

ACADEMIC MENTORSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UKRAINIAN AND EUROPEAN MODELS AMID CRISIS AND INTEGRATION

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INTRODUCTION

The culture of academic mentorship has gained increasing significance in contemporary higher education, particularly against the backdrop of global transformations, including internationalization, digital transition, geopolitical instability, and growing demands for inclusion and quality assurance. These dynamics are particularly pronounced in the case of Ukraine, where the ongoing war with Russia has profoundly affected higher education institutions (HEIs), compelling them to adapt swiftly to new realities, including the displacement of students and faculty, infrastructure destruction, and disruptions in academic mobility (Ivanytska, 2024¹; Fast, 2024²; Zaharova, 2022³). In this context, mentorship has emerged not merely as an auxiliary support mechanism but as a cornerstone of academic resilience, professional growth, and institutional renewal.

Globally, academic mentorship is viewed as a structured and relational process designed to facilitate the personal, educational, and professional development of students and early-career researchers. In Europe, the notion of mentorship has evolved into comprehensive systems integrated into institutional strategies, reflecting broader educational goals such as inclusivity, student-centered learning, social cohesion, and international competitiveness (Ivanytska, 2018⁴; Osidak et al., 2021⁵). Institutions in countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have pioneered structured

¹ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

² Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія "Педагогіка"*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

³ Zaharova N. The genesis of mentoring as a historical phenomenon. *Scientific Papers of Berdiansk State Pedagogical University. Series: Pedagogical Sciences*. 2022. № 1. C. 104–111. <https://doi.org/10.31494/2412-9208-2022-1-1-104-111>

⁴ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

⁵ Osidak V., Drahinda O., Kvasova O. Training the trainers in language assessment via mentoring: Building expertise to promote language assessment literacy of Ukrainian university teachers. *Languages*. 2021. № 4. C. 194. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6040194>

mentoring programs that not only support academic achievement but also enable the integration of students from refugee backgrounds, promote gender equity, and foster intercultural competencies (Ivanytska, 2018⁶; Fast, 2024⁷). These programs often benefit from cross-border collaboration and funding schemes, particularly within the Erasmus+ framework, which enables the transfer of best practices across national contexts.

In Ukraine, mentorship culture remains in a transitional stage, simultaneously shaped by traditional academic hierarchies and contemporary imperatives for reform. Recent reforms in higher education, along with increased academic mobility facilitated by initiatives such as the Bologna Process, have laid the groundwork for more dynamic and student-oriented mentoring approaches. However, challenges persist, especially in crisis contexts where students and staff experience psychological distress, disrupted learning trajectories, and limited access to academic resources (Osidak et al., 2021⁸; Fast, 2024⁹). Despite these difficulties, Ukrainian institutions have begun to institutionalize mentoring through policy innovations and international partnerships, focusing on building resilience, improving quality assurance, and aligning with European standards (Ivanytska, 2024¹⁰; Tsymbaliuk et al., 2020¹¹).

Current scholarship emphasizes the importance of implementing individualized and inclusive mentoring strategies in Ukrainian universities to ensure not only academic success but also the socio-cultural integration of displaced and vulnerable students. Mentorship is increasingly seen as a tool for mitigating inequality, supporting career development, and empowering underrepresented groups, including women in STEM and doctoral researchers

⁶ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

⁷ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

⁸ Osidak V., Drahinda O., Kvasova O. Training the trainers in language assessment via mentoring: Building expertise to promote language assessment literacy of Ukrainian university teachers. *Languages*. 2021. № 4. C. 194. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6040194>

⁹ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹⁰ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹¹ Tsymbaliuk S., Kurchenko L., Tokar V., Vinska O., Shkoda T. Gendered perceptions of professional development in academia: Evidence from a Ukrainian university. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*. 2020. № 1. C. 406–418. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.18\(1\).2020.34](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.18(1).2020.34)

at risk (Zaharova, 2022¹²; Fast, 2024¹³; Tsymbaliuk et al., 2020¹⁴). Moreover, gender dynamics and historical legacies of academic mentoring – particularly the roles of informal patronage versus formal institutional programs – remain critical to understanding the limitations and prospects of mentorship cultures in both Ukrainian and European systems.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of academic mentorship cultures in Ukrainian and European higher education institutions.

Specifically, it aims to:

(1) examine the conceptual foundations and historical trajectories of academic mentorship;

(2) describe and contrast current mentorship models and practices in Ukraine and Europe;

(3) identify key challenges and structural limitations affecting the implementation of effective mentoring; and

(4) propose evidence-based recommendations for enhancing mentorship frameworks in higher education.

The findings of this analysis aim to inform academic leaders, policymakers, and educators in both national and international contexts, particularly in light of the ongoing transformation of educational ecosystems under conditions of crisis and global interdependence.

1. Theoretical foundations and terminology

The conceptual landscape of academic mentorship is underpinned by the interrelated but distinct notions of mentoring, coaching, and tutoring, each contributing uniquely to the support and development of learners and early-career professionals. These three roles, though overlapping in practice, differ in their historical origins, theoretical underpinnings, functional objectives, and degrees of formality (Irby, 2012¹⁵; Krishna et al., 2019¹⁶; Kozyar & Byhar, 2022¹⁷).

¹² Zaharova N. The genesis of mentoring as a historical phenomenon. *Scientific Papers of Berdiansk State Pedagogical University. Series: Pedagogical Sciences*. 2022. № 1. C. 104–111. <https://doi.org/10.31494/2412-9208-2022-1-1-104-111>

¹³ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹⁴ Tsymbaliuk, S., Kurchenko, L., Tokar, V., Vinska, O., & Shkoda, T. (2020). Gendered perceptions of professional development in academia: Evidence from a Ukrainian university. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*. [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.18\(1\).2020.34](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.18(1).2020.34)

¹⁵ Irby B. Editor's overview: Mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2012. № 3. C. 297–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2012.708186>

¹⁶ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational

1.1. Mentoring: origins, functions, and distinctions

Mentoring traditionally denotes a long-term, developmentally oriented relationship between a more experienced individual (the mentor) and a less experienced one (the mentee). Rooted in ancient practices of apprenticeship and knowledge transfer, mentoring has evolved into a structured and multi-dimensional practice across educational, professional, and civic domains. The core of mentoring lies in its holistic and trust-based character, involving sustained interpersonal engagement that extends beyond the transmission of knowledge or skills (Definition of mentoring¹⁸; Krishna et al., 2019¹⁹; Kozyar & Byhar, 2022²⁰).

Scholarly literature, especially Kram's foundational model (1985), distinguishes two primary functions of mentoring:

1. Career or instrumental functions, which include sponsorship, exposure to opportunities, coaching, protection, and providing challenging assignments that foster professional growth.

2. Psychosocial functions, which address emotional well-being, role modeling, and support for self-confidence, identity formation, and interpersonal competence (Kram, as cited in Krishna et al., 2019²¹; Hurkova et al., 2022²²).

What sets mentoring apart from related practices, such as coaching and tutoring, is its depth, duration, and scope. While coaching is typically short-term, goal-specific, and often focused on performance optimization in a

studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

¹⁷ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

¹⁸ Definition of mentoring from the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus. Cambridge University Press. URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/mentoring>

¹⁹ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

²⁰ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>.

²¹ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

²² Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Supl/665>

particular domain (e.g., executive skills or sports), mentoring tends to be a longitudinal and relational process, focusing on broad personal and professional development. Tutoring, by contrast, is usually confined to academic or task-specific assistance within a limited timeframe and does not typically involve role modeling or personal development (Irby, 2012²³; Irby et al., 2018²⁴).

Another defining feature of mentoring is its potential to transcend formal institutional structures. Although mentorship often begins within an academic department or workplace, effective mentor–mentee relationships frequently continue informally over time and across institutions. For example, doctoral supervisors may continue advising their mentees post-graduation as they navigate early career challenges, grant applications, or tenure processes. In this sense, mentoring becomes a «lifelong developmental alliance», adaptable to shifting professional and personal contexts.

Modern conceptions of mentoring also emphasize its bidirectional and dynamic nature. While the mentor provides guidance, the mentee contributes new perspectives, digital fluency, and critical reflection—thus fostering mutual learning. In intercultural or intergenerational mentorship settings, this reciprocal exchange is especially pronounced and can lead to transformative professional and institutional change (Kozyar & Byhar, 2022²⁵; Krishna et al., 2019²⁶).

Furthermore, mentoring is increasingly framed as a strategic intervention for equity and inclusion. Inclusive mentoring models aim to reduce structural barriers for underrepresented groups – such as women in leadership, first-generation students, individuals, and scholars from conflict-affected regions – by offering not only guidance, but also affirmation, sponsorship, and access to academic networks (Karikari et al., 2025²⁷;

²³ Irby B. Editor's overview: Mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2012. № 3. C. 297–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2012.708186>

²⁴ Irby B., Boswell J., Jeong S., Pugliese E. Editor's overview: Tutoring and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2018. № 3. C. 245–248. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2018.1511955>

²⁵ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

²⁶ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

²⁷ Karikari L., Obiri J., Mensah C., Nyame K., Botsyoe M. The role of mentorship and support systems in enhancing women's academic advancement in higher education. *Path of Science*. 2025. № 4. C. 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.114-6>

Sevelius et al., 2024²⁸). These mentorships are most effective when mentors are trained to be culturally responsive and when programs are situated within a supportive institutional culture.

In sum, mentoring is a *complex, evolving, and context-sensitive practice that combines personal connection with professional development*. It is not merely an educational method but a relational framework that can influence academic cultures, support social mobility, and foster resilience throughout the lifespan.

1.2. Coaching: performance-driven development and goal-oriented support

Coaching, by contrast to mentoring, is generally a *shorter-term, task-specific, and performance-oriented process* designed to support individuals in achieving clearly defined goals within a set timeframe. It emphasizes skill enhancement, goal attainment, behavioral change, and measurable outcomes, often within the context of professional development, leadership training, or organizational performance (Hilali et al., 2020²⁹; Templeton et al., 2021³⁰). Unlike mentoring, which encompasses both holistic and psychosocial dimensions, coaching focuses primarily on the functional or technical competencies required to perform effectively in a particular role.

Coaching relationships are typically formalized through contracts or agreements, involving a structured sequence of sessions, well-defined milestones, and ongoing feedback mechanisms. Many coaching models draw from psychological and behavioral science frameworks, such as Cognitive Behavioral Coaching, GROW (Goal – Reality – Options – Will), or solution-focused approaches, which focus on identifying obstacles, developing action plans, and measuring progress over time (Irby, 2012³¹).

In educational and professional settings, coaching is frequently deployed to support leadership transitions, performance improvement, or behavioral change. For example, early-career faculty or managers may work with a coach to refine time management skills, improve classroom performance, or

²⁸ Sevelius J., Harris O., Bowleg L. Intersectional mentorship in academic medicine: A conceptual review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2024. № 4. C. 503. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21040503>

²⁹ Hilali K., Mughairi B., Kian M., Karim A. Coaching and mentoring: Concepts and practices in development of competencies: A theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*. 2020. № 1. C. 159–173. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v10-i1/6991>

³⁰ Templeton N., Jeong S., Pugliese E. Mentoring for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2021. № 1. C. 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2021.1902709>

³¹ Irby B. Editor's overview: Mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2012. № 3. C. 297–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2012.708186>

enhance communication styles. Coaching is also common in corporate environments, where return on investment is tracked in terms of productivity, employee retention, or leadership pipeline development (Hilali et al., 2020³²; Templeton et al., 2021³³).

