (Mentee #2) was beneficial to their development. This idea was further developed by Mentee #3 who said “it’s always good to talk to people that are in like, have the same kind of overhead focus”.
Mentor Success Themes

The mentors of the program, indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring relationship they needed to help the mentee, and also experience professional development. Three of the four mentors present at the mid-point focus group indicated in some way that their main goal was to help their mentee in whatever way they were able, “I wanted to, um, see if uh, I could help a student in their uh goal of figuring out whether or not they want to become a physiotherapist, and if there was any way that I could um help enlighten them on the process” (Mentor #3). In a follow up statement, Mentor #4 indicated that,

when I was a student, I didn’t, other than physio, and chiropractics, you know kind of your stereotypical kinesiology jobs, what was out there. So I kind of wanted to go into that, or into this program for that reason, to open up people’s eyes as to what is out there.

In addition, Mentor #2 stated that one of her purposes was to “encourage more females to take on a leadership role”. This idea of helping their mentee to succeed both during the relationship and in life in general was seen at later points during the discussion as well. One mentor indicate that she is,

…kind of in it for the student, and I am seeing some benefits that I am getting back from it, but I am truly doing it to help, um Shelly\textsuperscript{18} develop as a professional working woman and give her the opportunities to see what is out there (Mentor #4).

Towards the end of the focus group session, another mentor indicated that the best experience she had thus far in the program was “just the feeling that I am helping her achieve her goal” (Mentor #3).

\textsuperscript{18} Name change
The second major theme that emerged from the mentors was the need for professional development as a component of the relationship. One mentor clearly spelled this out, while others discussed it in a less direct manner. One mentor specifically talked about professional development in terms of being a mentor,

…as a first time mentor it would be interesting to have a discussion on what other type of programs are out there…if there were some you know, a little bit of background as to successful programs it will save us a lot of time and be much more successful (Mentor #2).

Another mentor indicated that she was anticipating more professional development because the program: “[it] is a leadership program, so I thought there would be some leadership component” (Mentor #4), but also because the program was marketed that way to mentors (to be discussed further in the discussion section). Professional development was used as a partial justification for the mentor to get time off work to be in the program,

…so as mentors, so it would help us develop as professionals. So in the working environment, other than the networks that we are making, that was another component.

So that was partly how I was able to justify it, because this is work time for me… (Mentor #4).

The mentors also suggested that they were learning throughout this mentoring program, but not necessarily in the form of traditional professional development. Three of four mentors noted that they found themselves having to re-learn things they once knew, “sometimes when you have to verbalize what you are doing, because you are just so used to doing it, and it’s the verbalizing it. It’s a little bit like teaching yourself as well as the individual…” (Mentor #1). Another mentor
stated that the experience has “open[ed] my eyes a little bit, I haven’t thought what it’s taken to get into school in such a long time…it’s really made me stop and think about how our profession has changed” (Mentor #3).

**Strengths of the Program**

Mentors and mentees agreed that in order to have a successful mentoring program, the following things had to be in place: mentoring agreements, revised mentoring reports, mentor and mentee only sessions, flexibility, increased program length, and a mentee directed start. The mentoring agreement was something that both groups found to be extremely valuable for the purpose of knowing “their [mentee] needs and wants” (Mentee #3), “open[ing] the lines of communication” (Mentee #1), “knowing what you want” (Mentee #2), “the steps of how you want to get what you want to get done and how you want to get it done” (Mentor #3), and “to understand why we are doing what we are doing” (Mentor #4). Both groups came to consensus that this was a valuable document worth continuing into the future, and one mentee clearly stated “I don’t think you would be able to accomplish as much if you didn’t know what you were working towards” (Mentee #6).

Revised mentoring reports was also an item that both mentors and mentees suggested to help maintain a successful mentoring program. The mentors all agreed that the reports were good for “accountability just to make sure that it gets done, and you can actually measurably see what you have accomplished or haven’t, or at least you know” (Mentor #2). Both groups agreed that the document would be redundant if performed on a weekly basis if the program were longer. One mentee stated, “I feel like if it was any like if it was longer than 4 weeks or whatever, um, that it would be totally redundant, like I don’t think you would need it” (Mentee #3). When I
asked whether or not the reports would be valuable if the program was longer, Mentee #3 said “it would be totally worth it just to track what, how you have been going about things”. The mentors also expressed that they felt it would be beneficial to be able to keep a copy of all documents so they could review what they have done, or missed through the process.

Both mentors and mentees felt it would be important in future programs for there to be opportunities for mentor and mentee only group sessions. The mentees stated their reasons for wanting to meet with mentees was to get to know them; “…like she said, getting to know the mentees, like I don’t know what their interests are, and like even though it’s not part of the program, like I would kind of be interested [in] what they want to do, and what they want to get out of it too” (Mentee #3). When I asked her what would be a good process for this to happen she suggested,

at the very beginning, instead of having mentee-mentor, like meeting session, have all the mentees first, and we could have a discussion group, like go around and talk about like, ‘hey this is what I want to do, and this is what I am hoping to get out of it’, and then we would bring in the mentors, and then have this big group discussion (Mentee #3).

Following this suggestion, another mentee brought up the idea of the mentors doing the same, so they could get to know each other. The mentors seemed to want the opportunity to meet with only the mentors, but for different purposes. One mentor indicated that she would want to meet just with mentors so they could discuss, “what other types of programs are out there, like where there is [a] successful program on mentoring and leadership in different institutions or workplaces, or just as a model” (Mentor #2). Furthermore Mentor #2 stated that a benefit to having mentor only meetings was being able to brainstorm, share resources and help identify,
…some of the factors we need to work on, maybe what is your skill set required for your profession, what are the networking [opportunities], what is the professional development, and from each of us we can probably have some, some real good resources for each other, in that regards.

Furthermore, one mentor indicated that “if you network with other mentors and then you come across a student that seems to have an interest on that side of things, then that is someone you can touch base with, finding out if that’s really what they want to pursue” (Mentor #1).

Flexibility in the program and within individual relationships was cited as something extremely important to maintain when moving forward with the program. The mentees agreed that the flexibility in the program and in individual relationships helped. They indicated that if there was more structure that the relationship would “…just feel like, like an assignment instead of a relationship” (Mentee #2). They also felt that “if it is too structured…then you can’t like, they can’t really expand on anything like, they can’t if something just comes up out of the blue, like, they couldn’t introduce you to that, or whatever” (Mentee #4). The mentors also appreciated the flexibility in the relationship because “with everyone’s jobs, I think it’s a lot more unorthodox, it’s not necessarily 9-5, Monday to Friday” (Mentor #1). Furthermore, the flexibility of the program lets the mentor and mentee establish their own boundaries: one mentor was away but contacted her network of “physio friends” and introduced her mentee by e-mail, and explained that she may have questions for them. The flexibility also allowed the mentors some freedom when “things come up” or unanticipated opportunities arose for their mentee to gain experience.
As indicated the earlier program was cut short, which limited the amount of time that mentors and mentees had available. When both groups were asked what could be improved on in the program, they all stated time as the number one issue, and in the case of the mentees, the only challenge. Furthermore the restriction of time prevented some of the relationships from starting immediately when the program started. In the case of two mentoring relationships, the mentors were away for 1-2 weeks immediately following the start of the program due to work related commitments. In addition to increased time, mentors requested knowing about the program start date in advance, …if we found out this fall or even this summer that you were looking to do this next winter, we are more apt to be able to participate, because they would allocate that resources. As opposed to this year when we found out in January about it, and I was able to jump through hoops to make it happen, but I don’t know if that can always happen. So more notice would be good (Mentor #4).

Moving forward, increased program length and premeditated start dates would be advantageous to foster successful mentoring relationships.

Finally, both mentor and mentees agreed that for success in the mentoring relationship there was a necessity for incorporating mentee driven goals. These goals were the basis of the mentoring agreement that shaped the relationship each pair had. The mentees agreed in unison that the relationships were heavily mentee driven, but that the mentors put in substantial work as well, “I would say that it is mentee driven, but she has put a lot of work into it too, where, I was not exactly asking for all that she was putting into it” (Mentee #3). The mentees in general felt that “[the mentor] wants it to benefit me a lot more than I guess it would her. Because she wants,
I guess, [to] show me what is out there kind of thing” (Mentee #2). In addition, mentees agreed that the initial structuring of their relationships through the mentoring agreements were, “based off my interests and what I wanted to learn” (Mentee #4), “based off of what I wanted, more than what she wanted” (Mentee #2), “…what I expected” (Mentee #3), “just basic things, and then like if I had, I wanted to do more stuff, I could like, he was just really flexible with stuff” (Mentee #1). The mentors had similar opinions. When asked about the process of the mentoring agreement, they stated, “I kind of asked her what she was doing, and then I tried to see how that aligned with some of my goals as professional person” (Mentor #4), “…I asked her, her academic background, and what she anticipates with a career, and uh it’s kind of how we determined our goals” (Mentor #2), “similar, what are your goals, so let’s figure out what you have to do to reach those goals and how I can help you with that” (Mentor #3). Both groups indicated through their answers that they formulated their relationships based on the mentee’s goals, and then looked at what the mentor could contribute and assist with to achieve those goals.

Gender of the mentor

The final theme that emerged from the mid-point focus groups was the disagreement between mentors and mentees on the issue of same gender, versus cross gender mentoring relationships. The mentees took the stance that the relationships should involve the same gender, while the mentors believed that the relationship could be from either gender. The mentees were very strong in their beliefs that the program should be same gender relationships. The first mentee to bring up this idea stated that,

I think it would make more sense to have all female mentors if you are trying to get girls to be interested. If they are working with someone, like I am sure it’s great to have a
male, because you are still able to learn and get experience in the field, but to just be able to model off that person…” (Mentee #5).

She later expressed that she feels male mentors just “reinforce like the stereotype of men are powerful in this field”. This comment spurred a great discussion around this topic: one mentee (#3) said it did not matter to her, but that she got along better with the female in the clinic. Mentee #3 felt that,

when you are working with another female, it’s a lot more relatable, and so, it’s viewed as much more of a role model and how independent and strong they have become in their profession and like, you want to take after that, because like you kind of want to be as good as they are, and like, I think if you were working with a male, like I kind of feel it would always be intimidating…

Another mentee simply stated, “I think if you are trying to empower women, then they need to be mentored by another woman” (Mentee #4). It became very obvious that the mentees felt the best option for the program was to have female-female mentoring pairings. The mentors, on the other hand, felt that there was no harm in males mentoring females, and that in fact sometimes it is necessary, “I mean obviously if we want more females in dominant professions, then there aren’t very many females to be available to be mentors, then you are going to require that [male mentor]” (Mentor #2). Other mentors shared a similar sentiment,

I think you know, you expose them to the profession and they enjoy what they are doing, and hopefully they pursue it, so it doesn’t matter I think whether it is a female-female relationship or a male-female relationship in that regard…I treat a male mentee probably the same with regards to [the] profession (Mentor #1).
The mentors also expressed that a way to handle the situation of male-female mentoring in regards to males not being able to speak to female barriers, is to have sessions that address and educate young females on female specific topics.

Another mentor brought forth the idea that,

whether you are male or female, you could have children or not have children and you are a professional working and you are juggling a lot of the same things a lot of the time. So you know, maybe as we have some women barriers, or women issues we have to deal with, it can be brought up through presentations (Mentor #4).

It was clear that the mentors did not see an issue with males mentoring females, but they provided suggestions and ideas tied to education and awareness for females entering the workforce.

