



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Promoting and Documenting a Sea Change: WiSE Mentoring in the BC interior

Amy Jenkins Swan, P.Eng.

Trudy Kavanagh, PhD
Robin Whittall, M Museum Studies
Stephanie McKeown, MA

From the research: women's career choices...

- are based on what they like and value
- are shaped by society's gender roles
- are influenced by role models
- involve multiple goals

Jacquelynne Eccles, *Understanding women's educational and occupational choices* (1994)

UBC

Okanagan Campus



- **July 1, 2005**
- **Small campus, 8643 students**
- **Kelowna population: ~ 106,000**
- **Conservative, retirement community**
- **Summer/winter vacation destination**

Female:Male undergraduate student ratios

(November 2011)

UBC Okanagan Campus

BA	1210:642	65.3%	female
BSc	492:490	50.1%	female
Engineering	40:209	16.1%	female

UBC Vancouver Campus

BA	6684:3942	62.9%	female
BSc	3420:3117	52.3%	female
Engineering	787:3393	18.8%	female

(Canada 2010, Engineering 17.7% female)

Annual Women in Science Workshops

- Funded by the Jade Bridges Project (NSERC Chair, Women in Science)
- \$3000 per year
- 2006 to 2009
 - Saturday workshops
 - Themes (*Ambition, Communication*)
- 2010 to present
 - Weekday evenings, 2-hour workshops
 - *Get the Job*
 - *Keep the Job, Get a life*



Women in Science Workshops at UBCO



Workshop Objective:

- to encourage and inspire female science students to a career in science



The WiSE Mentoring Program Committee

Who are we? We are diverse and wonderful!

- Faculty, Physical Geography (Trudy Kavanagh)
- Staff, Student Career Advising (Robin Whittall)
- Graduate Student, Biology (Jen Forsythe)
- Administration, Evaluation (Stephanie McKeown)
- Graduate Student, Engineering (Amy Swan)
- Centre for Teaching & Learning (Vania Chan)
- Student Advising, Engineering (Maria Graziana)
- Work-Study Students

Support and guidance from WWEST

Seed funding:

- Workshop to develop a mentoring program
- Annual Women in Science & Engineering workshops (3 yrs)
- Women in Science & Engineering Mentoring Program (3 yrs)

Informative workshops:

- January 2011 *Project Management*
- September 2011 *Succession planning*
- January 2012 *Fundraising*



Westcoast Women in Engineering,
Science & Technology

Developing the WiSE Mentoring Program

- Seed funding from WWEST
- Workshop, May 10, 2011
 - 1 Faculty, 5 staff, 1 industry mentor, 3 undergraduate and graduate students, 1 mentor program coordinator



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Developing the WiSE Mentoring Program

Workshop, May 10, 2011

- History of the Women in Science workshops
- Overview of UBC Vancouver mentoring program
 - Goals; training mentors & mentees; matching mentors and mentees; program evaluation; staffing and time commitments; budget; pitfalls to avoid
- Long-term/longitudinal study
 - Purpose of evaluation; evaluation presented as stories; the program; mentee stories; mentor stories; pre- and post-surveys; interviews; focus groups; applying to Research Ethics
- Planning session
 - Events; timing of events; number of mentees; budget; planning the longitudinal research study; finding mentors; finding mentees; web pages; mentor/mentee handbooks; what are we forgetting?

Developing the WiSE Mentoring Program

Summer 2011

- Build web pages (<http://wise.ok.ubc.ca/>)
- Develop mentor/mentee application forms
- Develop mentor/mentee mentoring handbooks
- Finding mentors/mentees
- Plan a schedule of activities
- Identify funding (Deans, Provost, Equity, WWEST)
- Create a logo
- Committee: weekly meetings

Developing the WiSE Mentoring Program

Summer 2011

- Develop the Longitudinal Research Project
 - Survey questionnaires; interview questions; focus group questions; workshop feedback forms
 - Complete *TCPS 2: Core Course on Research Ethics*
 - Apply for Research Ethics Approval

Mission of the WiSE Mentoring Program

- **To support the success of young women transitioning from their undergraduate education to a career in science or engineering.**
- **To prepare and mentor young women to remain in scientific careers.**

Goals of the WiSE Mentoring Program

- 1. To raise students' awareness about the issues faced by women with careers in science and engineering.**
- 2. To provide students with tools and strategies to enable them to succeed in their future careers in science and engineering.**

Student mentees

- Women
- All years of university
- Science triads
- Engineering triads
- Triads:
 - mentor
 - junior student
 - senior/grad student



Industry Mentors

- Women
- Science graduates
- Engineering graduates
- Experience in industry
- Experience with life decisions
- Actively working in industry



WiSE Mentoring Program: *Events Schedule*

Date	Time	Event
Sept 19/20	5:00–6:00	Information session
Oct 4	5:30–7:30	Mentee Orientation Session
Oct 18	5:30–6:00	Mentor Orientation Session
	6:00–8:00	Mentor/mentee introduction
Jan 25	5:30–7:30	Professional Development Session
March 7	5:30–7:30	W in Sci Workshop 1 (Get the Job)
March 14	5:30–7:30	W in Sci Workshop 2 (Keep the Job, get a Life)
March 28	5:30–6:30	Mentees: introductions, networking
April 10	4:30–5:30	Reception: Mentors only
	5:30–7:30	Reception: Mentees, administrators

WiSE Mentoring Program: *Longitudinal Study*

Date	Event
Sept 20	Deadline: Mentee applications
Oct 3	Deadline: Mentees pre-survey
Oct 4	Deadline: Mentor applications
Oct 17	Deadline: Mentor pre-survey
Week Jan 30	Mentee focus groups (10 students)
Week Feb 20	Phone interviews mentors
April 9	Deadline: Mentee post-survey
April 17	Deadline: Mentor post-survey

Longitudinal study – *Mentee Focus Groups*

Questions:

- **Comment on relationship in mentoring triad**
 - **Effective matching with mentor /other mentee**
 - **Frequency of communication**
 - **Effective communication with mentor/other mentee**
- **Activities engaged in with the mentoring triad**
- **Impact of program on academics and career**
- **Usefulness of WiSE events**
- **Support from WiSE Mentoring Program committee**
- **Is the mentoring program personally rewarding?**

Is the mentoring program personally rewarding?

- I think it empowers me...
- As an engineer I find it really special to be in a room with only girls...that is really nice...I have a handful of tutorials and classes [where] I'm the only woman
- It's special, we get to meet for special events and all the men are jealous, some of the guys I talk to say, "Oh wow, I wish I had a mentoring program!"

Evaluation of WiSE events so far

- The food was awesome
- [The events] make you feel really special and they're very helpful too.

What might we do differently next year?

- Recruit more mentors!
- More emphatic about mentee responsibilities from the start
- More structured activities



What might we do differently next year?

- **WiSE Committee**
 - Fundraising – seed funding reducing with time
 - Size/delegation – reduce individual time demands
 - Succession planning – for budget and committee membership



Westcoast Women in Engineering,
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Starting your own mentoring program...

- People – range of skills
- Workshop – bring in an expert
- Seed money – local NSERC chair, Deans, Equity Office, APENS, APGNS
- Administration buy-in/support – an ally
- Interested students
- Connections – willing mentors
- Build in opportunities for feedback