One of the key differences between coaching and mentoring lies like their relationship. Coaching is often hierarchical and expert-driven, with the coach acting as a facilitator of change or a performance consultant. While emotional support or role modeling may be present, they are not central to the coaching dynamic. The personal depth, long-term continuity, and identity formation associated with mentoring are typically absent from coaching relationships (Irby, 2012³⁴; Krishna et al., 2019³⁵).

Moreover, coaching generally occurs within formal institutional or organizational frameworks rather than emerging organically from shared interests or mutual trust, as mentoring often does. While some coaching programs now incorporate mentoring principles—particularly in leadership development initiatives—coaching remains distinct in its focus on measurable outcomes and accountability systems (Hilali et al., 2020³⁶).

In summary, coaching is a highly structured and goal-oriented practice designed to optimize individual performance in specific areas of focus. It complements but does not replace mentoring, providing targeted interventions where clarity, efficiency, and measurable results are prioritized over long-term relational development or broader personal growth.

1.3. Tutoring: instructional support for targeted academic needs

Tutoring is typically defined as a *short-term, content-specific, and pedagogically focused instructional intervention* designed to address immediate academic challenges faced by learners. Its primary purpose is to

³² Hilali K., Mughairi B., Kian M., Karim A. Coaching and mentoring: Concepts and practices in development of competencies: A theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*. 2020. № 1. C. 159–173. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v10-i1/6991>

³³ Templeton N., Jeong S., Pugliese E. Mentoring for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2021. № 1. C. 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2021.1902709>

³⁴ Irby B. Editor's overview: Mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2012. № 3. C. 297–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2012.708186>

³⁵ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

³⁶ Hilali K., Mughairi B., Kian M., Karim A. Coaching and mentoring: Concepts and practices in development of competencies: A theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*. 2020. № 1. C. 159–173. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v10-i1/6991>

clarify course materials, close specific knowledge gaps, reinforce learning objectives, and prepare students for assessments or examinations (Irby, 2018³⁷; Irby et al., 2018³⁸). In contrast to mentoring and coaching, tutoring is *narrower in scope*, concentrating on the transmission and reinforcement of academic content rather than broader developmental or professional goals.

Tutoring may be delivered one-on-one or in small groups, and the tutor is often a subject-matter expert, peer, teaching assistant, or instructor who applies targeted teaching strategies based on the learner's immediate needs. As such, tutoring is deeply embedded in instructional practice, with an emphasis on explanation, scaffolding, feedback, and guided practice (Roscoe & Chi, 2007³⁹). It is commonly used in school, college, and university contexts to support students who are struggling with subjects, modules, or competencies.

In educational systems worldwide, tutoring plays a crucial role in remediation and academic support, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds or those navigating second-language acquisition (Ko & Sammons, 2013⁴⁰). Its effectiveness has been widely documented in terms of improving academic performance, self-confidence, and motivation, especially when tutors are trained in student-centered pedagogies and responsive communication (Irby, 2018⁴¹).

Tutoring differs from mentoring and coaching in several key respects:

- It is task – and curriculum-based, focused on what to learn and how to perform specific academic tasks.

- It is usually short, tied to the resolution of particular learning problems or performance deficiencies.

- It typically lacks the relational depth and developmental focus seen in mentoring, or the performance-enhancement structure of coaching.

However, as Irby et al. (2018)⁴² observe, tutoring relationships can develop over time into informal mentoring, particularly when tutors establish

³⁷ Irby B., Boswell J., Jeong S., Pugliese E. Editor's overview: Tutoring and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2018. № 3. C. 245–248. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2018.1511955>

³⁸ Hilali K., Mughairi B., Kian M., Karim A. Coaching and mentoring: Concepts and practices in development of competencies: A theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*. 2020. № 1. C. 159–173. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v10-i1/6991>

³⁹ Roscoe R. D., Chi M. T. H. Understanding tutor learning: Knowledge building and knowledge telling in peer tutors' explanations and questions. *Review of Educational Research*. 2007. № 4. C. 534–574. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654307309920>

⁴⁰ Ko J., Sammons P., Bakkum L. Effective teaching: A review of research and evidence. 2013. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED546794.pdf>

⁴¹ Irby B. Editor's overview: Differences and similarities with mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2018. № 2. C. 115–121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2018.1489237>

⁴² Там само.

rapport, offer encouragement, and support students' broader educational journeys. This highlights the fluid boundaries among the three approaches and emphasizes the significance of context in shaping how each support role is experienced.

In contemporary education, especially in higher education and online learning environments, peer tutoring and reciprocal teaching models have become increasingly prominent. These models not only focus on content mastery but also foster collaborative learning, critical thinking, and learner autonomy (Topping, 2005⁴³).

In summary, tutoring is a targeted, instructional approach designed to help students master academic content, enhance performance, and develop effective study strategies. Although it is narrower in scope than mentoring or coaching, it plays a crucial role in ensuring academic success and reducing attrition, especially when integrated into broader support frameworks.

In Western academic discourse, distinctions among mentoring, coaching, and tutoring are often made based on the duration, depth, purpose, and degree of formality within the relationship (Irby, 2012⁴⁴; Krishna et al., 2019⁴⁵). Mentoring is characterized by long-term, voluntary, and informal engagement; coaching is structured and often tied to institutional performance metrics; and tutoring is typically short-term and curriculum-driven.

In the Ukrainian educational context, the evolution of these concepts reflects both local pedagogical traditions and the influence of international educational reforms. The term *nastavnytstvo* (Ukr. *наставництво*), historically used broadly, has encompassed elements of all three roles. However, the adoption of international models – primarily through programs like the New Ukrainian School and Erasmus+ – has introduced more precise functional boundaries among these roles (Kozyar & Byhar, 2022⁴⁶; Hurkova et al., 2022⁴⁷). This differentiation is vital as Ukrainian institutions seek to

⁴³ Topping K. Trends in peer learning. *Educational Psychology*. 2005. № 6. C. 631–645. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410500345172>

⁴⁴ Irby B. Editor's overview: Mentoring, tutoring, and coaching. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2012. № 3. C. 297–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2012.708186>

⁴⁵ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

⁴⁶ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

⁴⁷ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

align with European standards of learner support, quality assurance, and educator professionalization.

1.4. Theoretical background of mentoring, coaching and tutoring

The practices of mentoring, coaching, and tutoring are rooted in several interconnected theoretical frameworks that shed light on their psychological, social, and pedagogical aspects. These theories offer insights into how learning, motivation, identity development, and access to opportunities are promoted through structured interpersonal relationships.

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory posits that individuals learn not only through direct instruction but also through observation, imitation, and modeling⁴⁸. This framework is particularly relevant in mentoring and peer tutoring contexts, where the mentor or tutor serves as a role model for behaviors, problem-solving strategies, and professional norms (Kamarudin et al., 2020⁴⁹; Hurkova et al., 2022⁵⁰).

Bandura's emphasis on self-efficacy – the belief in one's ability to succeed – is central to mentoring relationships, as mentors foster mentees' confidence by demonstrating successful performance and encouraging perseverance. In peer mentoring, observational learning is reinforced by cognitive and emotional proximity between mentor and mentee, enabling effective internalization of behaviors.

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985⁵¹) identifies three fundamental psychological needs – autonomy, competence, and relatedness – that must be satisfied for individuals to be intrinsically motivated and engaged. Mentoring and coaching relationships that support these needs contribute to greater motivation, satisfaction, and performance (as cited in: Hurkova et al., 2022⁵²). For example, effective mentors create environments where mentees feel autonomous in their decision-making, competent in their progress, and socially connected through a sense of belonging. SDT explains why mentees

⁴⁸ Bandura A. Social Learning Theory. Prentice Hall. 1977. 46 c. URL: https://www.asecib.ase.ro/mps/Bandura_SocialLearningTheory.pdf

⁴⁹ Kamarudin M., Kamarudin A., Darmi R., Saad N. A review of coaching and mentoring theories and models. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*. 2020. № 2. C. 450–470. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v9-i2/7302>

⁵⁰ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

⁵¹ Deci E.L., Ryan R.M. Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior. Springer Science & Business Media. 1985. Berlin. 371 c. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-2271-7>

⁵² Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

thrive in supportive relationships and why coercive or hierarchical approaches are often counterproductive.

Kram's model offers a dual-function approach to mentoring by distinguishing between its career and psychosocial dimensions. The career function includes sponsorship, coaching, protection, and exposure to opportunities, while the psychosocial function encompasses role modeling, acceptance, counseling, and friendship⁵³. This theory is particularly useful in higher education and academic mentorship, where professional advancement and emotional resilience are both essential (Krishna et al., 2019⁵⁴). Kram's model also suggests that mentoring relationships evolve through phases – from initiation to separation – and that each phase requires specific types of support and relational negotiation.

Bourdieu's (1986) theory introduces a sociological lens through the concept of social capital, which refers to the resources embedded in networks of relationships⁵⁵. In mentoring, access to mentors is not just about guidance – it is a mechanism of social inclusion. Mentors act as gateways to academic, professional, and institutional networks, helping mentees accumulate cultural and institutional capital that enhances their career trajectories (Krishna et al., 2019⁵⁶). This is especially significant for first-generation students, underrepresented minorities, and displaced individuals who may lack traditional access points to these networks. Bourdieu's framework also helps critique mentoring systems that may reproduce existing inequalities unless actively designed with equity in mind.

These theoretical foundations collectively reveal that mentoring, coaching, and tutoring are not merely support mechanisms but are pedagogically and sociologically meaningful processes. In designing effective programs, institutions should draw on these theories to ensure that mentoring is not only supportive but developmentally appropriate, socially conscious, and structurally empowering.

⁵³ Kram K.E. Phases of the mentor relationship. *Academy of Management Journal*. 1983. № 4. C. 608–625. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/255910>

⁵⁴ Krishna, L., Renganathan, Y., Tay, K., Tan, B., Chong, J., Ching, A., Prakash, K., Quek, N., Peh, R., Chin, A., Taylor, D., Mason, S., Kanesvaran, R., & Toh, Y. (2019). Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

⁵⁵ Bourdieu P. The forms of capital. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* / за ред. J. Richardson. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1986. C. 241–258. URL: https://home.iitk.ac.in/~amman/soc748/bourdieu_forms_of_capital.pdf

⁵⁶ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

Together, these theoretical perspectives underscore the complex, context-dependent, and relational nature of mentorship. They emphasize the importance of personalized support, the cultivation of meaningful professional relationships, and the strategic role of mentorship in fostering both individual transformation and institutional change (Kamarudin et al., 2020⁵⁷; Krishna et al., 2019⁵⁸; Hurkova et al., 2022⁵⁹).

2. Academic mentorship models in Europe and Ukraine

Academic mentorship in Europe and Ukraine includes a variety of evolving models that reflect different institutional traditions, resource capacities, and educational objectives. In both regions, mentorship functions to enhance student engagement, academic success, and the development of a professional identity. Nonetheless, the structure, implementation, and target audiences of mentoring programs differ considerably.

2.1. European mentorship models

European universities have progressively institutionalized mentorship through structured programs that are often embedded in university quality assurance and student support systems. These models are typically formalized, inclusive, and supported by digital infrastructure and policy frameworks.

2.1.1. Peer mentoring

Peer mentoring has emerged as one of the most effective and widespread models of student support in European higher education institutions. At its core, peer mentoring involves experienced students – typically senior undergraduates or master’s students – providing guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance to less experienced peers, such as first-year students, international students, or those from underrepresented backgrounds (Ivanytska, 2018⁶⁰; Nowell et al., 2017⁶¹). Unlike hierarchical or faculty-led

⁵⁷ Kamarudin M., Kamarudin A., Darmi R., Saad N. A review of coaching and mentoring theories and models. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*. 2020. № 2. C. 450–470. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v9-i2/7302>

⁵⁸ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring’s role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

⁵⁹ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

⁶⁰ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

mentorship, peer mentoring is based on relatability and shared experiences, which fosters a sense of psychological safety and mutual understanding.