**Final Focus Groups**

The final focus groups were used to confirm some of the data found in the mid-point focus groups, as well as to delve into the components of the program in relation to the strengths perspective within a duality of structure framework. The questions for the final focus group were written to explore more deeply the components of the theoretical frameworks used in this project. Mentors and mentees were asked to discuss rule and resources, strengths, and the process of shaping that occurred. In addition to asking questions to answer the above stated topics, I also inquired once again about the topic of gender in mentoring relationships.
Formal and Informal Rules

Mentors and mentees were asked to verify the themes for a successful program that they presented in the mid-point focus groups. For the mentors those themes were professional development and the ability to help their mentee. For the mentees those themes were networking and career related aspects. Both groups confirmed that these were the two large components they required in order to have a successful mentoring relationship. Following their confirmation I asked them to brainstorm on rules and resource (both formal and informal) that would help foster these themes in the program.

The mentors suggested one formal and one informal rule to help them in achieving success in the program: a more formalized application process (formal) and a generic professional development series (informal). In regards to the application process, mentors felt that

…sometimes when people feel that they are paying into something, that there is more they are going to get out of it. And maybe by making this an application for whether it is a mentor/mentee, um, they may actually feel more invested in the program (Mentor #4).

Some suggestions on how the application process would work were also discussed. As the conversation developed, a clearer picture of what the mentors felt about an application process arose. Mentors felt that prior to writing the mentoring agreement form, the mentor and mentee should be able to exchange their goals of the program with each other; this would allow the mentors to be aware of what they were capable of helping the student achieve. Moving forward, the mentors suggested that they have a “standing” profile form that mentees could view to see what that specific mentor could contribute to their relationship. An additional suggestion put
forth by a mentor was to have “requirements” or “suggested background” that mentees should have if they are interested in pursuing a career or a mentoring relationship with that person: “I wonder if on our end, putting in sort of like a type of background the students should have…so maybe sort of the types of courses that are, or might fit with [the job]” (Mentor #1).

The second (informal) rule that the mentors suggested was a professional development series. As noted in the mid-point focus group, professional development for the mentor is an extremely important part of making the program successful for the mentors. One mentor suggested having “generic stereotype topics about, how to better yourself in the work place…something [the mentors can bring] back to their organization” (Mentor #4). This idea was further expanded with the suggestion that professors from the University of Windsor could speak on different topics, which would be beneficial to both the mentor and the mentee. It was also suggested that mentors who had experience in certain fields, for example, sexual harassment, or communication techniques, could provide the presentation as a “pay it back” aspect of the program.

Additional rules the mentors would like to see as the mentoring program evolves is the continuance of informality,

I like the informality in that we all have such busy lives and varying schedules and we are in town, we’re out of town and so that the informality in that we can choose to communicate via text, e-mail, or meet in person or you know, so that aspect of it I think is essential (Mentor #3).

This was highlighted at multiple points throughout the focus group in different contexts (see strengths below); for example, one mentor indicated that she believes the informality allows for
comfort on behalf of the mentees. An additional aspect the mentors are hoping to see as the program moves forward is a greater lead up time notice for the program. It was stated that larger organizations need to be able to plan for a program such as this, and therefore 4-6 months notice of the program would probably increase the likelihood that certain organizations and community leaders could participate.

The mentees, when asked to provide formal and informal rules to support their success theme in the program, suggested an in work placement of the program, as well as the development of additional communication techniques. Mentees suggested that if the program length were to be increased, a suggested minimum of in work placement hours be required, depending how long the program is, you could maybe have like I don’t want to say certain hours, but like, some sort of target in terms of like shadowing or um like having them do certain components of the job or something like that…not requirement, but like, standard that they could hit (Mentee #4).

This was echoed by other mentees who said, “you can only get so much out of sitting in one place and talking” (Mentee #3). However, the idea of a suggested requirement creates issues in regards to transportation. The mentees indicated in the final focus group that transportation could be an issue for mentees moving forward: “I feel like you need personally, I would have to have a vehicle because her office is in [omitted]” (Mentee #4), “I had to borrow a car to get there, and it’s not that easy” (Mentee #3, 04/05/13). This sparked a discussion surrounding the development of additional communication techniques. One mentee suggested the use of Skype in future relationships. The addition of Skype could potentially alleviate some of the issues surrounding transportation for the mentee.
Resources

Mentors and mentees alike were asked to discuss the resources they used and lacked in their mentoring relationship. Mentors indicated that they used a lot of communication resources (i.e., texting, e-mail, phone calls) in order to maintain their mentoring relationship. They were also able to use human resources to put their mentees in touch with other people who may have been able to provide them with a different perspective on the career, “I put her in touch with people she could ask pertinent questions to” (Mentee #3), “I let her shadow people who didn’t come from HK who did a PhD and who deal with stats…exposed her to different career paths to open it up, because she is only second year” (Mentor #4). The mentees discussed the issue of transportation again as a resource they were lacking that could be a potential issue in moving forward. Similar to the mentors, the mentees indicated that communication resources were the most highly used resource for them in the mentoring pilot program.

Strengths of the Mentors, Mentees, and the Program

Mentors and mentees were asked to speak about their strengths as a participant, their mentor’s or mentee’s strengths, as well as what they believed the strengths of the program to be. When I was analyzing these questions from the transcriptions I noticed that in general the mentors and mentees listed similar strengths. When the mentees were asked to speak about the strengths of their mentors, three major themes emerged: flexibility, knowledge, and resourcefulness. When mentors were asked to speak about their mentee’s strengths, their responses were categorized into two major themes: preparedness and professionalism. In addition to these traits, mentors and mentees were asked to discuss their personal strengths in their respective roles. Mentees believed their strengths to be flexibility, communication, and
eagerness. Mentors stated their strengths as resourcefulness, experience, and caring. In addition to all of the above listed strengths, the mentors and mentees were asked to discuss the program strengths. They collectively listed strengths of the program as: flexibility, education and learning, its existence, and open and dedicated mentors.

Flexibility as a strength of the mentors was highly rated throughout the entire transcript by the mentees, “she’s just open, and she’s flexible in a way that…is really good” (Mentee #3), “he is also flexible with when I go in there, and when I can” (Mentee #2), “she is just very open to meetings, like she, she is flexible” (Mentee #3). The idea of flexibility, a common trait between mentors and mentees as a positive quality of the program in the mid-point focus group, came out very prominently once again. The second theme that mentees mentioned about their mentors related to their knowledge, “I feel like mine, she really wants to pass her knowledge on. So she is really willing to give you whatever you want you know” (Mentee #2). Another mentee indicated that her mentor was always sharing his knowledge, “he answered all my questions” (Mentee #1). The third theme that emerged from the transcript was the idea of resourcefulness. Multiple mentees indicated that they found their mentor to be extremely resourceful. One mentee explained that she found her mentor to be resourceful in the sense of a human network, “she takes the time to well, she is resourceful I would say, because she has opened the doors [to], like, five or six physio’s that I am in the middle of e-mailing” (Mentee #3). Another mentee indicated that she found her mentor to be resourceful in terms of the kinds of things she did in their relationship, “she is setting up, like training for me so I could learn that program by myself” (Mentee #2). One mentee included all three of these themes into one sentence, “I feel like she’s established in her domain, and like she is willing to teach and um, like pass on her knowledge and [she was] flexible” (Mentee #4).
As stated above, mentors indicated preparedness, and professionalism as the strengths of their mentees. Preparedness on behalf of the mentee was something spoken about extremely highly by the mentors,

she came really well prepared with questions about all aspects, so I knew that she was planning in advance…she came very well prepared about what she wanted to get out of the program, which was great, because my whole thing was ‘what do you want to get out of it and how can I help you achieve it’ (Mentor #3).

Another mentor spoke about the idea of preparedness as a way to avoid wasting time, “there is no time to be wasted, I feel the same, it was very goal action driven. They don’t have time to waste either, and I like that as a professional person” (Mentor #4). Professionalism and maturity was another key strength that the mentors spoke about, “she was very professional, and you don’t get that with a lot of students, especially if they haven’t been in that situation” (Mentee #3). Another mentor indicated that she felt the professionalism and maturity level of the mentees will help the program in moving forward, “I think that will help you to attract more mentors in the future, when they know that they are dealing with serious people who are career driven, and are really truly looking for a mentor” (Mentor #4). Later in the transcript one mentor indicated that she felt it was “essential” that the mentees are mature. Confidence was stated as a positive trait of the mentees that related to professionalism and maturity. One mentor indicated that the confidence of her mentee allowed her (as the mentor) to be challenged,

…mine questioned, challenged me at times. Things we were doing a certain way. I like that, because there is always room for continuous improvement and another set of eyes can always change that. I like that she was confident enough to do that (Mentor #4)
When mentors were asked to discuss their strengths as a mentor, they stated their resourcefulness, experience, and caring nature as key themes. The idea of resourcefulness was thought of in a human resources type of understanding. One mentor explained her resourcefulness in a sense of a ‘human network’,

I just know a lot of physios, you know what, I have vast array of friends in the same business because I have been there for 27 years, and I knew that I could expose her to people and my friends are really nice and willing to help (Mentor #3).

Additionally, mentors discussed allowing their mentee to shadow other people within their organizations, as well as external to their organizations in order to give them a fuller view of the jobs. They indicated that they could make that happen through their connections with other individuals in their workplaces. A second theme, experience, was discussed amongst mentors, “we have seen a lot of the years, learn different ways, and do different things” (Mentor #1), In support of this a mentor stated, “I agree, I think the experience is good, because you have seen a lot and you can kind of open doors potentially, and from my standpoint I have a unique background and experience” (Mentor #4). Caring and effort was mentioned, as a trait that the mentors felt was a strength they had throughout the program. One mentor suggested it as a selling point for students in the future,

…this could be a selling point for this program. You know we have people, mentors who care, and maybe those are the kind of people that you take in, who really care about these people to give them the personalized experience (Mentor #4).

In addition to this point, the mentors indicated that they put a lot of caring and effort into their relationships with their mentee, “and caring, I put a lot of effort and caring into making sure she
tried to get what she wanted out of it” (Mentor #4). Furthermore, the mentors looked at caring as keeping in touch and in constant contact with their mentors.

The three key themes that the mentees classified as their personal strengths were: flexibility, communication, and eagerness. The mentees felt that it was equally as important for them to have flexibility in the relationship as it was for the mentors, “flexibility too, we had to be flexible” (Mentee #1). Another mentee talked about a different type of flexibility, the flexibility and openness to be disappointed,

I was open almost to disappointment if it didn’t, if physiotherapy didn’t live up to what I expected it to be. Like I did this as, I thought I wanted to be a physiotherapist and I still do, but I was open to the fact that her as a mentor might actually change my mind (Mentee #3).

The second theme that the mentees spoke to was communication. Mentees throughout the focus group spoke about how important communication was in order to maintain the relationships, “communication, where I feel like I tried very hard to keep an open line” (Mentee #3). The final theme that the mentees spoke about was their eagerness to take on opportunities as well as their willingness to learn. The mentees felt that, “I think [I was] able to take initiatives, and like, act on opportunities that [she] gave me” (Mentee #4). This point was furthered by two mentees who indicated that their willingness to learn were huge components of their relationships.

The mentors and mentees collectively stated the strengths of the mentoring pilot program as: flexibility, education and learning, its existence, and open and dedicated mentors. Flexibility was stated as a strength for multiple areas of the program. The mentors in particular liked the flexibility of the program as it allowed them to be able to give the mentee the best experience
they could. Mentee #3 stated, “I like the flexibility, it was huge, as said earlier, you know I think that was really helpful”. On the theme of education and learning, one mentee indicated that this program gave her “opportunities” (Mentee #1). Furthermore the mentees felt that the pilot program was, “…also education because of the meetings that we have, and the short presentations…so if it doesn’t open a network, you are also learning something” (Mentee #3). One of the mentors indicated that she found the program to provide for both the mentor and mentee,

I liked the group conversation, I really think that…even though we are working in different kinds of professions, we are all professional and we are dealing with the same kind of issues. So that is good for them to hear it from many different people in different ways” (Mentor #4).

