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Artículos científicos

Características del estudiante mentor en la educación superior

Characteristics of the student mentor in higher education

Características do aluno mentor no ensino superior

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Resumen

El plan de estudios del programa de licenciatura de Medicina Veterinaria y Zootecnia de la Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas (UAZ) es un programa de calidad, con reconocimiento nacional e internacional, donde uno de los indicadores de calidad más relevantes ante los organismos acreditadores, es mantener una eficiencia termina alta en dicho programa, para lo cual se debe prestar especial atención a los indicadores intermedios de promoción intersemestral, egreso y titulación. Para tal efecto, además de dar cabal cumplimiento a las actividades curriculares formales, también se incorporan las mentorías para evitar la deserción y coadyuvar al cumplimiento de los objetivos mencionados. La mentoría es un programa que lucha por lograr el reconocimiento curricular, donde los estudiantes sobresalientes que apoyan académicamente a compañeros en riesgo de rezago sientan el respaldo institucional, principalmente por parte del cuerpo de profesores. El presente trabajo, por tanto, se enfoca en describir las características de los actores del proceso de mentoría con base en una metodología cualitativa. La literatura revisada respecto al tema se basa en aportaciones teóricas sobre las formas en que se interrelacionan los actores involucrados en la mentoría. Además, se hace un análisis de cómo los modelos educativos deben de retomar las acciones de mentoría para que en el futuro sean reconocidas de manera institucional.

Palabras clave: características, formación académica, mentor, mentoría.

Abstract

The Study Plan of the Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics Degree program of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas (UAZ), is a quality program, with national and international recognition, where one of the most relevant quality indicators before the accrediting bodies is maintaining an efficiency ends high in such a program, with national and international recognition, where one of the most relevant quality indicators before the accrediting bodies is maintaining an efficiency ends high in such a program. That is why special attention should be paid to the intermediate indicators of inter-monthly promotion, egress, and graduation. For this purpose, in addition to fully complying with the formal curricular activities, mentoring activities are also incorporated to avoid dropping out and contribute to the fulfillment of the aforementioned objectives. Mentoring is a program that strives to achieve curricular recognition, where outstanding students who academically support peers at risk of lagging, feel institutional support mainly from the faculty. This work

addresses an analysis of the characteristics of the actors in the mentoring process, under a qualitative development methodology. The literature that is analyzed on the subject is based on theoretical contributions on how the actors involved in mentoring interrelate; In the same way, an analysis is made of how educational models should take up the mentoring actions to pay for them to be recognized institutionally in the future.

Keywords: characteristics, academic training, mentoring, mentoring.

Resumo

O plano de estudos do programa de licenciatura em Medicina Veterinária e Zootecnia da Universidade Autónoma de Zacatecas (UAZ) é um programa de qualidade, com reconhecimento nacional e internacional, onde um dos indicadores de qualidade mais relevantes perante os organismos credenciadores é manter uma eficiência fins elevados no referido programa, para o qual deve ser dada atenção especial aos indicadores intermediários de promoção, graduação e pós-graduação mensais. Para tanto, além do cumprimento integral das atividades curriculares formais, também é incorporada a tutoria para evitar o abandono escolar e contribuir para o cumprimento dos objetivos acima mencionados. O Mentoring é um programa que visa o reconhecimento curricular, onde os alunos que se destacam, que apoiam academicamente os pares em risco de atraso, sentem o apoio institucional, principalmente do corpo docente. O presente trabalho, portanto, se concentra em descrever as características dos atores do processo de mentoria com base em uma metodologia qualitativa. A literatura revisada sobre o assunto fundamenta-se em contribuições teóricas sobre as formas como os atores envolvidos na mentoria se relacionam. Além disso, é feita uma análise de como os modelos educacionais devem retomar as ações de mentoria para que, no futuro, sejam reconhecidos institucionalmente.

Palavras-chave: características, formação acadêmica, mentor, mentoria.

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Introduction

The Academic Center for School Services (CASE) of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas (UAZ) together with the Academic Unit of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics (UAMVZ) follow up on the Mentoring Program (created in 2015) to guide students again income, so in this paper the procedures carried out in it are analyzed to provide proposals to improve it. The students who have participated in this program state that it is very useful and a good support strategy for advancement, especially for new students, who face the most difficulties at the beginning of their professional training. In this sense, the UAMVZ mentoring coordination has systematized procedures so that the mentor students carry out the activities in a planned and organized manner, where academic support is provided to the new student. For this, the student (mentor) must have certain characteristics, which must be recognized in order to provide an optimal service that prevents school dropout.