This model serves several interrelated functions. Academically, it helps new students navigate university expectations, improve study strategies, and gain discipline-specific insights. Socially and emotionally, it supports integration into the university community, mitigates feelings of isolation, and enhances students' sense of belonging – a factor known to be predictive of retention and academic success (Nowell et al., 2017⁶²; Maguire et al., 2024⁶³).

A well-known example is the *PASS* (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) program in the *United Kingdom*, implemented widely across universities such as Manchester, Exeter, and Leeds. This initiative involves trained student leaders who facilitate collaborative study groups tied to specific courses, encouraging students to actively engage with the material and each other. Research on *PASS* indicates its positive impact on both academic performance and student confidence, particularly among first-year and at-risk students (Lorenzetti et al., 2019⁶⁴). The *SI* (Supplemental Instruction) model, initially developed in the U.S., has also been adapted and institutionalized in countries like Sweden and Norway, where it supports independent learning and reduces dropout rates in challenging introductory courses.

In the *Netherlands*, institutions such as the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University have developed comprehensive peer mentoring frameworks tailored explicitly to international students. These programs offer targeted intercultural orientation, campus navigation, and emotional support during the first semester, often leading to smoother transitions and higher satisfaction levels among non-Dutch students. Similarly, Scandinavian universities, such as *Lund University* (Sweden) and the *University of Helsinki* (Finland), have institutionalized peer support programs that combine mentoring with the development of soft skills, language assistance, and study skill coaching.

Peer mentors typically undergo structured training before assuming their roles. This training includes workshops on active listening, intercultural communication, group facilitation, ethical boundaries, and conflict

⁶¹ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. C. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

⁶² Там само

⁶³ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

⁶⁴ Lorenzetti D., Shipton L., Nowell L., Jacobsen M., Lorenzetti L., Clancy T., Paolucci E. A systematic review of graduate student peer mentorship in academia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2019. № 5. C. 549–576. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2019.1686694>

resolution (Hairon et al., 2020⁶⁵). By equipping mentors with these competencies, institutions not only enhance the quality of support provided to mentees but also promote leadership and employability skills among mentors themselves (Krishna et al., 2019⁶⁶; Cleary et al., 2023⁶⁷).

Moreover, peer mentoring contributes to more inclusive academic environments by reducing institutional barriers for marginalized groups, including first-generation students, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and those with diverse linguistic or cultural backgrounds. In some universities, peer mentors are intentionally matched with mentees based on shared academic interests or demographic affinities (e.g., gender, ethnicity, or nationality), thereby strengthening rapport and cultural understanding (Gatwiri et al., 2024⁶⁸; Maguire et al., 2024⁶⁹).

In *Ukraine*, peer mentoring models have begun to gain traction, particularly in universities engaged in Erasmus+ partnerships or implementing New Ukrainian School reforms. Pilot initiatives – often supported by international donors or bilateral cooperation programs – mirror European best practices and emphasize social-emotional support for displaced students, war-affected youth, and students from rural regions (Ivanytska, 2024⁷⁰; Hurkova et al., 2022⁷¹). For example, in 2023, several Ukrainian universities launched mentorship programs pairing local students with internally displaced peers to support academic integration during wartime displacement.

Ultimately, peer mentoring embodies a paradigm shift in student support: transitioning from hierarchical instruction to collaborative, student-centered

⁶⁵ Hairon S., Loh S., Lim S., Govindani S., Tan J., Tay E. Structured mentoring: Principles for effective mentoring. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2020. № 1. C. 105–123. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-019-09251-8>

⁶⁶ Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

⁶⁷ Cleary M., Thapa D., West S., Lopez V., Williamson M., Sahay A., Kornhaber R. Mentoring students in doctoral nursing programs: A scoping review. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2023. № 45. C. 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.01.010>

⁶⁸ Gatwiri K., Krupka Z., James S. Mentors and sponsors: Making a difference for racially and culturally minoritised academics in Australian universities. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. 2024. № 3. C. 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.360>

⁶⁹ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

⁷⁰ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

⁷¹ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rem/14.4Sup1/665>

learning communities. Its effectiveness relies on institutional recognition, sustainable program design, adequate training and supervision, and continuous evaluation to ensure that both mentors and mentees derive benefits from the experience (Nuis et al., 2023⁷²; Stoeger et al., 2020⁷³).

2.1.2. Faculty mentoring

Faculty mentoring in Europe is a well-established and increasingly formalized institutional practice, particularly in research-intensive universities. It is typically embedded within academic departments, graduate schools, or institutional development centers. It involves senior academics mentoring early-career researchers, doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and, in some cases, high-performing undergraduates with research aspirations (Nowell et al., 2017⁷⁴; Dorner et al., 2020⁷⁵). These mentoring relationships are generally long-term and are designed to support both career advancement and psychosocial well-being.

From a career development perspective, faculty mentors offer guidance in areas such as research project design, publishing strategies, grant writing, conference participation, and *academic networking*. These functions are essential in helping mentees build a successful academic portfolio and navigate complex research ecosystems. Psychosocially, mentors contribute to building confidence, forming academic identity, and fostering emotional resilience, especially as junior faculty navigate challenges such as work-life balance, impostor syndrome, or academic precarity (Pfund et al., 2022⁷⁶; Womack et al., 2020⁷⁷).

Several European universities have adopted formal mentorship frameworks that structure the mentoring process through written mentorship

⁷² Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

⁷³ Stoeger H., Balestrini D., Ziegler A. Key issues in professionalizing mentoring practices. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14537>

⁷⁴ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. C. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

⁷⁵ Dorner H., Mišić G., Rymarenko M. Online mentoring for academic practice: Strategies, implications, and innovations. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14301>

⁷⁶ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

⁷⁷ Womack V., Wood C., House S., Quinn S., Thomas S., McGee R., Byars-Winston A. Culturally aware mentorship: Lasting impacts of a novel intervention on academic administrators and faculty. *PLoS ONE*. 2020. № 8. C. e0236983. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236983>

agreements or Individual Development Plans (IDPs). These documents outline mutual expectations, set measurable goals, and define timelines for professional growth.

For instance, ETH Zurich in *Switzerland* and KU Leuven in *Belgium* incorporate IDPs into doctoral training programs to facilitate communication between mentors and mentees and track progress systematically. In the UK, institutions such as University College London and the University of Edinburgh implement mentorship schemes for early-career lecturers and postdocs, often as part of institutional research strategies or staff development initiatives.

In many cases, faculty mentors are not only selected for their academic excellence but also trained in culturally responsive and inclusive mentorship practices. Programs such as the Culturally Aware Mentor (CAM) framework – developed initially in the U.S. but adapted by some EU institutions – emphasize the importance of recognizing mentees’ diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences (Pfund et al., 2022⁷⁸; Armistead & Woods, 2021⁷⁹).

Faculty mentoring is also closely tied to institutional priorities, including research excellence, talent retention, and international competitiveness. For example, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions under Horizon Europe require clear supervisory and mentoring structures for funded researchers, prompting host institutions to formalize mentorship policies. Similarly, the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers encourage institutions to support mentorship as a key component of research careers.

Importantly, mentoring practices are continuously assessed through feedback loops, satisfaction surveys, and performance indicators (e.g., publication output, grant success, career advancement). Some universities, such as Lund University in *Sweden* and Radboud University in the *Netherlands*, have mentoring coordinators or committees that monitor program quality and offer ongoing support for mentors.

In *Ukraine*, faculty mentoring is gradually becoming more formalized, especially in institutions engaged in international cooperation or undergoing pedagogical modernization. While traditional academic culture has often been hierarchical, recent reforms have promoted mentorship as a

⁷⁸ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

⁷⁹ Armistead K., Woods V. Fostering and developing culturally-aware mentorship practices. *Handbook of Research on Leading Higher Education Transformation With Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion*. 2021. C. 147–165. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-7152-1.ch009>

collaborative process aligned with student-centered learning and European academic values.

Ukrainian universities participating in Erasmus+ Capacity Building projects or doctoral education reform often model their mentoring structures on European examples, with pilot programs introducing mentor training and IDP-like tools (Ivanytska, 2024⁸⁰; Hurkova et al., 2022⁸¹).

Overall, faculty mentoring in Europe reflects a strategic, multi-dimensional investment in academic human capital. It functions not only as a means of individual professional development but also as an institutional tool to promote inclusivity, research quality, and career sustainability across higher education systems.

2.1.3. Blended or hybrid mentoring models

Blended or hybrid mentoring models are gaining prominence across European higher education institutions as a flexible and scalable solution to support diverse student populations. These models integrate elements of both peer and faculty mentoring, often within structured frameworks coordinated by mentoring centers, student support services, or teaching and learning innovation units (Dorner et al., 2020⁸²; Nuis et al., 2023⁸³).

Typically, blended mentoring involves a combination of group-based sessions, one-on-one mentoring, and asynchronous digital communication, enabling mentors to tailor their support to meet different learning needs and schedules. For example, first-year students might participate in introductory peer mentoring groups focused on academic orientation and study strategies, while also having access to faculty mentors for long-term educational planning and research guidance. In some universities, graduate teaching assistants or doctoral candidates serve as intermediaries between faculty and undergraduate mentees, contributing to a multilayered mentoring ecosystem.

These hybrid models are particularly advantageous in institutions with large student populations, distance learners, or non-traditional students, such as

⁸⁰ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

⁸¹ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

⁸² Dorner H., Mišić G., Rymarenko M. Online mentoring for academic practice: Strategies, implications, and innovations. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14301>

⁸³ Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

adult learners or individuals enrolled in part-time programs. By providing both in-person and digital engagement options, blended mentoring enhances access equity and ensures continuity of support, regardless of geographic or scheduling limitations (Rollnik-Sadowska et al., 2023⁸⁴).

Digital platforms such as Moodle, Microsoft Teams, Canvas, or custom-built institutional portals are commonly used to manage communication, share mentoring resources, and monitor mentee progress. Some universities have also implemented automated matching tools or AI-based platforms that suggest mentor–mentee pairings based on academic interests, career goals, or availability. For instance, the University of *Helsinki* and KU Leuven have developed centralized mentoring platforms that enable both students and mentors to set goals, schedule meetings, and provide feedback⁸⁵.

Moreover, blended models often include training modules for mentors – particularly peer mentors – covering essential topics such as intercultural communication, conflict resolution, mental health awareness, and inclusive language use (Nowell et al., 2017⁸⁶; Maguire et al., 2024⁸⁷). These trainings are sometimes offered in a micro-credential format and count toward the professional development of faculty and staff.

In terms of evaluation, institutions increasingly use learning analytics, self-assessment tools, and qualitative feedback to assess the impact of hybrid mentoring programs on student retention, engagement, and academic performance. Universities in the *Netherlands* and *Germany*, for example, report that blended mentoring has led to increased student satisfaction, faster academic integration, and improved progression rates, particularly among international and first-generation students (Ivanytska, 2018⁸⁸; Dorner et al., 2020⁸⁹).