The fact that the program exists was a program strength from the perspective of the mentees. Mentee #2 explained that she “wouldn’t have gone out and found a mentoring program, it’s probably a good thing, because some people don’t know where to go, so this was like a good first step” (Mentee #2). Both mentors and mentees agreed that having open and dedicated mentors was a key strength of this program. The mentees found that the availability of mentors was a huge asset to the program, “not very often do you get the time to sit down with a professional that is willing to open [up]” (Mentee #3), “It’s nice to have someone that is completely open” (Mentee #2). In addition to this, the mentees felt that the program also had “…mentors that are like willing, like [they] want to do it” (Mentee #4). One of the mentors indicated that she “liked hearing the students’ experiences…it gives us an idea of the kind of things that they are going through and some are unbelievable” (Mentor #3)


Process of Shaping

Mentors and mentees were asked how they felt they were shaped by their mentor or mentee, and also how they (as a mentor/mentee) shaped their mentor/mentee. Mentors felt that they shaped their mentee on career and balance; mentees felt that they shaped their mentors on perspective and opportunity. When I asked the mentors how the mentees shaped them, they stated: to be real, to reflect, and to provide a positive view for the organization. When mentees were asked how their mentor shaped them, they stated: career information and preparation and determination.

When mentors spoke of career, they had a similar view of how they shaped their mentees. In general, the mentors felt that they shaped their mentees’ opinions on the careers they were mentored in, “I guess maybe looking for me, the sort of broader aspect of student therapist, um, trying to I guess give them sort of the professional and knowledge side of the field and how it is developed over the years” (Mentor #1). Furthermore, another mentor contributed to the discussion by saying, “I just hope she got a greater appreciation of physiotherapy and athletic therapy to help her in her decision” (Mentor #3). A third mentor broadly encompassed a few areas into her statement, “I think she got to see how dynamic and comprehensive health promotion can be, with partnerships, all the different levels of work we do, from policy to awareness with posters, and how you really need to be flexible and change is good” (Mentor #4). The second way that mentors indicated they shaped their mentee was through exposure to “real life”, and what a real working professional deals with, “and a real working mom, the kind of things I have to juggle, it’s good to see that people can do that” (Mentor #4).
The first way that the mentees felt they shaped their mentors throughout the pilot program was on the topic of perspective. Mentees felt that by being involved in the program, they provided a different perspective to their mentors, “I think I kind of gave her, like a, I don’t want to say more modern or younger perspective of like maybe how to like target these people using like technology that they could learn and stuff like that” (Mentee #4). Another mentee (Mentee #1) discussed her mentor’s ability to look at injuries from a basic level again, and explained that his ability and quality of explaining things increased throughout the program.

Secondly, mentees felt that they shaped their mentor through the idea of opportunity. One mentee stated that her mentor “has probably never had the chance to mentor someone, and I feel like she has always wanted to mentor someone…she was excited that I wanted to go into recreation” (Mentee #2).

When mentors were asked how their mentee shaped them, they stated that the mentees caused them to be real, to reflect on their profession and that the mentee shaped the organization from which the mentor worked. First, just as mentors said they felt they shaped the mentees on how to balance things, they felt that the mentee helped them realize they needed to reflect on the amount of balance they were experiencing in their lives.

She made me take a break, I had to take breaks because I am supposed to show her what the working day looks like…So it just really reminded me that yah, if I am going to be a role model I need to show the whole picture, that I need to take care of myself and do the work life balance (Mentor #4).

Secondly, the mentors said that by mentoring they were able to reflect on their profession and how far it had come, “it makes you step back and look at your profession, which you can get
caught up in the daily grind a lot of times and not you know, keep an eye on where you have come from, and that there are so many varied areas that we do” (Mentor #3). This mentor went on to say, “had I not interacted with Kim I wouldn’t have gone back to think about all that stuff”. The final way that the mentors felt the mentees shaped them was actually on an organization standpoint, “from my organization standpoint, to bring in someone other than a nursing student was huge leaps forward, really” (Mentor #4). She went on to explain that the majority of her colleagues do not generally come from the Kinesiology faculty, and so it was, “good for them to see the quality that comes out of here, like she set a very good example, left a good message with the health unit to potentially get more”.

One of the ways that the mentees said the mentors shaped them throughout the program was on the topic of career information and preparation. The mentees felt that they were shaped largely when it came to pursuing the career in which they were mentored. One mentee indicated that the mentoring experience changed her perspective on the career, “I guess, just more interested than anything. I thought I was going to have no interest, and I just wanted to stay away from it because of my bad experience with politics in the City of [omitted] but it’s, I don’t know, it just gives me a different perspective” (Mentee #2). Following that, another mentee stated her support for the idea of career related influence, “I am going to agree with that, I love it a lot more than I did, like I knew I liked the idea of it, but now that I have been in there, I don’t want to leave” (Mentee #1). In a slightly different direction, Mentee #4 spoke to the idea of how the mentoring program shaped her preparation for her ideas about future careers, “I am a little more prepared for some of the things that are brought up in a union environment versus a non-union environment”. The second way that mentees felt they were shaped through their mentor was an

19 Name changed
increased drive and determination towards their future, “She has made me a lot more determined I would say in education and I take looking for a job a lot more seriously” (Mentee #3). A little further into the conversation the same mentee added to her statement and said, “ever since this program started I have been a lot more serious about my future” (Mentee #3), to which another mentee (#1) agreed.

**Gender and the mentor**

During the final focus group I brought up the topic of a mentor’s gender and its effect on the mentoring relationship. I provided a summary of the key points made by the mentors and mentees during the mid-point focus groups. I then asked each group to discuss and weigh the pros and cons of the idea of male and female mentors in the program. As I was reviewing the transcriptions, I noticed a general ‘unsure’ feeling between almost all of the participants (mentors and mentees alike). Mentor #4 captured this feeling best with her comment on not easily being able to provide a decision on whether the mentors should be male or female:

I struggle a bit with, I know that women carry certain things that we have to overcome as a professional but you know like someone had said if a father is potentially the keeper at home and whatever, it doesn’t matter if it’s a man or woman, so that is where I struggle with, does it just need to be, does gender really matter?

In general, there was support for both sides of the issue: those who were in favour of males being mentors in future programs stated reasons such as it being a ‘necessity’,

If one of the goals is getting women moving into male dominant domains within sport, probably the big one being coaching, they may have to work with a male coach because that’s who is predominately there, so but that person could hopefully give them
knowledge or resources so that they could move up through the ranks and eventually get those head coaching jobs (Mentor #1).

The above idea of necessity was supported by a mentee who stated, “girls going into professional sport, it is usually guys, so they have to know they can’t be scared that there is going to be a guy” (Mentee #2). The second theme, mainly brought forth by mentees, was the concept that working with a male mentor would not be any less motivating or appealing to them,

…if I see a male in a job, I don’t think I can’t get there, I just think I can just get the job, I just think that, it doesn’t matter to me…if they are open to teaching me then I don’t see a problem, but if they are very closed minded then they obviously shouldn’t be in the program (Mentee #2).

The mentee who was mentored by a male in the program provided her support to this idea and said, “I can honestly say that I am [in support], just because I am with a male, and it is still motivating” (Mentee #1). An additional tangent to this idea was that a mentees’ willingness to participate in the program with a male might be affected by her feminist orientation. It was the belief of one mentee that if a student were to have a strong feminist orientation she would not want to be mentored by a male, regardless of his organizational position. The third theme was the idea that in the future mentees cannot avoid working with males in the workplace, and that a program like this may assist with the breakdown of ‘boy’s clubs/old boy’s club’ that are often seen in male dominated organizations. Mentor # 3 felt that the program “might help men in those ‘boy’s clubs’ area of professions recognize that ‘geeze you know what, we aren’t doing enough

20 Boy’s club refers historically to a powerful circle of men, usually white, whose connections and alliances help advance them within an organization or silo (Segal, 2012)
to encourage women in our profession”. Further on in discussion the idea of the “boy’s club/old boy’s club” another mentor stated that,

…boy’s clubs exist everywhere but just to ignore them and be afraid of them is not going to help you, and help us grow as women, working women, and professional women. I think we need to address those barriers and I think to really segregate and not include a man, I think that almost makes it worse (Mentor #4).

The arguments for having only female mentors were just as strong as those for having male and female mentors. A key theme that emerged from the mentees in particular was the idea of “comfort”. “Comfort” was a word that came up at different points during the discussion on gender relationships in mentoring, “I feel like we may be a little more uncomfortable” (Mentee #2), “yah, I don’t know, the mentees are still going to learn regardless, I think it is just how comfortable they are in that situation, and I don’t know if the mentors would pick up on that” (Mentee #4). In addition to the idea of “comfort”, mentees mentioned the idea of intimidation when working with a male mentor, “but it could be a little bit intimidating putting a female generally into what are known as male roles, so that could be an issue” (Mentee #3). Another issue that was brought up in the mid-point focus group and in this final focus group was the idea of female leaders. A concern about having female leader role models was present throughout the discussion with mentees, “I think if the whole concept of the program is getting women in leadership roles, then it is more ideal to have women mentors” (Mentee #4). The mentors provided some counter suggestions to this point by indicating that if there was a male mentor, the program could make it a priority that he be able to put the mentee in contact with another female in a similar leadership position to him. Mentors and mentees were thus able to argue for both
sides of the gender mentor question. One mentee was able to provide a synopsis of the discussion,

I would say that the goal of the program is to get females out there, and I would say, either way, if you are working with a female mentor that’s great, if you are working with a male mentor you are still getting that female out there is what I would say. You are directing them towards the goal (Mentee #3).

**Sub-Problem #3**

In the third sub-problem I generated a recommended mentorship program for increasing women in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy through the analysis of all forms of data collected in this pilot-mentoring program.

**Document Analysis**

**Mentee Profile Forms**

The mentee profile forms (N=5) revealed a few key common themes. When mentees were asked how the mentoring program would help or assist them in their future career or avocation aspirations, two common themes emerged. The first, which 4 out of 5 mentees indicated, was that they thought the mentoring program would assist them in determining a more specific career path for themselves. The second theme that emerged was seen in 3 of the 5 forms: mentees indicated that they felt the program would help them network to develop relationships that would help them in their fields. One (mentee #2) specifically indicated that she thought the relationships she developed would help start her career in the recreation field.

When the mentees were asked to list skills or attributes that would help them in the mentoring relationship, 4 of 5 indicated that they thought their ability to be a quick learner would
assist them during this process. Another commonly listed trait amongst them (3 of 6) was the skill of being a great listener. One mentee wrote something that I felt captured the feelings of many others, “I have past experience and knowledge with the field as well as I am personable … I am comfortable talking to new people and building relationships with them.” (Mentee #4). Other listed skills included: personable (2 of 5), liking to talk (2 of 5), knowledge of the field (1 of 5), and being dedicated (1 of 5).

Mentees were also asked to explain why they wanted to become a mentee in the program. This section had varied results, but all had an over-riding theme of career development. Two of 5 mentees indicated that they wanted to be a mentee to help them on their pathway to their career. Other items that mentees listed as reasons in this section were: to build their resume (1 of 5), to talk one-on-one with a professional (1 of 5) and to build relationships with people in their field (1 of 5).

*Mentor Profile Forms*

The mentor profile forms (N=4) provided less common and thematic responses as a whole in comparison to the mentee profile forms. For example, when the mentors were asked to list skills or attributes they could contribute to a mentoring relationship, they were much more career specific than general, as seen in the mentees’ skills and attributes. The only answer that appeared multiple times was field experience (3 of 4). Other skills and attributes that mentors listed included: planning, risk management, human resource planning, multi-tasking, health promotion, project management, leadership, and teaching.