According to Clutterbuck et al. (2017), the mentoring activity dates back centuries, as a form of interaction between those involved according to the characteristics of social development. Currently, the academic programs, the context, the individual and group needs and the social relationship in which they develop set the guidelines for how to carry out mentoring programs (Orland Barak, 2016). This accompaniment has become an indispensable tool during the entry, stay and graduation of students, so it must be in a way of academic life. Indeed, mentoring becomes a bastion when advanced, volunteer and outstanding students facilitate this transition through a formal program of coexistence and reflection on the actions and concepts for the construction of knowledge (Alonso et al., 2012).

The mentoring program - which in most higher education institutions is still considered informal, since it does not figure within the substantive academic activities - allows students to obtain positive academic and vocational results (van Dam et al., 2018). Traditionally, mentoring has been considered as an informal relationship between older people or people with greater academic progress, who achieve empathy with young people or students of an organization. (Garringer *et al.*, 2015).

Now, based on the teaching experience and the contribution to the training of student mentors, the authors of this work consider mentoring as incidental and informal learning. This experience has been recorded in the area of veterinary surgery, where outstanding students support those who find it difficult to perform surgery on live animals due to various

factors, such as stress, fear, etc. This way of locating mentors and mentees is located in an informal program where students trust each other and establish their corresponding role. A different atmosphere is created than the one that occurs in the formal setting between student and teacher, and they learn to discover the reality in which they are immersed. The mentor also learns by observing and getting to know his disciple and friend from his perspective, since there are underlying cultural and other aspects that placed him there. For this reason, what is central in mentoring is not only achieving goals, but also the process that is experienced.

Mentoring Conceptualization

Mentoring is known to have its origins in Greek mythology, specifically in Homer's *Odyssey*, where Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, son of Ulysses. Given the temporary absence of the father figure due to war issues, the role of the tutor arises in the educational field. The level of participation was given to such a degree that the mentor was considered half god and half man, and played roles typical of men and women. In fact, he assumed a preponderant role that corresponded to the parents with a strong sense of credibility and wisdom (Díaz and Bastías, 2013).

Currently, mentoring is carried out by students, identified and trained for their personal and academic qualities, to support other students. Mentorships are individual or group to solve a problem, complete a task, learn a strategy, master a procedure, etc., so it serves to support the role of teachers (Quevedo Marcolino and Medeiros Rodrigues Reali, 2010).

For Gómez and Eisman (2001), group mentoring identifies problems of a school, personal, family or social nature that affect the training process, and channels them to internal instances for their due care. On the other hand, individualized mentoring is in charge of those aspects related to pedagogy and teaching methods with the purpose that learning flows hand in hand with the development of values, attitudes, skills and competencies for a more comprehensive professional and professional training. human of the mentee.

Mentoring, then, is a direct orientation to the student in accordance with the peer mentoring protocol, where the different established evaluation activities are carried out (Soto et al., 2012). In other words, mentoring is a type of relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and results measured in terms of competencies gained.

This activity has a place in the supervision scheme proposed by Ten Cate (2018) in his theoretical proposal aimed at developing competencies through the model called reliable professional activities. It establishes a pyramid of student development that begins at the level at which they are only allowed to be an observer of an academic activity or professional service carried out by experts and advanced students in higher grades; then that student observer is allowed to do the assignments or activities in conjunction with their supervising teacher. In this way, activities are entrusted to him until he reaches independence and autonomy in his decisions to masterfully execute the activities that were entrusted to him under his responsibility. At that moment, the student who manages to climb said pyramid is in a position to be a mentor to supervise those who start the same journey, but who manifest different types of situations or gaps that make them a candidate to be supported.

Having identified the definitions of mentoring and taking into account that the mentor acts as an indispensable participant in it, the subject of mentoring is defined as a person who is willing to help and invest time and energy in the process of sharing their knowledge and experience. When assuming this responsibility, they must communicate assertively, provide feedback constructively, guide, provide information of ideas, confront, encourage and explore options (Soler, 2005).

Mentoring must be established before a need, which is inciting an activity of exchange between two or more people. The notion of need —according to Heller (1996)— oscillates between desires and lacks. However, knowing what is needed is really difficult, so the job of mentors, professionals and scientists is to help pinpoint them in a given situation.