⁸⁴ Rollnik-Sadowska E., Ryciuk U., Glińska E., Bartkute-Norkuniene V., Jodiene R., Sprudzāne S., Zvaigzne A., Marzano G., Jecheva V. Factors affecting mentoring services: Cross-national perspective. *Engineering Management in Production and Services*. 2023. № 1. C. 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.2478/emj-2023-0008>

⁸⁵ Mentoring @ KU Leuven – a course for mentees and mentors. KU Leuven. 2025. URL: <https://admin.kuleuven.be/personeel/english/trainings/mentoring-ku-leuven>

⁸⁶ Nowell, L., Norris, J., Mrklas, K., & White, D. (2017). A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing: Official Journal of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing*, 33(5), 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

⁸⁷ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

⁸⁸ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

⁸⁹ Dorner H., Mišić G., Rymarenko M. Online mentoring for academic practice: Strategies, implications, and innovations. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14301>

In the *Ukrainian context*, blended mentoring is still emerging but demonstrates strong potential, especially in the wake of COVID-19, war-related displacement, and the digitalization of higher education. Several universities piloting European-funded projects have started to adopt hybrid mentoring platforms and training schemes, often inspired by Erasmus+ collaborations and digital transformation initiatives.

In summary, blended or hybrid mentoring models offer a highly adaptive framework that combines the personal connection of traditional mentorship with the scalability and accessibility of digital tools, aligning with the evolving needs of contemporary higher education.

2.1.4. Inclusive mentoring

Inclusive mentoring has become a strategic priority across European higher education, particularly in alignment with the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies endorsed by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and national educational authorities. The focus on social justice, expanding participation, and ensuring equal access to academic success has led to the development of mentoring programs specifically designed for historically underrepresented and vulnerable populations (Fast, 2024⁹⁰; Nowell et al., 2017⁹¹; Armistead & Woods, 2021⁹²).

Inclusive mentoring extends beyond generic academic support, addressing systemic barriers and intersecting challenges faced by students and early-career researchers from marginalized groups. Target populations commonly include:

1. *Students with disabilities* (physical, cognitive, sensory), who benefit from mentors trained in accessibility, assistive technologies, and inclusive pedagogy.

2. *International and refugee students*, who may struggle with linguistic integration, cultural adjustment, and administrative complexities. Many universities in Germany, Finland, and the Netherlands have developed language-sensitive peer mentoring schemes and buddy programs in collaboration with local integration offices.

3. *First-generation students* and those from low socio-economic backgrounds are often supported through mentoring initiatives linked to

⁹⁰ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

⁹¹ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. С. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

⁹² Armistead K., Woods V. Fostering and developing culturally-aware mentorship practices. *Handbook of Research on Leading Higher Education Transformation With Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion*. 2021. С. 147–165. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-7152-1.ch009>

financial literacy training, time management workshops, and psychosocial resilience programs.

4. *Doctoral candidates* at risk of attrition, especially in fields where supervision is inconsistent or lacking emotional support. Mentoring circles and peer coaching have been piloted in institutions such as the University of Helsinki and ETH Zürich to foster a stronger sense of belonging and reduce isolation.

5. *Women in male-dominated fields*, such as STEM, who face both visible and subtle forms of gender bias. Targeted mentoring programs, such as the “Women in Engineering Mentorship Networks” or “Athena SWAN” linked schemes, offer support in navigating academic careers, applying for grants, and building professional confidence (Maguire et al., 2024⁹³; Farkas et al., 2019⁹⁴).

Inclusive mentoring is frequently embedded within institutional DEI strategies, often linked to mental health services, academic writing centers, intercultural communication workshops, and career offices. For instance, the *University of Vienna* offers an Inclusive Mentoring Certificate for academic staff and student mentors who complete training in trauma-informed mentoring, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and the use of non-discriminatory language.

Some inclusive mentoring programs incorporate in-person mentorship, group coaching, online communities of practice, and mobile app support (e.g., mentoring chatbots, AI-based progress tracking). Projects funded by Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, or national innovation funds often serve as incubators for these inclusive models, helping universities co-develop best practices and transfer knowledge across borders.

In the Ukrainian context, inclusive mentoring is becoming more visible through international collaborations and the pressures of war-related displacement. Several Ukrainian universities have begun implementing trauma-informed peer mentoring, particularly for internally displaced students and early-career researchers who have experienced institutional discontinuity. These initiatives are frequently supported by NGOs, diaspora academic communities, and European partners through virtual

⁹³ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

⁹⁴ Farkas A., Bonifacio E., Turner R., Tilstra S., Corbelli J. Mentorship of women in academic medicine: A systematic review. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2019. № 7. C. 1322–1329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04955-2>

mentoring and emergency academic integration schemes (Ivanytska, 2024⁹⁵ Hurkova et al., 2022⁹⁶).

Overall, inclusive mentoring represents a shift from transactional support to transformational engagement, aiming to empower students not only to survive but to thrive in academia. It requires intentional design, trained mentors, institutional commitment, and ongoing assessment to ensure it meets the evolving needs of diverse learners.

2.1.5. The Erasmus+ program for supporting mentoring activities

The Erasmus+ program, widely recognized for its support of academic mobility, also plays a pivotal role in fostering structured mentoring frameworks across European higher education institutions. Beyond funding student exchanges and internships, Erasmus+ encourages universities to embed mentoring into the mobility experience to ensure smoother intercultural adaptation, academic integration, and career development (Ivanytska, 2018⁹⁷; European Commission, 2023⁹⁸).

In this context, mentors – often faculty members, senior students, or alumni – are trained to serve as transnational academic navigators. Their role goes beyond basic orientation; they assist incoming and outgoing students in navigating complex institutional systems, understanding academic expectations, and managing cultural transitions. Mentoring may commence before departure, continue throughout the mobility period, and extend into a post-mobility phase, supporting reintegration and reflection.

Key components of Erasmus+ – supported mentoring activities include:

1. **Pre-departure mentoring:** helping students set realistic goals, understand the academic culture of host institutions, and prepare for linguistic and social differences.
2. **On-site mentoring:** providing support with administrative tasks, course selection, group integration, and emotional adaptation to a new environment.

⁹⁵ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

⁹⁶ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

⁹⁷ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

⁹⁸ The EU in 2023: Succeeding amidst challenging times. European Commission. 2023. URL: https://commission.europa.eu/news-and-media/news/eu-2023-succeeding-amidst-challenging-times-2024-03-13_en

3. **Reverse mentoring:** where international students share intercultural knowledge or digital skills with local students or staff, fostering mutual learning and enhancing host institutions' inclusivity.

4. **Digital mentoring platforms:** Erasmus+ projects increasingly utilize tools like **Moodle**, **MS Teams**, or custom apps to facilitate communication, mentoring assignments, resource sharing, and feedback collection. Some universities have incorporated AI-driven systems to match mentors with mentees based on interests and needs.

Several Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships and Capacity Building projects explicitly focus on mentoring as a means of enhancing academic retention, student well-being, and employability, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. For instance, the “Inclusive Mobility for All” initiative integrates mentoring as part of its inclusive support system for students with disabilities. Similarly, the “SUCCESS” project develops faculty mentoring protocols for international student success in Central and Eastern Europe.

Importantly, Erasmus+ also supports staff mentoring, particularly for early-career academics and administrative personnel involved in mobility schemes. These mentorships facilitate knowledge transfer, professional development, and the Europeanization of academic practices, thereby contributing to the broader objectives of the European Education Area (EEA).

In the Ukrainian context, Erasmus+-funded mentoring has become even more essential in the aftermath of the 2022 war. Many Ukrainian institutions collaborate with European universities to offer virtual mentoring, psychological support, and academic continuity for displaced students and staff. These partnerships have established the foundation for enduring mentoring cultures that combine local resilience with European solidarity (Ivanytska, 2024⁹⁹; Fast, 2024¹⁰⁰).

Thus, Erasmus+ emerges not only as a vehicle for mobility but as a catalyst for systemic mentoring innovation, empowering institutions to support learners holistically across borders, disciplines, and crises.

2.2. Ukrainian mentorship models

In Ukraine, mentorship has historically developed from Soviet-era supervisory models. It is now undergoing transformation influenced by

⁹⁹ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. С. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹⁰⁰ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

European integration processes, digitalization, and the war-induced need for institutional resilience.

2.2.1. Curatorship

Curatorship (Ukr. *кypatopcmbo*) is a traditional form of academic mentorship in Ukraine, involving the assignment of a faculty member to support a student group (typically 20–30 students) over the course of several years. (Ivanytska, 2024¹⁰¹; Osidak et al., 2021¹⁰²).

Critics point to several structural weaknesses:

1. **Lack of personalization:** Since curators are assigned to entire student groups (e.g., 20–30 students), the support they offer may be generic, failing to address individual learning trajectories or personal concerns (Ivanytska, 2018¹⁰³; Kozyar & Byhar, 2022¹⁰⁴).

2. **Insufficient training:** Many curators receive no formal preparation in mentoring, counseling, or educational psychology, which can undermine their effectiveness, especially when dealing with complex student needs or crises (Hurkova et al., 2022¹⁰⁵).

3. **Unrecognized workload:** Curatorship is often treated as an unpaid or lightly compensated responsibility, leading to variability in commitment and mentoring quality across departments and institutions (Fast, 2024¹⁰⁶).

4. **Ambiguous status:** The role of the curator straddles informal support and formal oversight, yet often lacks clear documentation, performance metrics, or institutional integration into broader student support frameworks.

Despite these limitations, curatorship still plays a valuable role, especially, where institutional resources for student support may be scarce. In such contexts, curators act as first responders to students' academic,

¹⁰¹ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹⁰² Osidak V., Drahinda O., Kvasova O. Training the trainers in language assessment via mentoring: Building expertise to promote language assessment literacy of Ukrainian university teachers. *Languages*. 2021. № 4. C. 194. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6040194>

¹⁰³ Ivanytska O. Tendencies of tutoring and mentoring development at higher educational establishments of Germany. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Pedagogics*. 2018. № 7/39. C. 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2313-2094.7/39.136861>

¹⁰⁴ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

¹⁰⁵ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rem/14.4Sup1/665>

¹⁰⁶ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

emotional, and social needs, particularly during transitions such as the first year of study or wartime displacement.

Recent reforms in Ukraine's higher education – driven by Bologna Process commitments, international partnerships, and Erasmus+ projects – have spurred efforts to modernize the role of the curator. Some universities now supplement curatorship with training in mentoring techniques, psychological first aid, or intercultural communication, especially in response to increased student mobility and refugee enrolment. Moreover, innovative institutions have started integrating curatorship into broader mentorship systems that combine peer mentoring, career counseling, and digital support (Ivanytska, 2024¹⁰⁷).

In essence, curatorship remains a transitional form of academic mentorship –rooted in tradition but evolving to meet new challenges. Its future relevance will depend on whether Ukrainian universities can professionalize and reconceptualize the role as part of a holistic, student-centered mentoring culture.

2.2.2. Scientific supervision

Scientific supervision (Ukr. наукове керівництво) represents the most formalized and legally defined mentoring relationship in Ukrainian higher education, especially within master's and doctoral programs. In this model, an academic staff member (supervisor or науковий керівник) is officially assigned to guide a student through all stages of their research project, including topic selection, research design, data collection and analysis, academic writing, publication efforts, and ultimately, the defense of a thesis or dissertation (Закон про вищу освіту¹⁰⁸, Semenog & Kapranov¹⁰⁹ Fast, 2024¹¹⁰; Ivanytska, 2024¹¹¹).

Rooted in the Soviet educational legacy, this relationship has traditionally been hierarchical and directive, with the supervisor holding

¹⁰⁷ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. С. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹⁰⁸ Закон України «Про вищу освіту». 2014. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18#Text>

¹⁰⁹ Semenog O., Kapranov Y. The Evolution of the Conceptual Sphere of “Education” in Ukrainian and Polish Discourses: Lexical Innovations, Neologisms, and Their Application in PhD Training. *Acta Humanitatis*. 2025. № 1. С. 41–69. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5709/ah-03.01.2025-03>

¹¹⁰ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹¹¹ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. С. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

significant authority over the student's academic progression. However, in contemporary contexts – particularly as Ukraine integrates further into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – there is a growing push to redefine this dynamic as more collaborative, dialogic, and development-oriented (Zaharova, 2022¹¹²; Kozyar & Byhar, 2022¹¹³).