A similar trend was seen when mentors were asked about why they wanted to mentor. Three items were listed multiple times (2 of 4) and they included: paying it back/forwards, wanting to see others succeed, and assisting with career decisions. Other items listed included: to
learn things from the mentor/mentee relationship, to help others gain experience, and to create professional opportunities for the mentee.

When mentors were asked to list future career aspirations, they were grouped into two major categories. Two mentors (2 of 4) indicated that they wanted to achieve leadership positions, whether within their own organization/company, or at an external place. Three of the mentors indicated that they wanted to continue to educate themselves, and to strive/aspire to be the best in their fields, whether that be by educating people, or by assisting athletes in the best way possible.

*Mentoring Agreement Forms*

The mentoring agreement forms (N=4) were analyzed for quality and completion. In general, these document had very few similarities, as they were unique to each mentoring pair. The one common theme I noticed was the desire for mentees to gain education in the profession of their mentor. Regardless of the specific skills required for the jobs, the overriding theme was education about the career. The mentoring agreement forms also varied in the level of detail in regards to completion. After reviewing the mentoring agreement forms and comparing them to the weekly reports, the varying levels of detail that were used to complete the forms did not affect the outcome of the mentoring relationship.

*Weekly Reports*

The weekly reports (N=7) showed few common themes between the different mentoring pairs. However, part of the purpose of having the pairs complete weekly reports was to be able to track their progress throughout the program, and also to compare the weekly reports to the mentoring agreements. Based on the goals listed in the mentoring agreements, I went through each of the weekly reports and compared what the purpose of the mentorship meetings were in
combination with the steps taken in relation to their mentoring agreement in order to determine how closely the weekly meetings were aligning with the stated goals. I found that in most instances the weekly meetings were directly related to the goals stated in the agreement. Furthermore, the steps that were listed on the mentoring agreement were being utilized to help achieve the goals. For example, a mentor goal on one of the agreements was to create a mentoring package for mentees interested in recreation. This goal was achieved with help from the mentee, and was sent to me as part of the weekly report.

*Speed Networking Content*

Speed networking content was recorded at four of the workshops. The research assistants each took notes on their particular group. The speed networking content revealed a very open and shared dialogue between the mentor and mentee. The content revealed a level of comfort in the discussions. Types of topics that were discussed over the four workshops included: work-life balance, being active in the workplace, the sharing of ‘the best piece of advice’, the importance of honesty, what you liked best about what you did, work preparation and advice for career and education moves in the future. Based on the level of content and discussion that was recorded, the speed networking sessions seemed to be extremely valuable for the mentees. The discussions were directed towards the mentees; the conversations did not appear to provide much information for the mentors.

The recommendations below have been broken into six key topics: using the frameworks of duality of structure and strengths perspective, the workshops, the documents for the program, an application process, gender of the mentors, and an evaluation process.
Duality of Structure and Strengths Perspective

Moving forward with the program I would recommend continuing a strengths perspective approach within a duality of structure framework. There were no complaints from the participants regarding any components where these frameworks were built in as core pieces. As the documents have already been created for this program, there is little to no additional documentation required for the program to continue operating in this manner. However, I do believe that the program administrator for this mentorship program is required to have a sound understanding of the strengths perspective. Additionally, I feel through talking to the Chairperson of LAWS, that the structure and format of this mentorship program coincided with the types of programs that LAWS intends to have now and in the future.

Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to the frameworks used are as follows:

• Continue running the program using a strengths perspective within a duality of structure Framework,
• Reassess the program frameworks as needed in upcoming years,
• Require the program administrator to have a thorough understanding of strengths perspective and duality of structure.

The Workshops

The workshops were a substantial portion of the face-to-face time I had with the participants of the program. The workshops were also a large component of the discussions that occurred in the focus group sessions. Mentors and mentees alike agreed that the workshops were a good component of the program, however some aspects of them needed to be fine-tuned.
During this pilot program the workshops ran approximately every two weeks; in a larger scale program, this would be too frequent. The participants seemed to agree with the time breakdown of each workshop hour: 20-30 minutes for a presentation, followed by some discussion, and then 10-15 minutes of social networking. The one suggestion that came from the mentees through a focus group session regarding time during the workshops was to be able to spend more time one-on-one with your respective mentor or mentee during the session. They indicated that sometimes being able to discuss the next meeting date in person is easier than communicating through multiple e-mail messages. Additionally, mentors did not seem to gain as much benefit during the speed networking sessions as the mentees did. One mentor stated that she enjoyed getting to learn about the mentees, and another said it was not an overly valuable component for her. A valuable component agreed upon by both mentors and mentees was the presentation segment. Both groups seemed to really enjoy this aspect of the workshop sessions, however the mentors suggested a more tailored program related to generic professional development topics. The mentors perceived this change to be a worthwhile investment that may make selling the program easier to organizations.

Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to the workshop are as follows:

- A monthly workshop that occurs on the same week (i.e., 3rd Friday) of every month,
- A 20-30 minute presentation on professional development topics such as: dealing with organization conflict, how to better communicate with your clients, followed by a 10-15 minute period of discussion or questions,
- A 10-15 minute social networking portion, where mentors and mentees can meet other participants in the program.
• Provide mentors and mentees 5-7 time slot options at the beginning of the program; the agreed upon time slot will be the time the sessions run for the remainder of the program.

*Program Documents*

The documents that the mentors and mentees are required to complete at the beginning and throughout the program are a very large component of the program effectiveness and evaluation process. The first document the mentors and mentees are required to complete is the profile forms. Based on my analysis, as well as the focus group discussions, the profile forms were quick and easy to complete, and contained valuable information for the matching process (to be discussed in a later section). The mentors and mentees agreed that these were worthwhile documents as the program moves forward. The mentoring agreement forms were the second document that mentors and mentees were required to fill out. Based on feedback from the focus groups, this document was a valuable tool for the relationships. One mentor suggested having the mentor and mentee state what their goals for the program would be on their profile forms so that when they arrived at the meeting to complete the mentoring agreement, they already had some idea of what the other person was capable of providing. Again, this document was stated as being useful to review over the span of the relationship, so the pair could make sure they were working towards the goals they set out to achieve. The one section on this document that could use some reviewing is the Meeting Dates and Venue section. After reviewing the mentoring agreement forms, this section on the majority of forms was not completed; this could be for multiple reasons. Firstly, the premise of the program is flexibility in meeting dates and lengths, therefore asking the mentor and mentee to roughly outline this information contradicts the program’s goals. Secondly, when the mentor and mentee filled this out they had not had a chance to meet
each other, and therefore were not sure of the type of the relationship they were capable of having.

The third document used in the mentoring program was the weekly report. This document caused significant discussion during the focus groups, and was altered part way through the pilot program. The initial plan for the weekly report was quite simple: to be completed weekly. However, the participants in the program ran into two issues with the form. Firstly, if they did not meet in a given week were they supposed to hand in a blank form? Secondly, they had a hard time distinguishing the difference between two sections on the report: steps taken to achieve goals and action items. Part way through the program, I took care of the first issue by only requiring the participants to complete the form if they met during the week. The second issue was resolved for this pilot by allowing the mentoring pair to fill the form out to the best of their ability. Sometimes this meant that they did not fill out one of the boxes (steps taken to achieve goals, and action items), and other weeks that meant that they attempted to complete both boxes. An additional item of concern for both the mentors and mentees was how frequently this document would have to be filled out if the program was longer (i.e., a semester long). The weekly report was recommended highly by both mentors and mentees, as a component that should be continued into the next program as it provides a tracking system, as well as a way to evaluate the progress of the relationship towards the goals set out in the mentoring agreement form.

Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to the documents are as follows:

- Continue using the mentoring profile forms,
• Continue using mentoring agreement forms, with an optional section for detailing meeting dates and venues,

• Allow the mentors and mentees to be able to access their completed and submitted documents, whether via an online database, Dropbox, or Google drive,

• Edit the weekly report document to be more clear in the differences between ‘steps taken to achieve goals’ and ‘action items’,

• Only require the mentor and mentee to complete a weekly report for the weeks that they meet during the program.

Application Process

A large item for discussion during the final focus group sessions was the idea of creating a more formalized application process. It was stressed that this process should not be too difficult, time consuming, or elaborate, but that an application process may make the program more legitimate, as well as contribute to a higher participant adherence rate. The application process for the pilot program was largely only a mentee application process. Given time constraints, the mentors were hand selected by the Chairperson of LAWS and myself. One suggestion put forth by a mentor was to have mentors apply to the program by completing a profile that would be viewed as a ‘standing’ profile. This profile would then be able to be viewed by potential mentees, to see if that specific mentor was doing things (work or avocation-related) that interested them. An additional suggestion put forth by both mentors and mentees was to have a mini-interview with potential candidates. This mini-interview would allow the program coordinator to get a sense of what types of things the individual was looking for in the program, as well as what she/he could contribute to the relationship. It is easy to write down what you believe the person on the other end would like to hear, however it is sometimes more difficult to
make it believable in an interview setting. Furthermore, it was suggested that the goals of the program be highly stressed to any mentor applying to be a part of the program. This suggestion was brought up following a discussion related to the gender of mentors in the program (to be discussed later).

Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to the application process are as follows:

- To create a formalized process,
- Require mini-interviews (via phone, Skype, or in person) of both mentors and mentees to assess their suitability for the program,
- Place a focus on the goals of the program when interacting with individuals interested in applying to the program.

*Gender of the Mentor*

This area in the recommendations was the most difficult to make. There was considerable conversation that occurred during all the focus groups in regards to whether the program should only have female mentors, or both female and male mentors. In addition to the conversation that occurred within the focus groups, I had conversations with colleagues, and thought many days and nights about my opinion on the subject. As the focus group results previously provided, there were lots of good points for both having male and female mentors, and having female only mentors. At this point, I feel that my sample size was too small to adequately determine whether there would be a difference between the mentoring received from a male or a female. My personal bias leads me down the path of having only female mentors, as this program is meant to further advance women in sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy careers.
However, logic and research tells me that this may be extremely difficult to do, as there are some professions that lack large numbers of females, making it extremely difficult to secure mentors. Based on the mentoring that occurred in this pilot-program there was no difference between the quality of mentoring provided by the male and female mentors.

My one concern in potentially moving forward with the recommendation of having both female and male mentors is that the mentees indicated at multiple points that while they would not mind being mentored by a male, they would prefer a female, and would be concerned about their level of comfort in working with a male mentor. A suggestion put forth by the mentees was to allow the mentee to identify a preference for being mentored by a male, a female, or either. This may be one way of combatting the issue of comfort, however it may cause potential issues if a mentee was not matched with a mentor of their preferred gender. Furthermore, it was stated that working professionals, regardless of their gender, are all trying to achieve a work life balance. It was also suggested that by having male and female mentors the program may be more accepted by organizations, and may also help to educate more individuals on how to assist female advancement in the workplace.

Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to the gender of the mentor are as follows:

- To include males and females as mentors at least until there is a large enough sample size to get a better understanding of any difference in the relationships,
- Maintain a minimum 50% quota of female mentors,
- Provide mentees with an option process for their preference on a male or a female mentor.
Evaluation Process

The final area I will provide recommendations on is the evaluation process for the program. This pilot program was a unique situation, as the program was being used partially as a means to complete this thesis. In future years the program is anticipated to operate strictly as a program with no large research component taking place. For this pilot program there were evaluation techniques built in: the analysis of documents completed by the participants, the focus groups, and the personal journal observations by the program coordinator. In the future, these components may not be there, leaving it as a program with a reduced evaluation process. As a researcher evaluating the program, I found the most beneficial information came from the focus group sessions. The focus groups allowed the participants to express their opinions on the program, provide suggestions for immediate changes, and also provide recommendations for future programs. One type of evaluation this pilot-program did not utilize was surveys. This is an option for gathering information about the program without requiring substantial time from participants. The Grossman (2005) evaluation process for youth mentoring programs was utilized in this pilot program. When I was creating my focus group questions I was attempting to answer the two measures he says are important for program evaluation: process measures, and outcome measures. The process measures looked to answer questions such as, what is the program experience, and how ‘good’ were the relationships that were formed. The outcome measures looked to determine whether the program worked.
Based on the above discussion, my recommendations moving forward with the mentoring program in regards to an evaluation process are as follows:

- Continue to have focus groups twice throughout the program, once in the middle, and then at the program completion,
- Create online surveys monthly for participants to complete including but not limited to: their experiences in the program, recommended topics for presentations, and the functionality of their personal mentoring relationship,
- Establish desired outcome measures (measurable variables) to complete a fuller evaluation of the mentoring program,
- Put an evaluation process, such as Grossman (2005) in place in order to potentially secure grant funding down the road.