Specifically, the mentoring activity focuses on meeting defined interests and solving needs, desires, expectations and even whims. That is, the definition of a need implies considering objective and subjective aspects, which implies emotional and cultural perspectives of the recipients of the service offered. For Miettinen (2005) a need is understood as a contradiction or a possibility to be resolved through the activity mediated by the use of tools. For this, it is necessary to imagine the object —in this case, the absent knowledge in the mentee student— to create actions that allow overcoming this dilemma, either creating new alternatives or transforming the existing ones, because by satisfying needs, individual capacities and competencies are developed and collective. Thus, the need becomes the motive capable of guiding the actions of the subject only when he finds the object of it.

One of the characteristics of mentoring in the university environment is the exchange of ideas and concepts, since it allows the transfer of knowledge and experiences, which allows the relationship between mentors and mentees to be strengthened. (Burgos, 2018).

Method

The present work was based mainly on the qualitative approach, since the central part was based on a bibliographic review. Among the main points that stand out from this review, the need for continuous training of student mentors stands out, and the characteristics that they must have to carry out said work in higher education are rescued.

In this sense, the integrity and independence in the curricular development that the students show for knowledge management and decision making seems to be an element that will shape them institutionally in the group of prominent mentors. In other words, they are the students who excel in the more objective aspects of knowledge, specific skills, and attitudes in their discipline; In addition, they show qualities for socialization, human warmth, ease of interaction and teamwork, leadership attitudes, as well as a willingness to carry out both their own affairs and those of the people in their charge in a parallel and organized manner. (Escudero, 2017; Terrion y Leonard, 2010).

Student Mentor Characteristics

- Be a student of the UAMVZ of the UAZ with a minimum average of 8.5, which is verified through the Kardex, official document of the academic progress of the students of the Zootechnical Veterinary Doctor career.
- Demonstrate experience in the area that is going to venture as a mentor, with mastery of processes and knowledge of those areas where statistically a higher rate of failure is reported as a possible reason for school dropout, or where extraordinary support is requested by of students with grades less than or equal to that of the mentor.
- Adaptation to the learning pace of the mentored student.
- Have availability of time without neglecting their own academic progress.
- Organize your activities to also dedicate space to continuous training.

- Handling difficult situations. Show empathy with the mentor student and take active listening into account to clarify any academic need that may arise.
- Interest in helping others. Solidarity with the student mentor.
- Have impeccable conduct inside and outside the institution.
- Have a passing grade in all subjects and not have any extraordinary exam.
- Knowledge of the institution, especially the academic regulations on admission, permanence and graduation from the MVZ degree.
- Charisma and empathy with fellow mentees. Understand the situations that are experienced in today's world due to economic, health and learning problems.
- Interpersonal skills such as leadership, listening skills, teamwork.
- Have values of social commitment, honesty, justice, democracy, critical-scientific thinking and code of ethics.
- Discretion regarding what was commented by the mentee.
- Get involved in mentor training induction courses at UAMVZ.

Discussion

The institutional mentoring program of the UAZ together with the Mentoring Coordination of the UAMVZ are in charge of ensuring that the mentor students follow the support and orientation strategies of the program to advise the new students and thus guarantee their academic improvement. In this sense, it should be noted that for the selection of mentors, the characteristics established here must be identified. Once selected, they must be recruited and trained to better perform the task entrusted to them.

Conclusions

The benefits of the mentoring program are linked to social and administrative orientation, study habits and techniques, organization and academic performance, and support in the academic path.

The design of the institutional mentoring program, therefore, is focused on offering academic services to new students and advanced semester students, if requested. For this, the characteristics that the higher education mentor student of the institutional mentoring program of the UAMVZ of the UAZ are established.

Among the limitations detected is the fact that some teachers do not agree that the mentoring program supports the lags that its content or methodology do not allow their students to advance. In addition to this, the current era of the modality of studying online sometimes makes communication between students difficult to receive mentoring.

Future lines of research

In principle, it should be emphasized that the recognition of mentors for their contribution to academic services should be encouraged. Likewise, topics such as the following can be delved into: 1) the role of the student mentor, 2) mentoring at the higher level, 3) virtual mentoring among peers, 4) mentoring as an educational strategy, 5) the processes of mentoring, 6) the social impact of the mentoring program, and 7) online peer mentoring due to covid-19.

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