While scientific supervision is indispensable for academic advancement and scholarly training, research shows that its quality and effectiveness vary significantly across institutions and individuals. Several recurring issues have been identified:

1. **Uneven supervision quality:** The depth and regularity of supervision often depend on the **individual supervisor's commitment**, mentoring philosophy, and time availability. Some students report exemplary support – frequent consultations, constructive feedback, and co-authorship – while others experience long periods of neglect or minimal engagement (Fast; Ivanytska, 2024¹¹⁴).

2. **Lack of structured expectations:** In many cases, **roles, responsibilities, and timelines** are not formally outlined, leading to misaligned expectations between students and supervisors. Unlike in some European systems where individual development plans (IDPs) or supervisory contracts are common, Ukrainian institutions often lack such frameworks (Hurkova et al., 2022¹¹⁵).

3. **Limited psychosocial support:** The mentoring relationship is often academically focused, with little attention paid to students' mental health, career uncertainty, or personal challenges. This gap is especially critical in the current wartime context, where students face disruptions, trauma, or displacement (Fast, 2024¹¹⁶; Osidak et al., 2021¹¹⁷).

¹¹² Zaharova N. The genesis of mentoring as a historical phenomenon. *Scientific Papers of Berdiansk State Pedagogical University. Series: Pedagogical Sciences*. 2022. № 1. C. 104–111. <https://doi.org/10.31494/2412-9208-2022-1-1-104-111>

¹¹³ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review*. 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

¹¹⁴ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹¹⁵ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

¹¹⁶ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹¹⁷ Osidak V., Drahinda O., Kvasova O. Training the trainers in language assessment via mentoring: Building expertise to promote language assessment literacy of Ukrainian university teachers. *Languages*. 2021. № 4. C. 194. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6040194>

4. Supervisor overload: Many supervisors are burdened with multiple administrative, teaching, and research duties, which reduces their capacity to provide consistent and high-quality mentorship. In some cases, a single supervisor may be formally responsible for 10 or more graduate students simultaneously, which can undermine the depth of individual engagement (Ivanytska, 2024¹¹⁸; Kozyar & Byhar, 2022¹¹⁹).

In response to these challenges, reform efforts are emerging. Select universities – especially those involved in international consortia (e.g., Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education projects) – have begun to institutionalize best practices from the EU, such as supervisory training, regular feedback loops, and mentorship evaluation systems. There is also increasing interest in co-supervision models, involving multiple mentors (academic and non-academic), and the integration of digital platforms (e.g., Moodle, Google Scholar tracking) to support research planning and communication.

Overall, scientific supervision remains a central pillar of academic development in Ukraine; however, its modernization is essential to ensure equitable, effective, and human-centered academic trajectories – particularly for early-career researchers navigating post-war realities and a transforming higher education system.

2.2.3. Project-Based Mentorship

In response to evolving labor market demands, Ukrainian universities are increasingly adopting project-based mentorship models, particularly in fields with strong applied orientations such as information technology, business, engineering, and agriculture (Ivanytska, 2024¹²⁰). These initiatives typically involve students working on real-world problems under the guidance of experienced academic supervisors or industry professionals, often in collaboration with external stakeholders, including private companies, public institutions, and NGOs. The objective is to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, thereby enhancing students' employability and professional readiness upon graduation.

For example, IT faculties in Kyiv and Lviv have piloted mentoring schemes where developers supervise students or team leads from tech companies while working on software prototypes or data analysis projects.

¹¹⁸ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work.* 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹¹⁹ Kozyar M., Byhar H. Theoretical foundations of the problem of mentoring. *Pedagogy and Education Management Review.* 2022. № 5. C. 4–12. <https://doi.org/10.36690/2733-2039-2022-5-4>

¹²⁰ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work.* 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

These mentoring formats offer dual benefits: they equip students with hands-on experience and soft skills, and they allow mentors to identify emerging talent for potential recruitment.

However, such initiatives tend to be sporadic and decentralized, often emerging from individual faculty members' efforts. As a result, they lack consistent institutional support structures, quality assurance mechanisms, and long-term continuity (Fast, 2024¹²¹). Mentorship may occur without formal agreements, dedicated time allocation, or financial compensation, which undermines its sustainability and limits its potential for scalability across faculties or universities.

Notably, Ukraine's participation in international academic programs, including Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe, as well as national-level initiatives such as **ESPERIDTA** (European Studies for Supporting Polish Education and Research in Digital Transformation: An Interdisciplinary Approach), has catalyzed the reform of mentorship practices. Through these collaborations, some Ukrainian universities have begun to institutionalize mentorship centers, develop training modules for mentors, and formalize mentorship roles within curriculum frameworks. These developments are often supported by external expertise, policy exchange, and capacity-building workshops aimed at aligning Ukrainian mentorship culture with European standards (Fast, 2024¹²²).

Moreover, recent reforms have increasingly focused on student mental health and well-being, especially amid wartime disruptions. New mentorship formats are progressively incorporating emotional support components, stress management strategies, and resources for academic resilience, particularly for displaced students or those affected by trauma (Ivanytska, 2024)¹²³.

Despite these positive trends, significant challenges persist. Mentorship in Ukraine remains fragmented and underfunded, heavily reliant on individual enthusiasm rather than systemic incentives or institutional mandates. The absence of clear national guidelines, infrastructure, and mentorship-specific funding continues to hinder the coherence and impact of mentorship across the sector. For mentoring practices to mature into a strategic pillar of educational quality, further policy attention, capacity building, and sustainable resource allocation are urgently required.

¹²¹ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹²² Там само.

¹²³ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. С. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

2.3. Comparative overview of key academic mentorship models and practices

Table 1 provides a structured comparative overview of key academic mentorship models and practices observed in European and Ukrainian higher education institutions. Each row corresponds to a distinct mentorship model – peer, faculty, blended, inclusive, and project-based – highlighting the defining features, institutional embeddedness, and implementation strategies within both regions. The European column emphasizes formalization, inclusivity, and the use of digital tools, whereas the Ukrainian column reflects a transitional phase characterized by inherited supervisory traditions, emerging innovations, and project-based adaptations. The final column offers key academic sources that substantiate the comparison.

This tabular representation serves to illustrate not only the similarities and differences between European and Ukrainian approaches, but also the extent to which structural, cultural, and policy-related factors shape mentorship outcomes across contexts (Table 1).

Table 1

Comparative Table of Mentorship Practices

Model / Practice	Europe: Key Features	Ukraine: Key Features	Key Citations
Peer Mentoring	Structured student-to-student support for academic and social integration; widely used for onboarding international and first-generation students	Still emerging; often informal and limited to student initiatives without institutional coordination	Ivanytska, 2018; Fast, 2024; Nowell et al., 2017
Faculty Mentoring	Formalized programs embedded in departments; support for career development, research, and psychosocial well-being	Predominantly realized through curatorship and scientific supervision; often hierarchical and inconsistent in quality	Ivanytska, 2024; Dorner et al., 2020; Nowell et al., 2017
Blended/Hybrid Models	Integration of peer and faculty mentoring; use of digital platforms (e.g., Moodle, Teams); coordinated through mentoring centers or student services	Implemented selectively via international projects (e.g., Erasmus+, ESPERIDTA); limited sustainability outside project cycles	Ivanytska, 2018; Dorner et al., 2020; Nowell et al., 2017
Inclusive Mentoring	Grounded in DEI frameworks; support for underrepresented groups (e.g., refugees, students with disabilities, women in STEM)	Emerging focus on vulnerable populations, especially doctoral candidates and displaced students	Fast, 2024; Nowell et al., 2017
Project-Based Mentoring	Collaboration between academia and industry; mentors guide applied research and innovation-driven projects	Increasingly common in technical fields (e.g., IT, agriculture); often ad hoc and under-institutionalized	Ivanytska, 2024; Ivanytska, 2018

These mentorship models illustrate **both convergence and divergence** across the Ukrainian and European higher education landscapes.

Convergence is evident in the **growing acknowledgment** of mentorship as a key mechanism for enhancing educational quality, student retention, and professional development. Both contexts are increasingly aware of the need for structured mentoring practices, especially for doctoral students and at-risk groups.

Divergence, however, persists in the institutionalization and systemic support of mentorship. European institutions typically embed mentoring within departmental structures or specialized centers, often guided by national DEI policies and quality assurance frameworks. In contrast, Ukrainian practices are more fragmented, with mentorship responsibilities often assumed informally or as part of broader supervisory roles (e.g., scientific supervision, curatorship) without dedicated training, incentives, or monitoring.

Furthermore, digital integration and data-driven mentoring platforms are more prevalent in Europe, enabling real-time progress tracking and broader access for students in remote or part-time programs. Ukrainian universities are only beginning to explore these tools, often through externally funded initiatives.

Ultimately, while Ukraine is increasingly aligning with European mentorship paradigms, particularly through Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe collaborations, much of its mentorship culture remains in transition – shifting from tradition-bound supervisory models to student-centered, competence-based, and inclusive mentorship ecosystems.

3. Institutional and cultural differences in academic mentorship

Academic mentorship does not develop in isolation; its effectiveness is shaped by the institutional environment, political context, legal frameworks, and cultural norms within which it is embedded. This section outlines the key institutional and cultural differences in mentorship practices across countries and universities, with a particular focus on three critical dimensions: formalization and infrastructure, inclusivity and equity, and political-legal conditions.

3.1. Level of formalization and institutional support

Mentorship programs in higher education vary significantly in their degree of formalization, reflecting differences in institutional priorities, national education policies, resource availability, and academic cultures. In well-funded universities across Western Europe and North America, academic mentorship is often highly structured and institutionally embedded. Dedicated mentoring centers, staff development offices, and

student success units are typically responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating mentorship programs as part of broader institutional strategies for educational quality assurance and student retention (Pfund et al., 2022¹²⁴; Owan et al., 2023¹²⁵; Mutale et al., 2023¹²⁶).

Key indicators of formalized mentorship in these settings include:

- **Structured training programs** for faculty and peer mentors, focusing on communication, intercultural competence, inclusive teaching, and psychosocial support (Armistead & Woods, 2021¹²⁷);

- **Mentorship contracts or agreements**, which clearly define roles, expectations, timelines, and feedback mechanisms, promoting mutual accountability and goal alignment (Pfund et al., 2022¹²⁸);

- **Digital platforms** that streamline the mentor – mentee matching process, monitor progress, and provide centralized access to guidance materials. Platforms such as Chronus, Mentorloop, or custom institutional systems integrated with LMS (e.g., Moodle, MS Teams) are increasingly used to scale mentorship initiatives and ensure consistency (Owan et al., 2023¹²⁹).

Such institutionalized approaches are not only associated with improved academic outcomes and student satisfaction but also foster inclusive academic cultures. For example, culturally responsive mentoring frameworks, such as those developed by Pfund et al. (2022)¹³⁰, have been shown to enhance

¹²⁴ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

¹²⁵ Owan V., Ameh E., Anam E. Collaboration and institutional culture as mediators linking mentorship and institutional support to academics' research productivity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2023. № 1. C. 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-023-09354-3>

¹²⁶ Mutale W., Nzala S., Martin M., Rose E., Heimburger D., Goma F. Accelerating organizational change to build mentorship culture in Zambian universities. *Annals of Global Health*. 2023. № 1. C. 55. <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.4032>

¹²⁷ Armistead K., Woods V. Fostering and developing culturally-aware mentorship practices. *Handbook of Research on Leading Higher Education Transformation With Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion*. 2021. C. 147–165. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-7152-1.ch009>

¹²⁸ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

¹²⁹ Owan V., Ameh E., Anam E. Collaboration and institutional culture as mediators linking mentorship and institutional support to academics' research productivity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2023. № 1. C. 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-023-09354-3>

¹³⁰ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

mentor – mentee engagement, reduce dropout rates among underrepresented students, and cultivate equity-oriented leadership in academia.