**Additional Recommendations**

The following recommendations did not fit cleanly into a sub-heading, but are important for the program in the future:

- Establish a requirement for job shadowing, or for time spent in the workplace,
- Provide a set number of bus tickets for mentees without access to a vehicle,
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Sub-Problem 1

How is a mentorship pilot program created and deployed using the duality of structure and strengths perspective as its foundation?

I began this research process with a desire to have a practical impact on the local community, which was to create a program that would help females interested in gaining mentoring experience to advance towards their future careers. One of the aims of the study was to create a program that facilitated mentors and mentees working together in a reciprocal relationship instead of the traditional top down approach. This seemed like an easy task when I began the program, and even throughout the planning stages, however the deployment of this concept was more challenging than anticipated.

Before I can fully discuss this, I need to re-evaluate a key decision that shaped the creation of the program - the definition of mentoring. The starting point of the mentoring program and relationships was the definition of mentoring. The two definitions I initially debated between were Moore & Amey (1988) and Miller and Noland (2003). After working through the program, I still support my decision to choose Miller and Noland’s definition, “the practice of mentoring [is] to advise and guide another, providing wisdom and inspiration as a result of experience (p.84)”. I believe that if I had chosen Moore and Amey’s definition, which reinforced traditional mentoring themes, that the program would have taken a different direction. I feel that a definition lays the groundwork for the remaining segments of the program.
Program Structure

Conceptually, I used the strengths perspective within a duality of structure framework as the basis for the mentoring program. I intended to expand the experiences of both mentors and mentees through the use of a reciprocal mentoring program, with a focus on networking experiences. I created a program with ample opportunities for mentors and mentees to network with other individuals not directly involved in their individual relationships. I was attempting to build on literature linked to mentoring programs that focus on the idea of reciprocal exchange, while still maintaining positive aspects of mentoring, such as career exposure, networking, and career advancement. In the creation of the program I intentionally tried to create elements in the program that would foster learning by both the mentor and mentee. For example, I created the mentoring agreement form to outline goals and steps for both the mentor and mentee, so it was embedded from the beginning that the program was not only about the mentee. Furthermore, I created presentation segments with the intention of them being beneficial for both mentor and mentee.

Implementation Process

Challenges arose when attempting to secure mentors for the pilot program. Due to the limited time available to run the program, the securing of mentors at the last minute was a difficult task, which set the program launch date back substantially later than anticipated. Results from the focus group show that the amount of time allowed for the mentoring relationships in this pilot was not ideal for the participants. I would argue that regardless of the time, the effect it had on mentees was substantial, but respect the desire for increased program length in the future.

There is substantial information regarding the length of time it takes to foster a mentoring relationship, but not a lot of information on what is required of the program coordinator to make
the program successful. My perceptions of what would be required to have this reciprocal relationship transpire did not meet the reality of my situation. The premise sounds easy, and theoretically the creation of my program was accurate, but the deployment and actual functioning of this theoretical relationship was difficult. While I attempted to create a situation where both mentors and mentees experience the benefits of acquiring information (Mullen, 1994), I am not completely confident I was able to do that in this pilot. Following the mid-point focus group, I had a better understanding on the view of the program from my participants’ standpoints, which allowed me to alter the remainder of the program to better suit their needs. Rabionet, Santiago & Zorrilla (2009), stated that the reciprocal relationship provides the opportunity for both individuals to contribute equally to the relationship. In theory, I agree with this statement; in practice, I challenge the ease and accuracy of this statement. By being involved in the creation and also the deployment, I was able to work through the process of the program alongside my participants. Segments of the program that were intended to create reciprocal exchanges of information seemed to effect the mentees greater than the mentors. I would argue that it could be difficult for mentees to be able to provide reciprocal experiences to the mentor at a equivalent level in the same way the mentor could provide them. There are some situations where reciprocal interactions happened, and mentors learned from the information and discussions just as the mentees did, however in general I would say the program was still geared towards impacting the mentee. Based on the results of the mid-point focus group, the mentors need to experience professional development experiences in order for the mentoring program to be successful for them; I would argue that this aligns with the social exchange theory. The social exchange theory is based on the idea and understanding that people expect rewards and costs from social exchange to be equitable (Colman, n.d.). I believe that the focus on professional development
from the mentors may be a way to reduce the pressure on mentees to provide a reciprocal experience, while allowing both parties to benefit.

*Group Mentoring*

One of the large components of the mentoring program was the idea of speed networking, and getting to know all participants in the program. One of the reasons for building this into the program as a large component is the Small World Phenomenon (2009), where “two people $A$ and $B$, chosen at random, tend to be connected by a surprisingly short acquaintanceship chain, $A$ knowing someone who knows someone…who knows” (para. 1). An additional reason for such a large focus on group mentoring and networking is that it breaks down the silos that are often seen in the sporting world. Benefits that have been attributed to group mentoring include: a nurturing environment, a safe place to disclose personal issues, an increased sense of belonging, acknowledgement, validation, and progression through careers (Glass & Walter, 2000; Jones, Walter & Akehurst, 2001; Wolak, McCann & Madigan, 2009). Based on the results of the focus groups, I would say that in some way all of these benefits occurred. Mentees spoke specifically about the amount of effort that was invested into the relationship by their mentors. Additionally, the mentees indicated how much the mentors were willing to share about their experiences and work related tasks. Feeling they were in “a safe place” was brought up indirectly a number of times through the idea of comfort. The mentees were comfortable discussing things with their mentor in one-on-one situations, and also as a group in workshop presentations. Finally, at the end of the program, mentors and mentees felt like they had achieved something, and had been acknowledged for their involvement in the program. There was little progression ‘through’ the careers by the mentees, however in comparison, they received information and education that will allow them to gain progress in their path to achieving careers in their fields.
Strengths of the Program

Although limited time during the program may have reduced the amount of time the participants got to spend with each other, a number of strengths emerged from this program. For example, the undergraduate students who were involved spoke highly of their experience in relation to their career direction; as well as benefiting from having a new sense of direction and dedication to their academic studies as a result of their experiences in the program. Additionally, some of the mentees extended their mentoring relationships and are continuing outside of the program duration; one was even able to secure a spot as a Student Athletic Trainer for the upcoming school year.

A second strength of the program was the flexibility the participants were able to have. In abiding by the third principle of the strengths perspective, (the upper limits of growth are unknown), I did not dictate the time requirements for one-on-one mentoring sessions, or identify an hourly quota per week. The mentors and mentees greatly appreciated this, and spoke of it as a strength throughout the entire program.

A third strength of the program was its ability to expose mentees to the workplace. The goal of the mentoring program is to increase females in leadership positions within sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy fields. I believe, based on the results from the focus groups, that the mentees in the program now have a better understanding of what is required of them to achieve their career goals.

A final strength of the program was the dedication, caring, and effort put forth by the mentors. I am unsure whether I had a unique group of mentors (due to hand selection), or if individuals are generally interested in helping to advance younger females in the workforce. I was amazed at the level of detail and effort some mentors put into making sure the goals of their
mentees were met. In my opinion, this will be a large selling point moving forward with the program; we have mentors who care.

Conclusion

The aim of this sub-problem was to identify how a pilot mentorship program is created and deployed using the duality of structure and strengths perspective as its foundation. Results for this sub-problem are consistent with research supporting the social exchange theory. The results suggest that in order for the mentoring programs to be viewed as successful for the mentor, they need to experience benefits that parallel the amount of time and effort they have invested.

The challenges experienced in the deployment of a reciprocal mentoring program suggest that more research needs to be completed on the implementation process of reciprocal mentoring programs. The model is designed to allow mentors and mentees to contribute to the relationship, but as stated above, I believe it is difficult for the mentees to provide the necessary level of reciprocity for the mentor. Additionally, the time constraints of the program limited the full establishment of a mentoring relationship, but nonetheless provided mentoring experiences for both the mentor and the mentee.

The strengths of the program outweigh the challenges associated with it. I believe in the future if the challenges were addressed, the program would be an excellent initiative for LAWS to take on full time.
Sub-Problem 2

What are the mentor and mentee perceptions of the pilot mentorship program?

My analysis of the mentors’ and mentees’ perceptions of the pilot mentorship program is based on data gathered through the facilitation of mid-point and final focus group sessions. Aligning with Grossman’s (2005) evaluation techniques, I attempted to ask questions related to process measures. By attempting to answer what the program is as an experience for the participants and how ‘good’ the relationships were, I created a fuller picture of the pilot mentorship program.

Informal versus Formal Mentoring

When initially creating the program I struggled trying to determine whether my program would be considered formal or informal mentoring. Informal mentoring was defined as relationships that occur naturally between individuals, and formal mentoring was described as a systematic set up where organizations match individuals to form mentorship relationships (Armstrong, Allison & Hayes, 2002). While my program contained aspects of formal mentoring, the key thing that was missing from the mentoring style was the voluntary nature of the relationships in this program, which was evident in the informal relationships style. Formal relationships are often forced by the organization as a program for incoming employees. As I worked through the results, I began to describe the program as voluntary formal, which captured the best of both formal and informal mentoring.

Gender and Mentoring

The mentor and mentee perceptions of gender in regards to the mentor changed multiple times throughout the focus group sessions. Initially mentees were adamant that it should be only
female mentors, while the mentors themselves were more accepting of both male and female mentors. A few mentees indicated that they had no preference regarding the gender of their mentor, which supports Burke & McKeen’s (1997) study, which found women had no preference between male and female mentors. By the end of the final focus groups, both seemed to accept the idea of having male mentors, but the decision was not an easy one, nor overly convincing. Many participants went back and forth between having either gender acceptable, or only females. Bower & Hums (2009) stated that there are barriers for women attempting to enter into male dominated workforces: exclusion from the old boy’s network, lack of female representation, not being taken seriously, time spent at the workplace, and a non-female friendly environment. Mentees in particular discussed in depth the issue of the old boy’s network, a lack of female representation, and establishing a level of comfort with their mentor. Interestingly, the issue of sexual relations with a male mentor was never mentioned. This could be due to the demographics of my participants, or this could potentially be connected to the uneasiness mentees have verbalized about having ‘comfortable’ relationships with male mentors.

**Qualities of the Mentors and Mentees**

In order to be aligned with the strengths perspective in my focus groups, I asked the mentors and mentees to indicate the strengths they themselves had, as well as those of their respective mentor or mentee. Weaver & Chelladurai (1990) suggested three general characteristics that make a good mentor: age and experience, organizational position and status, and traits and abilities. Based on the focus group results from my program, I would support these as general characteristics of the mentors in this program. The mentees felt that their mentors’ strengths were found in their ability to be knowledgeable (experience) and resourceful (organizational position). Furthermore, the mentors felt that their strengths were also
resourcefulness (organizational position) as well as experience. Expanding on these qualities, I would add flexibility. The idea of flexibility was discussed often in my program; both mentors and mentees listed it as a key strength for the mentors. I believe this to be the case specifically in mentoring programs that deal with students, and in the fields of sport and recreation, because both of these categories tend to have extremely unpredictable schedules.

