

**Table 1***Themes - mentors*

Theme	Description	Representative quote
1: Staying connected	Captured both the sense that mentors wished to contribute to the development of the careers of their junior colleagues, and also wished to maintain a connection to each other, to academia, to the Faculty and to the institution.	“It was really important to me to continue to be involved with the department and faculty colleagues.”
2: Paying it forward	Captured comments that made a connection between the experiences that mentors had themselves, the impact of this experience on their own career development and the interest in offering such an experience to others.	“I had some excellent mentors... over my career and found the experience enriching, but also, it helped move my career forward, there's no doubt about it”.
3: The mentoring relationship	Relational engagement was reported as key for mentors. Comments that highlighted the mentoring relationship focused on how relational engagement can strengthen the effectiveness of mentoring. Mentors expressed that this is especially true when mentoring across disciplines. There was an acknowledgement that investing in getting to know each other and making efforts to understand the context that the mentees lived in, and worked to develop their career in, was a strong variable in the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.	“I knew my mentee, but from having worked on a committee or two – so only very professionally. We always pulled in the personal, so we got to know each other...I think that truly contributed...to the development of the relationship ...”.
4: Mentor skill development	The mentoring development program that equipped mentors to engage in informed academic mentorship with a career focus was viewed as important. Following the completion of the workshops, mentors felt supported and prepared to enter the experience. The workshops and the workbook were used to facilitate effective relationships.	“I learned that, as always, it is the relationship that makes the outcome”.
5: Enrichment through engagement	Mentors expressed that the opportunity to engage post-retirement represented a welcomed departure from the usually rigid structure of academia. In the study intervention, they had the freedom to stay engaged in activities that they found enriching	“...I worked to try and maintain a connection with colleagues, I didn't formally teach classes, simply because I wanted the freedom to not be constrained by marking

6: The academic context

without the constraints that academic life demanded.

Uniquely, retiree mentors could offer a rich understanding of the history and culture of an institution. This allowed for a uniquely meaningful perspective to be passed on to the mentees who were navigating the institution.

and deadlines and things that I wasn't looking forward to" "...the wisdom of how you do it within the culture of the university is sometimes something perhaps we can bring to the, to the table."

At the same time, mentors were keenly aware that the academic context was undergoing change. The expansion of requirements and obligations on faculty was noted, and comments highlighted that participation in programs like the study intervention would need to remain voluntary in order to maintain the level of genuine engagement that was required for it to be successful.

"We don't want to see this as yet another job requirement that you must do either as a mentor or mentee."

7: The career trajectory of the mentee

Comments were grounded in a desire to provide a differentiated mentoring experience that was specific towards the individual mentee, and their location along the career trajectory. This was also evident in the inquiring work mentors engaged in to establish where the mentee was at and then match their coaching and mentoring strategies to that.

"Where they're at in their career trajectory makes a difference."

"There may also be different levels of anxiety as well. I mean, I mean, the amount of anxiety that probationary faculty feel is just enormous."

---