At the same time, formalization requires long-term institutional commitment, including budget allocation, staff coordination, and periodic evaluation. As Mutale et al. (2023)¹³¹ emphasize, mentorship programs without sustainable support structures risk becoming tokenistic or overly bureaucratic, particularly if participation is not meaningfully incentivized or integrated into workload models.

By contrast, in many Eastern European universities and Ukrainian HEIs, mentorship practices often remain informal, fragmented, or underfunded, despite growing recognition of their importance. Relationships between faculty and students, such as *наукове керівництво* (scientific supervision) or *кураторство* (curatorship), traditionally fulfill mentoring functions but are typically not supported by formal policies, training, or institutional infrastructure (Ivanytska, 2024¹³²; Fast, 2024¹³³).

Informal mentorship in Ukraine has both advantages and limitations:

On the one hand, it allows for flexibility, personal connection, and the cultivation of trust-based relationships, which are particularly valuable in post-Soviet academic cultures that emphasize interpersonal loyalty. On the other hand, the lack of formal recognition or training often leads to unequal access, over-reliance on individual initiative, mentor burnout, and variability in the quality of support across faculties or regions (Nowell et al., 2017¹³⁴; Hurkova et al., 2022¹³⁵).

Moreover, in the context of war, internal displacement, and increased student vulnerability, the absence of a centralized mentoring framework creates additional risks. Students may lack consistent guidance, especially those navigating cross-border mobility, hybrid learning environments, or mental health challenges.

¹³¹ Mutale W., Nzala S., Martin M., Rose E., Heimburger D., Goma F. Accelerating organizational change to build mentorship culture in Zambian universities. *Annals of Global Health*. 2023. № 1. C. 55. <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.4032>

¹³² Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹³³ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹³⁴ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. C. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

¹³⁵ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Sup1. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

Efforts to formalize mentorship in Ukrainian universities have accelerated through participation in international projects such as **Erasmus+**, **Horizon Europe**, and **ESPERIDTA**. These programs often introduce structured mentorship components, develop pilot mentoring centers, and encourage the use of digital solutions for mentor – mentee engagement (Fast, 2024¹³⁶). For instance, some Ukrainian institutions now incorporate online mentorship modules into their virtual learning environments, though coverage remains partial and experimental. The article Semenoh, Semenikhina¹³⁷ describes some aspects of the PhD program “Academic Culture of a Researcher: European and National Experience” curriculum, developed under the Erasmus + Jean Monnet Module for PhD students in the field of knowledge “01 Education / Pedagogy”. The program is implemented at the A. S. Makarenko Sumy State Pedagogical University.

Importantly, the digitalization of mentorship – accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing hybrid education models – offers a critical opportunity for equalizing access, especially for students in remote areas or with limited mobility. However, this shift also exposes challenges such as:

- Digital literacy gaps among both mentors and mentees;
- Infrastructure inequalities between urban and rural universities;
- Cultural resistance to impersonal or virtual mentorship formats.

In conclusion, while European universities increasingly move toward systematized and inclusive mentoring ecosystems supported by policy, funding, and technology, many Ukrainian institutions are in a transitional phase, experimenting with hybrid forms of mentorship without full-scale institutionalization. Bridging this gap requires a concerted effort to align mentorship practices with international quality standards, secure institutional funding, and provide mentor training that is sensitive to local socio-political conditions and student needs.

3.2. Inclusivity: addressing the needs of vulnerable and underrepresented groups

Inclusivity is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of effective academic mentorship, especially in the context of widening participation, equity in higher education, and systemic transformation. Institutions that adopt

¹³⁶ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. С. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹³⁷ Semenoh O., Semenikhina O. Interdepartmental projects in the conditions of education content integration: experience of the A. S. Makarenko Sumy State Pedagogical University. Information and Innovation Technologies in the Life of Society: Monograph 28 / за ред. A. Ostenda, N. Svitlychna. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Technicznej w Katowicach, 2019. С. 221–231. URL: <http://repository.sspu.edu.ua/handle/123456789/8104>

mentorship strategies rooted in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) principles not only improve academic performance and retention but also contribute to broader institutional goals of justice, representation, and social mobility (Pfund et al., 2022¹³⁸; Womack et al., 2020¹³⁹; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁴⁰).

Inclusive mentoring frameworks are designed to meet the complex needs of individuals who experience structural disadvantages in academia. These groups include – but are not limited to

- **Women in academia**, particularly in male-dominated fields such as engineering, mathematics, and computer science. Research by Karikari et al. (2025) and Maguire et al. (2024) shows that gender-responsive mentorship, led by women or allies, enhances confidence, research output, and career progression, while also addressing challenges such as impostor syndrome and work-life balance.

- **Racially and culturally minoritized scholars**, whose experiences of marginalization, bias, or institutional exclusion can lead to academic isolation. Gatwiri et al. (2024)¹⁴¹ highlight that both mentoring and sponsorship – especially when led by individuals from similar backgrounds or trained in anti-racist pedagogy – play a vital role in professional advancement and personal empowerment.

- **students, students with disabilities**. Sevelius et al. (2024)¹⁴² emphasize that inclusive mentorship must be built on affirmation, psychological safety, and cultural competency.

- **Refugee and displaced students**, especially in conflict-affected regions such as Ukraine, who face profound challenges in academic adaptation, legal uncertainty, trauma, and disrupted educational pathways. As Fast (2024)¹⁴³ argues, inclusive mentorship for displaced students must

¹³⁸ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

¹³⁹ Womack V., Wood C., House S., Quinn S., Thomas S., McGee R., Byars-Winston A. Culturally aware mentorship: Lasting impacts of a novel intervention on academic administrators and faculty. *PLoS ONE*. 2020. № 8. C.e0236983. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236983>

¹⁴⁰ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁴¹ Gatwiri K., Krupka Z., James S. Mentors and sponsors: Making a difference for racially and culturally minoritized academics in Australian universities. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. 2024. № 3. C. 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.360>

¹⁴² Sevelius J., Harris O., Bowleg L. Intersectional mentorship in academic medicine: A conceptual review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2024. № 4. C. 503. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21040503>

¹⁴³ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

be trauma-informed, flexible, and integrated with psychosocial support systems, language training, and digital literacy development.

Programs rooted in **intersectional design** – acknowledging that individuals often face multiple, overlapping forms of disadvantage – are most effective at fostering long-term transformation. For example, mentoring a first-generation female refugee in STEM requires awareness not only of gender barriers, but also of linguistic, cultural, and economic inequalities.

A notable European example is Germany's "Integra" initiative, which combines academic mentoring, language support, and career orientation for refugee students and scholars. Similarly, the Aurora Network in Western Europe supports inclusive mentoring through student-led diversity hubs, providing mentorship spaces for minority and international students.

Furthermore, the type of mentor and the quality of their preparation are important. Mentors who share lived experiences – such as female mentors for women scholars or mentors with refugee backgrounds – can foster more empathetic and empowering relationships. Training in inclusive communication, bias awareness, and culturally responsive teaching further enhances their effectiveness (Womack et al., 2020¹⁴⁴; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁴⁵; Holcomb & Gonyer, 2024¹⁴⁶).

In the Ukrainian context, inclusivity in academic mentorship is emerging as a response to war-related displacement, gender inequality, and increasing academic mobility. While formal inclusion policies remain limited in many institutions, Ukrainian universities participating in Erasmus+ or ESPERIDTA are experimenting with inclusive mentoring models. For example, some HEIs have initiated peer-to-peer programs for displaced students or designated staff as inclusive mentors to assist those with trauma-related learning difficulties (Fast, 2024¹⁴⁷).

However, without institutional commitment, dedicated funding, and collaboration with support services (e.g., counseling centers, accessibility offices, or student unions), inclusivity risks remaining a rhetorical goal rather than a transformative practice. As Holcomb & Gonyer (2024)¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Womack V., Wood C., House S., Quinn S., Thomas S., McGee R., Byars-Winston A. Culturally aware mentorship: Lasting impacts of a novel intervention on academic administrators and faculty. *PLoS ONE*. 2020. № 8. C. e0236983. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236983>

¹⁴⁵ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCIE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁴⁶ Holcomb D., Gonyer M. Inclusive language and culturally responsive formal mentorship. *Critical Social Work*. 2024. № 2. C. 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.22329/csw.v25i2.7903>

¹⁴⁷ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹⁴⁸ Holcomb D., Gonyer M. Inclusive language and culturally responsive formal mentorship. *Critical Social Work*. 2024. № 2. C. 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.22329/csw.v25i2.7903>

argue, the integration of mentorship with campus-wide diversity strategies – including inclusive language policies, accessible infrastructure, and feedback loops – is essential for ensuring long-term equity and academic justice.

In sum, inclusive mentorship is not just about representation – it is about redistributing support, attention, and opportunity to those for whom higher education has historically been inaccessible or alienating. It requires multi-level commitment: from individual mentors, institutional leadership, national policy, and international collaboration.

3.3. Political and legal dimensions of mentorship

The **political environment**, **legal frameworks**, and **national education** policies profoundly influence mentorship practices in higher education. These factors determine not only how much mentorship is institutionalized and funded but also its inclusivity, sustainability, and strategic importance within broader educational objectives.

In many *Western countries*, mentorship is strategically embedded within national policy agendas. For instance, *Australia's higher education* strategy explicitly links mentorship programs to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) – by targeting underrepresented groups in science and leadership pipelines (Gatwiri et al., 2024)¹⁴⁹. In several EU Member States, mentorship is not merely encouraged, but incentivized through policy instruments, such as performance-based funding, accreditation criteria, and quality assurance standards. These may include requirements for formal mentorship plans in doctoral programs or diversity benchmarks for institutional funding (Karikari et al., 2025¹⁵⁰; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁵¹).

Legal mandates further reinforce the role of mentorship as a mechanism for equity. Anti-discrimination laws, gender equity legislation, and data monitoring obligations often translate into institution-wide mentorship initiatives – for example, structured support for female researchers, ethnic minorities, or students with disabilities. In *Sweden* and the *Netherlands*, government bodies monitor academic institutions' compliance with these

¹⁴⁹ Gatwiri K., Krupka Z., James S. Mentors and sponsors: Making a difference for racially and culturally minoritised academics in Australian universities. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. 2024. № 3. C. 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.360>

¹⁵⁰ Karikari L., Obiri J., Mensah C., Nyame K., Botsyoe M. The role of mentorship and support systems in enhancing women's academic advancement in higher education. *Path of Science*. 2025. № 4. C. 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.114-6>

¹⁵¹ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

mandates, directly influencing how mentorship programs are designed and evaluated (Farkas et al., 2019¹⁵²; Sevelius et al., 2024¹⁵³).

By contrast, in contexts where legal protections are weak, political instability persists, or educational funding is limited, mentorship often lacks institutional support. As Uslu (2020)¹⁵⁴ notes in his review of emerging economies, mentorship is frequently regarded as non-obligatory, depending heavily on the goodwill or personal initiative of individual faculty members. In such settings, it is rarely included in faculty workload models, career promotion pathways, or strategic planning – leading to burnout, inconsistency, and unequal access to support.