According to Cunningham & Eberle (1993), important qualities for mentees to have as suggested by mentors and mentees alike were: desire to learn, people-oriented, conceptual ability, and introspective. The majority of strengths listed by the mentors and mentees regarding the mentees fall into this list. The mentors indicated that they felt the strengths of the mentees were their professionalism and preparedness. Comparing these items to the list above, I would say that mentees showed people-oriented qualities through their ability to act as a professional in the work settings of their mentors. Furthermore, the mentees showed goal-oriented behaviour through their preparedness in the program. The mentors indicated that the mentees came prepared with well thought out questions, and asked intelligent questions when at the workplace. Mentees said their strengths in the program were their ability to communicate, which would relate to being people-oriented. The mentees in the program stated that they were often the ones making sure they were staying in contact with their mentors and maintaining an open line of communication. Additionally, the mentees found themselves to be eager (desire to learn) while in settings and meetings with their mentors. One mentee indicated specifically that she loved being in the environment, and she did not want to leave.

An additional point of interest is that all the mentees in the program were female. According to Weaver & Chelladurai (1999), women are often too passive and do not have enough faith in the mentoring process for it to be beneficial for them. Based on the success of my
program, I challenge this. Being highly involved with my participants throughout the program has led me to see that there is nothing passive about the mentees that took part in my program. Furthermore, their lack of ‘faith’ in the mentoring process did not come up as an issue. One mentee did indicate that she was prepared to be disappointed in case her mentor shaped her perceptions of physiotherapy in a negative way. However, this did not translate into a loss of interest or faith in the process.

Benefits for the Mentor and Mentee

An important aspect of evaluation is what the participants got out of the program. I asked the mentors and mentees throughout the two focus groups, what types of things they got out of the program. Burke and McKeen (1997) found that mentors provided three overall benefits to mentees: role modeling, career development functions, and psychosocial functions. The majority of my results support these three benefits. Mentees indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring program they needed to experience career related education and information, as well as networking opportunities. I believe that the career development functions were successfully achieved in the short program based on the feedback received from the mentees, but the psychosocial functions were not completely fulfilled because of the restricted program time, which reduced some pairs’ face-to-face time.

Just as it is important for mentees to receive benefits in the program, based on the reciprocal modeling structure, mentors must receive benefits as well. According to Reich (1986), benefits to mentors include: improved performance of subordinates, awareness of other’s needs, satisfaction from helping others, improved managerial skills and idea stimulation. Based on this list, the results from my research support improved performance of subordinates, satisfaction

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21 Psychosocial functions include role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship (Kram, 1983).
from helping others, and idea stimulation. The discussion in my focus groups did not lead into the other areas (awareness of others’ needs or improved managerial skills), nor are they completely applicable to a mentoring program for university students. Based on the focus group results, two pairs noticed an increase in the ability of the mentee to perform tasks related to the mentor’s job. The other two pairs did not have a relationship that allowed for hands on work involvement by the mentee. All mentors indicated that one of the requirements for them to experience a successful mentoring program was to positively benefit and assist a mentee. Furthermore, mentors stated that they had to almost re-learn parts of their job in order to be able to explain it out loud to their mentees. They also liked the fact that their mentees challenged them to think in different ways, and to consider different approaches.

In addition to the benefits suggested by Reich (1986), LaFleur and White (2010) classified benefits for the mentors into four categories: positive impact on person or practice, personal satisfaction, professional success, and organizational and professional contribution. The results of my study supported all of these categories. As stated above, mentors indicated that helping a mentee to succeed was required in order for them to have a successful relationship. They also stated that experiencing professional development (professional success) that they would be able to take back to their workplace or organization (organizational and professional contribution) would be an extremely important part of the mentoring program. These segments in this pilot program were not as successful as hoped; mentors indicated the need for them to improve and continue into the future.

**Conclusion**

The aim of this sub-problem was to gather the participants’ perceptions on the program to assist with providing recommendations for the future. Findings from this study support previous
literature in regards to traits (or strengths) of the mentors and mentees, as well as the benefits for mentors and mentees. Burke and McKeen (1997) found that mentors provided three overall benefits to mentees: role modeling, career development functions, and psychosocial functions. The majority of my results support these three benefits. Mentees indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring program they needed to experience career related education and information, as well as networking opportunities. Additionally, the results of this study challenge Weaver & Chelladurai’s (1999) results, which stated that women were too passive to engage in mentoring relationships.
Sub-Problem 3

What is the recommended mentorship program for increasing women in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy?

The aim of this sub-problem was to provide recommendations for a mentoring program geared toward increasing women in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy fields. Recommendations were provided in the results section, but are included (Table 1) below as a reminder:

**Table 1: Recommendations**

| Duality of Structure and Strengths Perspective | • Continue running the program using a strengths perspective within a duality of structure framework,  
• Reassess the program frameworks as needed in upcoming years,  
• Require the program administrator to have a thorough understanding of strengths perspective and duality of structure. |
| Workshops | • A monthly workshop that occurs on the same week (i.e., 3rd Friday) of every month,  
• A 20-30 minute presentation on professional development topics such as: dealing with organization conflict, how to better communicate with your clients, etc, followed by 10-15 minutes of discussion or questions,  
• A 10-15 minute social networking portion, where mentors and mentees can meet other participants in the program.  
• Provide mentors and mentees 5-7 time slot options at the beginning of the program; the agreed upon time slot will be the time the sessions run for the remainder of the program. |
| Documents | • Continue using the mentoring profile forms,  
• Continue using mentoring agreement forms, with an option section for detailing meeting dates and venues,  
• Allow for the mentors and mentees to be able to access their completed and submitted documents, whether via an online database, Dropbox, or Google drive,  
• Edit the weekly report to be more clear on the differences between ‘steps taken to achieve goals’ and ‘action items’,  
• Only require the mentor and mentee to complete a weekly report for the weeks that they meet during the program. |
| Application Process | • To create a formalized process,  

- Require mini-interviews (via phone, Skype, or in person) of both mentors and mentees to see their suitability for the program,
- Place a focus on the goals of the program when interacting with individuals interested in applying to the program.

| Gender of the mentor | • To include males and females as mentors until there is a large enough sample size to get a better understanding of the relationships,
  • Maintain at minimum 50% female mentors,
  • Provide mentees with an option for a preference of male or female mentor. |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluation Process   | • Continue to have focus groups twice throughout the program, one at the middle, and one at its completion,
  • Create online surveys monthly for participants to complete,
  • Establish desired outcome measures (measurable variables) to complete a fuller evaluation of the mentoring program,
  • Create an evaluation process, such as Grossman (2005) to potentially secure grant funding down the road. |
| Additional Suggestions | • Establish a suggested requirement for shadowing, or for workplace hours,
  • Provide a determined number of bus tickets for mentees without access to a vehicle. |

The remainder of this section will focus on the evaluation process used in this research. Grossman (2005) discussed evaluating mentoring programs by utilizing process measures and outcome measures. Process measures are generally the first questions you ask when evaluating, “what exactly is the program as an experience by participants?”, “Did the program recruit appropriate participants?”, “Did all the components of the program happen?” (Grossman, 2005, p. 252). Outcome measures answer the question, did it work? The following sections will evaluate the program and justify recommendations based on process and outcome measures.

**Process Measures**

Grossman (2005) stated that these measures answer questions such as, what exactly is the program as an experience by participants. Based on the data collected through all methods, I feel
as though I can address this question adequately. The program as experienced by participants is a mentee driven relationship. In general, the mentees and mentors agreed that the mentees were the ones who drove the direction of the relationship. This is likely due to traditional perceptions that mentoring relationships are there to advance the mentee. I do not feel that having the program be mentee driven is a bad thing; in fact, I believe it gives the mentee something to contribute towards the mentoring relationship. With the mentee driving the direction of the relationship, they are inevitably showing that they are prepared, eager, directed, and goal oriented. The intention of the program was to have a reciprocal mentoring relationship between the mentor and mentee. In theory, this seems like an easy approach to achieve, however, because I was involved in the deployment of the program, I realize that this is not an easy feat. I personally believe that it is easier to satisfy the mentees than it is the mentors. I believe this to be the case, because in order for the mentors to participate in the workshop sessions of the program they are required to take time off work, or at least gain permission to include the mentoring program as part of their daily hours. Due to this reason, I feel that the mentors have extremely high expectations of the workshops, and feel that if in the future they are not seen as applicable and viewed as worthwhile for the mentor, they will stop attending. If that were to happen, then the entire structure of the program would have to change. In general, the mentors and mentees involved viewed the program as successful. The mentors even went so far as to suggest that they were mini champions of the program, and could assist in the following year to assist with the marketing and attraction of mentors. Based on the results of the focus groups, and the weekly reports, the mentees felt the same. Aside from the fact that the program was shorter than intended, the mentees found the program to be extremely useful, and two stated that it had created a new drive and focus in their academics.
Additionally Grossman (2005) suggests addressing in an evaluation whether or not the program recruited the appropriate people. When I initially put the recruitment out to the students, I was surprised to receive as many responses from second year students; 3 out of 4 mentees in the pilot program were second year students. In addition to that, the mentees who started and finished the program were described by their mentors as extremely mature, professional and prepared when involved in program activities. Mentors stated that this was a key component contributing to the success they achieved in their relationships, and they suggested trying to create an application process that would be able to tease out that information. The mentors also suggested using the fact that the mentees were mature, professional and prepared as a selling point for attracting mentors.

As I was working through the program I came to the realization that not a single applicant from the mentee pool had selected media literacy as a preferred field; in fact, no one ranked media literacy in their choices higher than option three. This caused me to question why this was the case; was it really an unappealing career, or are there other things going on here? After spending some quality time pondering and discussing the idea, I did not come to a decision, but rather a question. Is some form of a mentoring program ideal for high school students? In theory, if second year undergraduate students are not interested in careers in media literacy, they may actually be deterred at even a younger age, such as high school. I believe the program in its current state is best directed towards college and university undergraduate students, however a modified version of the program may be worth considering for female high school students.

In regards to the mentors for the program, there was inevitably bias involved. The mentors for this program were hand selected from the community by the Chairperson of LAWS and myself. In the future, the hand selection would not be the ideal recruitment tool for mentors.
I hope as the program progresses that it becomes highly sought after by both mentees and mentors. In conclusion, I feel as though this pilot program attracted and targeted the ideal candidates for the research project.

The final question for process measures that Grossman (2005) suggests addressing is whether or not all the components of the program happened. Based on my initial creation plan for the program, everything did occur as planned. As I stated previously, some items were amended following the mid-point focus group to allow for the best experience possible for both the mentor and the mentee. Workshops had the same breakdown each week with the exception of the final workshop. The final workshop was completed after the mid-point focus group, and therefore was amended to address the feedback given. The final focus group was structured as an open discussion using personal cases or questions in regard to systemic barriers, challenges, or anything else that seemed appropriate for the conversation. This allowed the mentors to share their experiences, and also the mentees to share, and to ask for advice regarding situations where they had previously found themselves. Moving forward, some of the program components would change slightly: weekly reports would become only required after a meeting, profile forms for mentors and mentees would be kept on file to be viewed, and presentations would be directed towards professional development topics. Additionally, due to the proposed once a month meeting, I feel as though the segments may run in the future with a greater purpose and direction.

