



Cross-Institutional Mentoring Committees

Final Two-Page Summary, 06/21/2024

Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities (CIMC) were designed to create career mentoring networks for faculty with personal characteristics and/or specific identities, especially intersectional identities traditionally underrepresented in STEM (e.g., women of color, LGBTQIA+ women, differently-able women) or simultaneous demands of an academic career and family caregiving responsibilities. Cohorts of CIMCs were formed each academic year starting in Fall 2020 they were yearlong mentoring committees that partnered mentees with mentors who have experienced similar challenges (usually 1-2 mentees, 3-4 mentors). Some CIMCs stayed meeting together for all 4 years.

The CIMC networks emphasized career obstacle problem-solving and enhanced community and belonging. The program reduced isolation and exclusion by developing communities around shared lived experiences and peer strategy discussions. The CIMCs facilitated inter-institutional exchanges and reflective learning among committee members seeding fresh ideas across campus communities. A supporting goal of the program was to instill a culture of listening, awareness, and responsiveness to the concerns of women and traditionally underrepresented faculty that results in systemic institutional change on each campus.

The CIMC model was based on Michigan Tech's Early Career Management (ECM, <https://www.mtu.edu/provost/programs/ecm/>) and Advanced Career Management (ACM, <https://www.mtu.edu/advance/initiatives/acm/>) ADVANCE initiatives.

Participation

1. **2020-2021:** 10 groups. 56 individuals (25 Assistant, 13 Associate, 15 Professor, 9 Other)
2. **2021-2022:** 8 groups, 2 continued. 32 individuals
3. **2022-2023:** 7 groups, 2 continued. 30 individuals
4. **2023-2024:** 9 groups, 4 continued. 36 individuals
5. **Summary:** 137 (+2023/2024) ($\frac{2}{3}$ mentees)

A total of 21 CIMCs with four to seven members participated over the project's two years. Participants predominantly hailed from STEM departments; all were from the four institutions.

Of the participants, 37 were assistant professors, 22 were associate professors, and 23 were professors, with an additional 17 in other academic positions (lecturer, professor of practice, etc.). Of the mentees/mentors, 65 (70%) identified parent/caregiving as an important identity, approximately 50 (50%) identified race/ethnicity as an important identity, 14 (15%) identified LGBTQIA+, and 62 (67%) self-identified gender as an important identity and shared their gender as women.

Outcomes

Individual interviews of CIMC participants were conducted after the end of the second cohort of CIMCs. Seven individuals (three mentors and four mentees), representatives from all four partner institutions, ultimately agreed to participate in our program evaluation. [A complete report from the evaluators is available.](#)

1. CIMCs built community and resiliency.
2. Guiding questions for any future mentoring communities are broadly available.
3. CIMCs were particularly effective for issues that faculty find difficult to express to local mentors and for faculty feeling isolated due to low representation of certain intersectionalities at their institution.
4. Participants largely agreed that their ability to navigate career challenges (87%), work/life (87%), and tenure & promotion (75%) improved through participating in CIMCs. The majority also felt more satisfied with their position at the university.

Dissemination

1. Minerick, A.R., Cervato, C., Bilen-Green, C., Koretsky, C. "Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities (CIIMC): A mentoring framework that centers key identities." ADVANCE AIM Network, virtual talk, Nov. 28, 2023.
2. Minerick, A.R., Cervato, C., Bilen-Green, C., Koretsky, C. & Rouleau, M. Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities: A Virtual Mentoring Model. *The Chronicle of Mentoring and Coaching*, v.6, Special Issue 15, 812-816. 2022. <https://www.mentor-cmc.com/cmc/cmc2022/>
3. Minerick, A., Cervato, C., Goltz, S., Bilen-Green, C., Rouleau, M., Wahl, D., Sotirin, P. (2022) Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities Program, 2022 American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Proceedings, June 2022, Annual Conference & Exposition, Minneapolis, MN. <https://peer.asee.org/41385>
4. Minerick, A.R., Cervato, C., Bilen-Green, C., Koretsky, C. & Rouleau, M. (2022). Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities: a virtual mentoring model during COVID-19. University of New Mexico 15th Annual Mentoring Conference, October 26, 2022.
5. Minerick, A. (2022). "Leveraging Support and Professional Development Across Institutions through Cross-Institutional Mentoring Communities. Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, April 13-17, 2022.

The CIMCs leveraged growing cross-institutional relationships to create near-peer and senior-peer mentoring spaces for individuals seeking whole-person support and professional mentoring. This emergent and promising mentoring model can transform academic mentoring, particularly for individuals, including postdocs and possibly graduate students, under-represented in STEM disciplines and whose intersectional identities do not fit in the traditional one-on-one mentoring approach.