In *Ukraine*, the political and legal context of mentorship has undergone rapid transformation in response to external pressures. The ongoing war, which began in 2022, has disrupted traditional academic relationships and institutional capacities, prompting mentorship to shift into more fluid, emergency-driven formats (Fast, 2024¹⁵⁵). Faculty members often assume multiple roles, such as educators, counselors, and crisis responders, without institutional guidelines or legal protections. This burden disproportionately affects women and junior staff, who are often the most involved in informal student support.

Nevertheless, Ukrainian universities are beginning to align with EU mentorship standards through participation in international frameworks such as **Erasmus+**, **Horizon Europe**, and **ESPERIDTA**. These programs offer structured mentoring components, promote diversity-sensitive policies, and build capacity for policy compliance. For example, some institutions now require mentorship components in doctoral supervision contracts or integrate mentoring metrics into internal quality assurance systems.

The legal framing of mentorship is especially critical in relation to intersectional protection. As Sevelius et al. (2024)¹⁵⁶ emphasize, robust legal instruments can prevent discrimination while also promoting proactive strategies for inclusion. However, laws alone are insufficient unless

¹⁵² Farkas A., Bonifacino E., Turner R., Tilstra S., Corbelli J. Mentorship of women in academic medicine: A systematic review. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2019. № 7. C. 1322–1329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04955-2>

¹⁵³ Sevelius J., Harris O., Bowleg L. Intersectional mentorship in academic medicine: A conceptual review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2024. № 4. C. 503. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21040503>

¹⁵⁴ Uslu B. Mentoring and role modelling through the perspective of academic intellectual leadership: Voluntarily and institutionally. *REAL Journal of Research in Educational Administration and Leadership*. 2020. № 3. C. 921–952. <https://doi.org/10.30828/real/2020.3.9>

¹⁵⁵ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹⁵⁶ Sevelius J., Harris O., Bowleg L. Intersectional mentorship in academic medicine: A conceptual review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2024. № 4. C. 503. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21040503>

accompanied by effective implementation mechanisms, including adequate funding, regular monitoring, targeted training, and institutional sanctions for non-compliance.

Thus, the political and legal status of mentorship reflects more profound structural inequalities in academia: well-resourced systems with strong policy commitments can foster formal, inclusive, and impactful mentorship; under-resourced or politically unstable systems, on the other hand, risk perpetuating fragmentation and exclusion. Bridging this global divide requires a reconceptualization of mentorship not as a voluntary task, but as a core institutional obligation – embedded in national education policy, reflected in accreditation criteria, and backed by legal mandates and budget lines.

Moreover, cross-border academic collaboration can act as a **catalyst for harmonization**. Projects under **frameworks like Erasmus+, Horizon Europe**, or the **Bologna Process** promote the adoption of shared values – such as equity, excellence, and mobility– and facilitate the exchange of best practices. For Ukraine and other transitioning systems, such cooperation is not merely a source of funding but a strategic pathway toward modernization and inclusion.

4. International projects and best practices in academic mentorship

As higher education becomes increasingly global, universities are adopting mentorship models that transcend borders, incorporating digital innovation, cultural sensitivity, and diverse structures. The initiatives described below illustrate how international collaboration and innovative program design are transforming the mentorship landscape.

4.1. ESPERIDTA (Ukraine – Poland): digital mentorship in times of crisis

The **ESPERIDTA** project (*European Studies for Supporting Polish Education and Research in Digital Transformation: Interdisciplinary Approach*) serves as a compelling case study of how **digital mentorship** can act as a stabilizing force in higher education during times of crisis. As a transnational collaboration between **Ukrainian** and **Polish** academic institutions – most notably involving the **University** of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw **and** Tavria State Agrotechnological University in Ukraine – ESPERIDTA was launched in direct response to the systemic disruptions caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Operating under the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet framework, the project establishes digital mentorship infrastructures that transcend not only physical displacement but also linguistic, institutional, and technological divides. Key features of ESPERIDTA include:

1. **Asynchronous mentoring formats** using platforms such as Moodle, Zoom, and custom-built repositories, which allow flexible communication and resource sharing, regardless of time zone or internet reliability.

2. **Interdisciplinary peer learning**, wherein mentors and mentees collaboratively engage in digital pedagogy, research methodology, and EU policy studies – bridging Polish and Ukrainian academic cultures.

3. **Co-mentorship models**, pairing junior scholars with both local and foreign mentors, thus diversifying perspectives and reducing dependency on strained local academic support systems.

4. **Integration of mental health and well-being considerations**, where mentorship includes emotional support, academic identity preservation, and career planning under conditions of displacement or institutional collapse.

As Al Fattal et al. (2024)¹⁵⁷ note, such **virtual mentorship ecosystems** offer vital academic continuity, particularly for early-career researchers at risk of professional isolation. ESPERIDTA not only maintains the scholarly productivity of Ukrainian academics but also promotes intercultural solidarity and mutual capacity-building among Polish partners.

Moreover, ESPERIDTA demonstrates how digital mentorship can be systematically integrated into post-crisis academic rebuilding. By formalizing remote mentoring practices and archiving shared digital content, the project helps build resilient academic infrastructures capable of withstanding future geopolitical shocks.

The sustainability of the ESPERIDTA project lies in disseminating its results to higher education institutions. A vivid example of effective collaboration during wartime is the ESPERIDTA project at Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko (SSPU, Ukraine), which aims to support young researchers through the exchange of best practices in academic mentoring. Launched in 2022, this collaboration encompasses joint applications for Erasmus+ programs, guest lectures, organizing educational events, and sharing expertise in digital education transformation.

Within the project, academic schools, roundtables, and seminars are held to foster the professional development of students, postgraduate students, and faculty. A key event was the Polish-Ukrainian roundtable “European Studies through Digital European Language” (November 27, 2024), which brought together academic mentors and students from Warsaw, Sumy, Kyiv, Lutsk, and Pryluky to discuss topics such as:

– Multilingualism in the European Union: challenges and opportunities in the digital era;

¹⁵⁷ Al-Fattal, A., Sisavath, S., & Singh, J. (2024). Virtual mentorship in academia: A collaborative autoethnography of cross-border academics. *The Australian Educational Researcher*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-024-00795-0>

- Digital tools for revitalizing endangered European languages;
- Language technologies and artificial intelligence in preserving European languages;
- The impact of digital media on linguistic evolution in Europe;
- E-learning platforms and their role in language education;
- Intercultural communication in digital European workplaces;
- EU language policy in the context of global digitalization.

The ESPERIDTA Summer School included a roundtable titled “Digital Lexicography in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Innovations for a Multilingual Europe” (March 26, 2025). These activities demonstrate how academic mentoring can enhance digital competencies and intercultural communication, which are crucial for Ukraine’s integration into the European educational space.

The ESPERIDTA project exemplifies how international collaboration can enhance the culture of academic mentoring. For instance, roundtables and academic schools facilitate the exchange of experiences between mentors (faculty) and mentees (students, postgraduate students), while also helping to develop digital skills and promote ethical responsibility.

During wartime, the project plays a vital role in supporting young researchers facing challenges such as displacement, loss of access to resources, and psychological stress. ESPERIDTA facilitates the integration of Ukrainian students into the European academic environment through Erasmus+ mobility programs and the exchange of best mentoring practices, aligning with principles of inclusivity and student-centeredness¹⁵⁸.

(<https://sspu.edu.ua/news/sumdpu-spivorganizator-zakhodiv-mizhnarodnoji-litnoji-shkoli-esperidta-varshava-sumi>)

The results of the collaboration were reflected in the educational process through joint classes in the course “Ethics of Scientific Research: Philosophical, Linguistic Aspects” for the formal and informal education of future PhD students¹⁵⁹, through joint research on the issues of Digitalization in Philological Education at Higher Education Institutions in Poland and Ukrain¹⁶⁰.

¹⁵⁸ Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A. S. Makarenko. (2024, June 25). SSPU – co-organizer of the events of the international summer school ESPERIDTA: Warsaw – Sumy. <https://sspu.edu.ua/news/sumdpu-spivorganizator-zakhodiv-mizhnarodnoji-litnoji-shkoli-esperidta-varshava-sumi>

¹⁵⁹ Semenog O. Kapranov Ya. Ethics of Scientific Research: Philosophical, Linguistic Aspects. Third (Educational and Scientific) Level : Handbook. Sumy : Sumy State A. S. Makarenko Pedagogical University. 2024. 102 p. <https://repository.sspu.edu.ua/items/f4401ba1-aa9f-47d0-9428-37197b9335e4>

¹⁶⁰ Kapranov Y. V., Semenog O. M. Principles of Digitalization in Philological Education at Higher Education Institutions in Poland and Ukraine. In: *Philology and Philological Education in the Digital Transformation Era: European Dimensions, National Context, Intercultural*

Notably, the project also aligns with the EU's broader Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027) and European Education Area goals by supporting digitally inclusive education, enhancing cross-border collaboration in times of adversity, and fostering research excellence in an interdisciplinary and multilingual framework.

In sum, ESPERIDTA redefines mentorship as **a digitally empowered, transnational, and trauma-informed practice** – one that exemplifies how academic solidarity and innovation can emerge even in the face of war. It stands as a model for how institutions across Europe can integrate emergency-responsive mentorship into mainstream education policy and practice.

4.2. PASS (UK) and Dutch blended mentoring: structured peer learning across contexts

The **PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions)** program in the United Kingdom and the *blended mentorship models emerging* in the Netherlands exemplify how structured peer and faculty mentoring can be systematically integrated into higher education to foster academic achievement, personal development, and institutional inclusivity.

Originally developed at the University of Manchester and now widely adopted across British universities, the PASS model pairs senior undergraduate students with first-year students for curriculum-linked, collaborative study sessions. Unlike traditional tutoring, PASS is non-remedial and emphasizes student empowerment, peer-to-peer learning, and active engagement with course material. Sessions are co-facilitated and student-led, fostering a participatory atmosphere in which mentees build confidence and enhance study strategies.

According to Allocco et al. (2022)¹⁶¹, the dual benefits of PASS are striking:

- **First-year students** report stronger academic integration, reduced anxiety, and greater persistence, particularly in challenging STEM subjects.
- **Mentors**, meanwhile, develop transferable skills in leadership, communication, and pedagogical empathy, often leading to enhanced employability and academic identity formation.

Furthermore, PASS programs often incorporate *formal mentor training*, reflective practice, and continuous evaluation, ensuring quality and sustainability within institutional frameworks. Many universities integrate

Communication : Scientific Monograph. Riga, Latvia: “Baltija Publishing”, 2024. P. 33–90.
DOI <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-456-6-3>

¹⁶¹ Allocco A.L., Vandermaas-Peeler M., Hall E., Ketcham C., Idris M., Hamel J.A., Marshall D.J. Undergraduate Research in the Global Context: Models and Practices for High-Quality Mentoring. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2022. № 1. C. 106–123.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2022.2031084>

PASS into broader *student success strategies*, connecting it to retention initiatives and inclusive teaching policies.

In the *Netherlands*, where higher education institutions emphasize student autonomy and internationalization, recent innovations in blended mentoring are transforming how academic support is provided. These models combine: in-person group mentoring, often during the early semesters to build academic routines and community, one-on-one digital mentoring, particularly for remote learners or students juggling work and study, and mentor constellations, a multi-mentor approach that brings together academic staff, senior students, and industry professionals to support mentees holistically.

As Goeltz & Duran (2018)¹⁶² observe, these mentor constellations foster a 360-degree support ecosystem, ensuring that students are guided not only in coursework but also in career development, intercultural navigation, and personal resilience. Such models are especially impactful for international students, first-generation learners, and those from underrepresented backgrounds, who may otherwise lack access to informal academic capital.