Outcome Measures

Grossman’s (2005) suggestions for evaluating the program based on outcome measures attempts to address the question, does it work? What is key for this type of measurement is to establish measurable variables, which are sensitive enough to notice change. For this mentoring
program there were no measurable variables included. There are multiple reasons for this. First, it can be very difficult to determine what measurements would be considered valuable in the first year of the program. Second, the process measures for this program fit in better with the sub-problems in this research program. Moving forward with the mentoring program, I would suggest selecting items that could be used as measurable variables. Measurable variable may include levels of self esteem (pre and post program), what characteristics they feel ideal mentors or mentees have, or measurement of career and psychosocial functions. These types of measurements in combination with the process measures would create a very full view of the program. This summary of the program could be used to attract mentors, mentees, or even funding sponsors.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this sub-problem set out to provide recommendations on the mentoring program, by using the evaluation process by Grossman. Overall, the pilot program was evaluated on process measures rather than outcome measures, and future programs should attempt to include both process and outcome measures. In regards to the process measures, the program was perceived as a mentee driven program. The attempts to create reciprocal relationships were slightly successful, but in the end I feel that the mentors have extremely high expectations of the workshops, and feel that if in the future they are not applicable or viewed as worthwhile for the mentor, they will stop attending. Furthermore, I feel that in light of the goals of this pilot program, the right individuals were engaged. In the future, it may be worthwhile exploring other mentoring programs, or a speaker series for younger females in high school. For future mentoring programs, I suggest creating measurable variables that will assist when evaluating the program for outcome measures.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

Mentoring programs are a form of socialization and advancement for professionals throughout their career. Mentoring is often viewed in a traditional, top down approach, where the mentee and mentor do not both benefit from the relationship. Additional programs have begun to emerge, which focus on a reciprocal relationship where both the mentee and mentor exchange information and grow from the relationship. Researchers have identified that mentoring contributes to benefits such as career advancement, greater job satisfaction, and increased education and learning experiences. Mentoring relationships for females are often harder to come by in organizations that are male dominated. In organizational situations like these, females are required to either be mentored by a male, or attempt to advance without the assistance of a mentor. Therefore, it was important to establish a mentoring program for female mentees focused on advancing them in careers fields such as sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy.

Recognizing the lack of a mentoring program in Windsor-Essex County that focused on females in sport and recreation, health and wellness, and media literacy, in addition to a lack of literature surrounding a mentoring program framed within a duality of structure and strengths perspective, this pilot mentorship program was created. The main research problem for this project was: how can the process of mentoring facilitate opportunities for women to successfully take on more roles in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy. The following sub-problems helped me address the main research problem:
1. How is a mentorship pilot program created and deployed using the duality of structure and strengths perspective as its foundation?

2. What are the mentor and mentee perceptions of the pilot mentorship program?

3. What is the recommended mentorship program for increasing women in sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy?

The pilot mentorship program was conducted over 6 weeks, and consisted of four workshops, and an individual mentoring relationship. As the individual who created the program and also deployed the program, I observed and was engaged in all aspects. In addition to participant observations, I completed a document analysis of documents completed by participants, and also ran two segments of focus group sessions. These three types of data were used to answer the sub-problems listed above. Results from each of these types of data were analyzed for thematic content. Common themes were grouped together and categorized, and then compared to current literature pertaining to mentoring.

Conclusion

Findings from this study suggest that both mentors and mentees enjoyed the program. Results show that the relationships were initially driven by the mentees’ goals. I would argue that while the intention of the program was to create a reciprocal relationship, the relationship was still more heavily shaped in favour of the mentee.

Results are consistent with research supporting the social exchange theory. One result suggests that in order for the mentoring programs to be viewed as successful for the mentor, they need to experience benefits that balance out the amount of time and effort they have invested.
The challenges experienced in the deployment of a reciprocal mentoring program suggest that more research needs to be completed on the implementation process of reciprocal mentoring programs. The model is designed to allow mentors and mentees to contribute to the relationship, but as stated above, I believe it is difficult for the mentees to provide the necessary level of reciprocity for the mentor. Additionally, the time constraints of the program limited the full establishment of a mentoring relationship, but nonetheless provided mentoring experiences for both the mentor and mentee.

Findings from this study support previous literature in regards to traits (or strengths) of the mentors and mentees, as well as the benefits for mentors and mentees. Burke and McKeen (1997) found that mentors provided three overall benefits to mentees: role modeling, career development functions, and psychosocial functions. The majority of my results support these three benefits. Mentees indicated that for them to have a successful mentoring program they needed to experience career related education and information, as well as networking opportunities. Additionally, the results of this study challenge Weaver & Chelladurai’s (1999) claim that women were too passive to engage in mentoring relationships.

Overall, the pilot program was evaluated on process measures rather than outcome measures, and future programs should attempt to include both process and outcome measures. In regards to the process measures, the program was perceived as a mentee driven program. Attempts to create reciprocal relationships were slightly successful, but in the end I feel that the mentors have extremely high expectations of the workshops, and that if in the future workshops are not applicable or viewed as worthwhile for the mentor, they will stop attending. Furthermore, I feel that in relation to the goals of this pilot program, the right individuals were engaged. In the future, it may be worthwhile exploring alternative mentoring programs, or creating a speaker
series for younger females in high school. For future mentoring programs, I suggest creating measurable variables that will assist when evaluating the program for outcome measures.

**Recommendations**

Following the completion of an analysis of the pilot mentorship program, a number of theoretical and practical recommendations related to the program emerged. The following sections are broken up accordingly. Theoretical recommendations will include suggestions for future research projects. The practical recommendations include suggestions directly pertaining to the mentorship program in the future.

**Theoretical Recommendations**

Prior to this study, there were no documented accounts of mentoring programs using the strengths perspective and duality of structure framework. The challenges experienced in the deployment of a reciprocal mentoring program suggest that more research needs to be completed on the implementation process of reciprocal mentoring programs.

Another possible area for future research could be the difference in mentoring outcomes between male and female mentors. For this study, the structure of the program should remain the same, and additional outcome measures should be implemented. The participant pool in this study was not large enough to adequately address this question.

**Practical Recommendations**

I provided recommendations for the program in a previous chapter. The practical recommendations provided below are a few key recommendations for moving forward: an
increased time length, using mentors and mentees as program champions, and seeing the program continue.

First, I would increase the time length for the program. Initially the program was set to run over a three month period, however, after issues arose the program was only able to run for 6 weeks. In the future, this program would be better run over a longer period of time, such as an academic semester. Additionally, I would have more lead in time for mentors to arrange the program with their place of employment. I feel the additional time will allow relationships to develop further, and give the mentees an opportunity to experience greater exposure to the career.

The second practical recommendation is to use the mentors and mentees of this pilot program as program champions. When moving forward with the program, I need to be able to provide marketing statements and promotional materials for the mentors and mentees. By using the four mentor pairings that lasted the entire program as champions, who experienced the program first hand, and can speak to its successes, I feel that I will be able to secure quality mentors and mentees in the future.

The third practical recommendation is for LAWS to adopt this initiative as a full program. I believe that the results seen in this pilot program will only increase when it operates in full force. Furthermore, I believe that the goals, and the process of this initiative are in line with the vision and mission of LAWS.
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The Wellington Centre. (2012). *Evaluation of the women and mentoring program*. Victoria, AUS: Keating


APPENDICES

Appendix A: E-mail Recruitment Letter

December 1, 2012

Hello,

My name is Meghan Roney and I am a Masters Candidate in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. I am creating a pilot mentorship program for females at the undergraduate level. The purpose of my study is to facilitate opportunities for aspiring women to be exposed to careers in health and wellness, sport and recreation, and media literacy.

I am looking for female undergraduate students who are interested in careers in: sport and recreation, health and wellness and media literacy, such as: coaching, officiating, dietician, health promotion, athletic therapy, journalism, and campus recreation. The program will run for 3 months beginning at the start of January.

Throughout the 3-month program, participants will be required to attend 4 workshop presentations of one hour each, and 2 focus groups of one hour each. In addition to these workshops, you will have the opportunity to develop a mentorship relationship with your mentor. The mentorship program will conclude in mid-March 2013.

If you have any questions regarding the program, or would like to apply to be a mentee please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail at roney@uwindsor.ca or contact my supervisor Dr. Victoria Paraschak by e-mail at parasch@uwindsor.ca.

Sincerely,

Meghan Roney
Master Candidate
Human Kinetics
Appendix B: Recruitment Flyer

ARE YOU A FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT IN THE FACULTY OF HUMAN KINETICS?

ARE YOU CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SPORT AND RECREATION, HEALTH AND WELLNESS, OR SPORT MEDIA?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO BOTH OF THESE QUESTIONS...

JOIN THE

LAWS MENTORING PROGRAM

When: January 2013– March 2013
Why: Being part of this mentoring program will allow you to access highly regarded professionals in your field of interest. And, you will have many opportunities to engage in professional networking session.

CONTACT MEGHAN FOR MORE INFORMATION:
RON@UWINDSOR.CA
## Appendix C: Ideal Mentoring Candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Health and Wellness, Sport or Media Literacy</th>
<th>U of W Employee:</th>
<th>Community Specialist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Caton</td>
<td>Sports Reporter</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Windsor Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Doucette</td>
<td>“The Early Shift”</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td>U of W</td>
<td>CBC Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Fields</td>
<td>Communications Officer</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>The Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisa Mitton</td>
<td>Sports Information Officer</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Harvie</td>
<td>Athletic Therapist</td>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Stoute</td>
<td>Athletic Therapist</td>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Copot-Nepszy</td>
<td>Health Promotion Specialist</td>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td></td>
<td>WECHU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Wellington</td>
<td>Dietician</td>
<td>Health and Wellness</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Health Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chantal Vallee</td>
<td>Head Women’s Basketball Coach</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Ondracka</td>
<td>Campus Recreation Coordinator</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Romiens</td>
<td>Volleyball Official</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Haddad</td>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Riverside Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Leeman</td>
<td>Coach/Intramurals</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation</td>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Windsor Valiants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Mentee Profile Form\textsuperscript{22}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone (W):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone (C):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preferred means of contact:

Rank your preference of relationship (1-3):

___ Sport and Recreation ___ Health and Wellness ___ Media Literacy

Your experience in sport and recreation, health and wellness, or media literacy:

How will this mentoring program help in your future career or avocation aspirations:

Skills and/or attributes that you can bring to a mentoring relationship:

Why would you like to be a mentee:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c|c}
Signature & Date \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Note: this information will be kept confidential and only used for necessary purposes in this mentorship program.

\textsuperscript{22} Amended from Making Mentors (Australian Sports Commission, 2005, p. 9)
**Appendix E: Mentor Profile Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone (W):</td>
<td>Telephone (C):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>E-mail:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preferred means of contact:**

- Your experience in sport and recreation, health and wellness, or media literacy:
- Your future career goals and aspirations:
- Skills and/or attributes that you can bring to a mentoring relationship:
- Why would you like to be a mentor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: this information will be kept confidential and only used for necessary purposes in this mentorship program.

---

23 Amended from Making Mentors (Australian Sports Commission, 2005, p. 9)
Appendix F: Mentoring Agreement

We (mentee) and (mentor) agree to enter into a mentoring relationship voluntarily and comply with the following conditions.
Commencement date: ________________  Completion Date: ________________

Goals for Mentee and Mentor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee’s Current Goal:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes for the mentee (specific skills, knowledge, and qualities desired):</td>
<td>Action plan (what steps will you take to achieve this goal):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor’s Current Goal:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes for the mentor (specific skills, knowledge, and qualities desired):</td>
<td>Action plan (what steps will you take to achieve this goal):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meeting Dates and Venue

We (mentor and mentee) agree to meet (days, times per week, length of time per meeting):

We agree to commit to establishing a mutually beneficial mentoring relationship for the duration of this agreement. We agree to an assurance of confidentiality and a no-fault termination of this relationship if necessary. This agreement may be reviewed at the request of either party.

Signature of mentee: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

Signature of mentor: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

Additional Comments or Concerns:
Appendix G: Conversation Topics for Speed Mentoring

1. What is your role in your department?

2. What are some of the skill sets necessary to succeed in your career?

3. What do you like best about your job?

4. What are your short term and long term goals?

5. What is the biggest challenge you have had to overcome in your career?

6. What motivates you the most about your job?

7. What is your leadership style?

8. If your employees were to describe you in three words, what would they be?

9. What key positions and accomplishments in your career helped you get to the level you have achieved?
### Appendix H: Speed Networking Recording Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Recorder:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of Conversation (mentor):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did they use a conversation starter question: Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, what question did they use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What types of things did they talk about:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments/Observations on the group behaviour and or attitudes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix I: Weekly Mentoring Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Mentee &amp; Mentor:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Meetings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Meetings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Meeting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps taken to achieve goals:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentee:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Items:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentee:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix J: Observation Journal Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Topic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>(body language, interactions, engagement, etc.):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Items:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Conceptual Baggage

Well, I never thought I would actually get to the point of being able to have a full thesis proposal completed. After much jumping around on topics, I have finally found one that speaks to me (ironically I started my thesis exploration interested in mentoring youth, and ended up with a topic mentoring women). Just a little history about myself; I grew up in a small town in Northern Ontario, Sault Ste. Marie. I was very active in sports throughout my elementary and high school days. There were rarely weekends during my high school years when I was home on a weekend; I was usually traveling with one of the many sports I participated in. When I graduated high school I was awarded the Harvey Morrison award for outstanding contribution to female athletics during my four years at Korah Collegiate and Vocational School. This was a really big honour for me, as I had never been the strongest athlete in any sport, but was always highly involved, and the first to volunteer in any way I could. I then continued my education here at the University of Windsor. I have since completed an undergraduate degree, and continued on into my masters (obviously, people don’t just write proposals for fun…right?). Windsor has become home to me over the last 6 years, and I hope one day, that my career and future spouse’s career, allows us to make Windsor our permanent home.

The process of writing has really challenged me in ways that I never really imagined, nor thought to be possible. It has made me realize that generally speaking, I have had a fairly easy trek through my undergraduate and master’s degree until this point. I have also realized how much fear can be a motivator for me. Once I had some serious deadlines set, I had no problem adhering to them!
The process of reading and recording information for my literature review has made me realize that there is infinitely more information out there than I could ever begin to comprehend. Reading the literature has also led me to places that I never imagined my thoughts would wander to (ahh, the joys of free flow thinking). Some of the literature has really challenged the way I look at organizations and society in general. Other literature has really riled me, and I have found myself disagreeing with the content out loud. More so, a lot of the literature has led me to self-reflection. For example, learning around women in leadership positions and the challenges they face has really made me debate if that’s where I want to be in the future. I imagine my knowledge and understanding of mentoring will increase ten-fold before the end of my thesis. I hope that the next stage of the process is even more fun than this one has been!

**DATE: DECEMBER 4, 2013**

Well, I am preparing my presentation for the thesis proposal, which is making me nervous! I love to present, and I love to create presentations, but this is certainly adding an element of pressure to the table! I feel like I covered so much information in my proposal that I don’t even know where to start when including information in my presentation! I realize that my committee members will have read the full thing, but I want to make sure everyone understands, which is added pressure! I am going to start reading through my proposals in the evening to make myself review the sources and such that I used.

Patiently waiting to hear back from ethics, I’ve started dreaming that I have forgotten to include things in my submission…let’s hope they were all just nightmares and that everything is there! Ironically enough, shortly after I wrote that last sentence, I got an e-mail from REB asking to meet with me this afternoon. Here’s hoping everything is a-ok with this!!!
DATE: FEBRUARY 28, 2013

Well, tomorrow is the first day of the mentoring program. Late, very late, but starting! I am excited, and nervous and feeling pressured to make this a great program in a short amount of time… Got word yesterday that we are receiving $1,500 for the Mentoring Program! Awesome news, I will be able to provide some food items, as well as some potential honorariums for the mentors!

I am hoping that I can keep myself on task and be able to finish off the program, as well as my complete thesis with time to graduate at Intersession! Fingers crossed!

DATE: MARCH 1, 2013

Today was the first day of the mentoring program, and I was pleased with the turnout and running of the day. I had the majority of my mentors and mentees attend. There were a few who were unable to attend, and they contacted me prior to the session. I was able to meet up with everyone today to get them to sign the informed consent forms so I was able to begin doing some data analysis. Some of the discussion that happened today was great, it sounds horrible, but I guess I expected the worst, and when I got great content from the networking session, I was so excited! It was working just as I had hoped it would!

DATE: March 8, 2013

Today was the second day of the mentoring project. I asked Marge to give the presentation today, as she was unable to the first day (worked out better that way anyways). There were less people able to attend today’s session. The majority were able to attend when I first confirmed the date, however one pair of the individuals was actually meeting together at that same time, another mentor was away at a conference, and two individuals were away at a work related
event. I have set all my dates so I can finish everything up on time for intersession graduation. The timelines are crazy tight, and I am going to do everything I can to get my stuff done in order to graduate. The more time I spend in the project, the more I actually believe it would be a really great long term project. Some of the feedback that I have received from the participants has been great, and many of them said they hope the program can run for longer next time. Some have even indicated to me that they are going to try to maintain their mentoring relationship after the program finished. I guess that’s sort of the gold standard. I mean, I hope that everyone in the program gets a good experience, and is able to take something from it in the end, but to maintain the relationship and develop it further outside of the program, I think that is just amazing!

I have begun to do some of the results in regards to the mentor and mentee profiles. As I was working through the mentee profiles, I was seeing that the majority of my participants had selected health and wellness (followed by sport and recreation, with media literacy last), I began to wonder why that was. Have we hit a trend in education that the big push is towards health and wellness, or is something else going on here? Are females being introduced to the idea of careers in health and wellness that tend to have a more “caring” aspect to them? While health promotion doesn’t necessarily deal with individual people one on one, it deals with making the population as a whole healthier, which I would argue is a caring trait; they are caring for the larger population. Or are females being discouraged/turned away from careers in sport and recreation and media literacy at a younger age? Maybe the mentoring program actually needs to target high school students? Or maybe women just really have no interest in pursuing careers in those fields? I certainly don’t have the answers, but it really makes me think…what messages are we actually sending the younger women? Are we discouraging them from careers in these fields before they even have the chance to make the decision themselves?
DATE: March 20, 2013

One of the concerns at my thesis proposal defense was the retention of mentees in the program; I am actually finding that it’s more difficult to keep the mentors engaged in the process. I realize it is a bit of a time commitment, and the program in its shortened form requires way more of a commitment than initially thought. I am just getting the impression that some of the mentors are finding it too “onerous” to try and find time to talk to their mentees.

DATE: MARCH 22, 2013

Today was my third presentation session, and also my first focus group sessions. I had the mentees come in from 9-10, and then had a workshop from 10-11, followed by the mentors for their focus group from 11-12. The workshop went well today, Sarah presented on how to remain active in the office, and how to hold healthy meetings. I am not sure if the concept was lost on the participants, or if they found value in it. The focus groups were really what I was concentrating on for most of the morning. The mentee focus group this morning went really well. I felt like the mentees were really excited to share their experiences and opinions, and to have a say in the program recommendations. I had a great feeling when I left the room, that feeling of success, when something is actually going the way you intended. Then there was the mentor’s focus group. This was an interested contrast to the mentee group. I found the mentors were extremely difficult to get talking; they were a little reserved, which surprised me based on their personalities outside of the program. I am not sure if they were a little more hesitant to speak critically about the program, or if maybe they were tired? By the end of the session I had gathered enough valuable information to use for the analysis, however it was not easy.
DATE: MARCH 27th, 2013

I have finished the process of transcribing, and am moving on to the analyzing part. My deadlines are quickly approaching, and I am certainly learning how important my time-management skills are! Between trying to finish my thesis and working, I have been put to the test! It has been a few late nights, but I am finally starting to see chunks of my research come together. Working through this first focus group has been a bit of a challenge. I have never written up focus group results before so I am learning as I go along. Once I figured out the plan to write them, it became much easier, but still taxing.

DATE: APRIL 5, 2013

After analyzing and reviewing the feedback provided in the mid-point focus groups, I changed this final workshop session to be a case study session. I invited the participants to come prepared with a ‘case study’ pertaining to experiences they have had in the work force that could be learned from by others. I also encouraged them to come with questions if they could not come up with a case they wanted to share with the group. This session ran very smoothly, and the mentors were highly involved. I feel as though the mentors enjoyed being able to share their experiences and advice with other people. I always remember that people like to be asked about themselves, and to be asked to share their story, and that was exactly what this was today.

DATE: APRIL 9th, 2013

I have to say, I am rather enjoying the process of writing the remainder of my thesis. Writing generally is not my strong suit, nor do I particularly enjoy it, but this isn’t half bad! I think because I was able to create the program, and work through it I have a better understanding and desire to provide a finished product to LAWS…not having to pay intersession tuition doesn’t
hurt either! I can’t believe I have almost finished everything, only a few more weeks to go and everything will be finished!

**DATE:** May 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2013

During my thesis defense, an audience member asked me if I thought I had mentored any mentee during the process of my program. I had never actually stopped to consider whether or not I had done such a thing. As I thought about it standing in front of everyone, I realized that I had in fact mentored at least one of the mentees during the program. I vividly remember one of the mentees during a focus group sessions saying she had no idea that research could be so hands on and engaging! Prior to my mentoring program she was always under the impression that research was boring, and that you had to just collect data (i.e., statistics). However after being involved in my mentoring program, she was seriously considering pursuing a masters degree based on the idea of human involved research in a similar fashion to mine!
Appendix L: Focus Group Questions

Mid-Point Questions:

1. When you signed up for this program, what goals or benefits did you hope you'd get out of it? Now that you're part way through, are you feeling like you'll be successful in achieving your goals? Are you seeing any other benefits you're gaining through this process?

2. When you signed up for the program, what did you imagine, or believe the process was going to be, why?

3. What was the process you and your mentor/mentee took when completing the mentoring agreement?
   a. What did you like about this process?
   b. What could be improved upon?

4. How have the weekly reports been working for you and your mentor/mentee?
   a. What parts of the weekly report work well? what could be improved upon?

5. What parts of the group mentoring sessions have you enjoyed, why?
   a. Is there an activity we should be doing more of? Less of?

6. How has the process gone in getting to know your mentor/mentee?
   a. Is there anything I/we can be doing to help facilitate this?

7. In the mentoring experience, what has not been working well? how do you think it could be improved?

8. Up to this point, what has been your best experience in the program, why?

9. Do you have any further thoughts at this point to improve the program or process as we move into the last parts of it?

Final Focus Group Questions:

1. When I did the analysis of the first focus groups I found that in order for the mentoring relationship to be successful and worthwhile for you, you as a group needed to experience that you were helping the mentee but also experience professional development, is this correct?
a. Are there any formal or informal rules or guidelines that we can put in place to help this happen?

2. What other formal rules you feel need to be in place to create an optimal program?

3. What were the resources that you used in your relationship?

4. Do you feel you had adequate resources in your mentoring role?

5. What resources helped facilitate your strengths? Their strengths?

6. Are there additional resources we need to bring into play for the mentors/mentees in the future?

7. Informally can you think of any ways to foster the relationships?

8. What do you think the strengths of the mentee/mentor where?

9. What were your strengths as a mentor/mentee?

10. What strengths did you build into your relationship?
   a. Her strengths?
   b. Your strengths?

11. What were the strengths about the program?
   a. What about your relationship with your mentor/mentee?

12. How do you feel you have shaped your mentee/mentor?
   a. How did they shape you?
   b. How did the mentee grow through this process?
   c. How did you facilitate the processes of the relationships?

13. As we conclude do you have anything else to say or reinforce about the program?
Vita Auctoris

NAME: Meghan Audrey Roney

PLACE OF BIRTH: Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1989

EDUCATION: Korah Collegiate and Vocational School, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
            2003-2007
            University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
            2007-2011 BHK
            University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
            2011-2013 MHK