Key features of Dutch blended mentoring include digital mentorship portals for scheduling, documentation, and progress tracking; emphasis on co-designed mentorship goals, where students actively shape their mentoring journey; institutional alignment with European Higher Education Area (EHEA) priorities on mobility, diversity, and student-centered pedagogy.

Together, the PASS and Dutch models underscore a shared European commitment to structured, evidence-based mentoring, student agency, and co-creation in mentorship processes, as well as scalable, inclusive designs adaptable to both domestic and international student populations.

Their success also illustrates that mentorship need not be faculty-dependent – when supported by institutional investment and pedagogical training, students themselves can become powerful agents of educational support and transformation.

4.3. Insights from global mentoring initiatives

A global review of high-impact mentorship initiatives identifies several best practices that transcend national contexts and institutional types. While mentorship programs vary in format, scope, and target audience, those that have a lasting impact tend to share five key features. These features reflect both structural foresight and pedagogical innovation, providing a blueprint for effective mentorship in higher education worldwide.

¹⁶² Goeltz J., Duran R. Best practices in mentoring undergraduate researchers for placement in an international setting. *Advances in Mentoring Undergraduate Students*. 2018. C. 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2018-1275.ch017>

Research consistently shows that mentorship is most effective when it is multimodal, offering students multiple pathways to support.

For instance, in Canada and the U.S., large-scale initiatives like the Entering Mentoring curriculum (Pfund et al., 2022¹⁶³) provide frameworks for tailored mentoring across research, teaching, and identity development.

Mentorship programs embedded in university strategy – rather than being treated as optional or extracurricular – show significantly higher impact (Nowell et al., 2017¹⁶⁴; Sakarias et al., 2024¹⁶⁵). This includes formal mentor training and ongoing professional development, as well as administrative infrastructure such as mentoring centers or digital portals, and evaluation tools to assess mentor performance and mentee outcomes (Esplen et al., 2025¹⁶⁶).

Such commitment is often reflected in the allocation of credit or recognition for mentoring work, which helps incentivize faculty and senior students to participate meaningfully.

Contextually sensitive mentoring is essential for fostering inclusion. Programs that overlook the specific challenges faced by women, students, refugees, or first-generation learners risk perpetuating existing inequalities (Farkas et al., 2019¹⁶⁷; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁶⁸; Atobatele et al., 2024¹⁶⁹).

Flexible approaches – such as using inclusive language, aligning mentoring with cultural calendars or caregiving responsibilities, or offering

¹⁶³ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

¹⁶⁴ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. C. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

¹⁶⁵ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

¹⁶⁶ Esplen M.J., Fiksenbaum L.M., Lin E., Darani S.A., Teshima J., Vigod S.N. Identifying the mentorship needs among faculty in a large department of psychiatry – support for the creation of a formal mentorship program. *BMC Medical Education*. 2025. № 1. C. 47. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06629-y>

¹⁶⁷ Farkas, A., Bonifacino, E., Turner, R., Tilstra, S., & Corbelli, J. (2019). Mentorship of women in academic medicine: A systematic review. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 34, 1322–1329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04955-2>

¹⁶⁸ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁶⁹ Atobatele F.A., Okonkwo C.A. Incorporating Emotional Intelligence in Leadership Training: A U.S. Review: Evaluating the Effectiveness, Challenges, and Long-Term Benefits of Integrating EQ Development in Leadership Programs. *International Journal of Futuristic Management Research*. 2024. № 1. C. 60–69. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJFMR.2024.5.1.60-69>

language-specific support – have proven successful. For instance, Karikari et al. (2025)¹⁷⁰ show how gender-responsive mentoring in STEM increases retention and publication rates for female scholars.

Mentorship models are increasingly benefiting from open educational practices, such as sharing mentoring curricula, training materials, and program designs across institutions. According to Atenas et al. (2023)¹⁷¹, this transparency promotes not only equity and cost-efficiency but also **cross-border innovation** and the development of global mentoring communities.

OEPs have been particularly valuable during crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts such as the war in Ukraine, where digital resource-sharing enabled continuity of mentoring across disrupted academic systems.

Beyond academic success, international mentorship programs significantly contribute to the development of soft skills that are essential for 21st-century careers. Participants in global mentoring initiatives report gains in communication and teamwork, digital literacy and time management, ethical reasoning and problem-solving, as well as intercultural sensitivity and adaptability (Allocco et al., 2022¹⁷²; Goeltz & Duran, 2018¹⁷³; Atobatele et al., 2024¹⁷⁴).

These skills are especially cultivated in co-mentoring or reverse mentoring arrangements, where students also mentor others or participate in reflective peer exchanges. They also correspond with frameworks such as the European Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, further endorsing mentorship as a strategic investment in human capital.

¹⁷⁰ Karikari, L., Obiri, J., Mensah, C., Nyame, K., & Botsyoe, M. (2025). The role of mentorship and support systems in enhancing women's academic advancement in higher education. *Path of Science*. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.114-6>

¹⁷¹ Atenas J., Nerantzi C., Bussu A. A conceptual approach to transform and enhance academic mentorship: Through open educational practices. *Open Praxis*. 2023. № 4. C. 352–364. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55982/openpraxis.15.4.595>

¹⁷² Allocco A.L., Vandermaas-Peeler M., Hall E., Ketcham C., Idris M., Hamel J.A., Marshall D.J. Undergraduate Research in the Global Context: Models and Practices for High-Quality Mentoring. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2022. № 1. C. 106–123. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2022.2031084>

¹⁷³ Goeltz J., Duran R. Best practices in mentoring undergraduate researchers for placement in an international setting. *Advances in Mentoring Undergraduate Students*. 2018. C. 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2018-1275.ch017>

¹⁷⁴ Atobatele F.A., Okonkwo C.A. Incorporating Emotional Intelligence in Leadership Training: A U.S. Review: Evaluating the Effectiveness, Challenges, and Long-Term Benefits of Integrating EQ Development in Leadership Programs. *International Journal of Futuristic Management Research*. 2024. № 1. C. 60–69. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJFMR.2024.5.1.60-69>

4.4. Why international mentorship matters

In an era characterized by global academic mobility, geopolitical instability, and rising demand for intercultural competence, **international mentorship** has become a strategic necessity in higher education. Beyond traditional objectives of student retention or academic achievement, cross-border mentorship programs offer layered benefits that enhance institutional resilience, promote research excellence, and foster individual empowerment.

International partnerships facilitate the transfer of mentorship models that have been tested and refined in diverse educational settings. Universities in transition—such as those in Ukraine—benefit from adopting structured practices already institutionalized in Western European or North American contexts, such as mentoring agreements, mentoring centers, or modular training programs. These models are not simply replicated but are contextually adapted, supporting the localization of global standards while maintaining flexibility and relevance.

For example, the ESPERIDTA project exemplifies how mentoring structures developed in Polish universities are reinterpreted within Ukrainian institutions to support researchers affected by war, thereby enhancing academic continuity and emotional well-being.

Mentorship across cultural and national borders fosters empathy, intercultural sensitivity, and adaptability among both mentors and mentees. These soft skills are increasingly acknowledged as vital to global citizenship and career development, particularly for those entering international research environments or multidisciplinary teams (Goeltz & Duran, 2018¹⁷⁵; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁷⁶).

Cross-context mentoring promotes what Al Fattal et al. (2025)¹⁷⁷ describe as “relational resilience”, i.e., the ability to sustain meaningful academic relationships even in the face of distance, disruption, or institutional differences. Such skills are invaluable in times of crisis, migration, or transition.

One of the most powerful outcomes of international mentorship is the expansion of professional networks. Mentees gain access to transnational research communities, publication opportunities, grant networks, and mobility schemes such as Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and Fulbright (Esplen

¹⁷⁵ Goeltz J., Duran R. Best practices in mentoring undergraduate researchers for placement in an international setting. *Advances in Mentoring Undergraduate Students*. 2018. C. 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2018-1275.ch017>

¹⁷⁶ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁷⁷ Al-Fattal A., Sisavath S., Singh J.K.N. Virtual mentorship in academia: a collaborative autoethnography of cross-border academics. *The Australian Educational Researcher*. 2025. № 52. C. 1975–1996. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-024-00795-0>

et al., 2025¹⁷⁸). This not only boosts their visibility but also strengthens their academic identity and career prospects.

For displaced scholars, early-career researchers in under-resourced institutions, or first-generation academics, such networks can be transformative – reducing professional isolation and opening doors to collaborative innovation.

At the institutional level, international mentorship promotes organizational learning. Cross-institutional collaborations encourage universities to reflect on their mentorship strategies, identify capacity gaps, and co-design better solutions. They also reinforce the values of inclusion, transparency, and student-centeredness – key priorities under frameworks such as the **European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Crucially, digital technologies serve as enablers, allowing hybrid mentoring ecosystems to flourish across time zones, linguistic boundaries, and academic cultures. Whether through platforms like Moodle and MS Teams or bespoke university portals, digital mentorship ensures that geography is no longer a constraint to meaningful academic connection.

International and hybrid mentorship models are **transforming the academic landscape** into a more inclusive, agile, and interconnected environment. Programs like ESPERIDTA and PASS demonstrate that impactful mentorship does not rely solely on physical proximity or national context. Instead, it is characterized by intentional design, institutional commitment, and relational equity.

As universities face unprecedented challenges – from war and forced migration to digital transformation – international mentorship provides a resilient and human-centered solution. By promoting inclusive excellence and transnational solidarity, it cultivates a new generation of globally competent scholars who are not only academically prepared but also socially attuned and ethically grounded.

5. Discussion and comparative analysis of Ukrainian and European mentoring practices

5.1. Summary of main findings

Mentorship has increasingly been recognized as a fundamental element of academic success, professional growth, and institutional cohesion in both

¹⁷⁸ Espen M.J., Fiksenbaum L.M., Lin E., Darani S.A., Teshima J., Vigod S.N. Identifying the mentorship needs among faculty in a large department of psychiatry – support for the creation of a formal mentorship program. BMC Medical Education. 2025. № 1. C. 47. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06629-y>

Ukrainian and broader European higher education systems. It is no longer regarded as a peripheral or informal activity but as a strategic process that influences educational quality, research output, and student well-being.

Across the reviewed literature and case studies, mentorship is conceptualized as a multifaceted relationship – encompassing cognitive, psychosocial, and institutional dimensions. It serves not only as a vehicle for knowledge transfer but also as a transformative process that cultivates professional identity, emotional resilience, and social integration, especially in multicultural or crisis-affected settings (Shlieina & Zimonova, 2025¹⁷⁹; Ponomarenko et al., 2024¹⁸⁰; Maguire et al., 2024¹⁸¹).

Effective mentoring relationships have been consistently linked to a wide array of positive outcomes, including:

- **Improved academic performance and retention** among undergraduate and graduate students (Nuis et al., 2023¹⁸²; Nowell et al., 2017¹⁸³).

- **Enhanced career preparedness and research productivity**, particularly for early-career researchers and junior faculty (Rollnik Sadowska et al., 2023¹⁸⁴).

- **Strengthened emotional support systems**, especially for students from vulnerable or underrepresented backgrounds (Fast, 2024¹⁸⁵; Womack et al., 2020¹⁸⁶).

¹⁷⁹ Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. C. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

¹⁸⁰ Ponomarenko M., Aryna F., Iryna M., Marharyta V. The role of mentoring in fostering the professional identity of future teachers. *Conhecimento & Diversidade*. 2024. № 41. C. 11507. <https://doi.org/10.18316/rcd.v16i41.11507>

¹⁸¹ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁸² Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

¹⁸³ Nowell L., Norris J., Mrklas K., White D. A literature review of mentorship programs in academic nursing. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2017. № 5. C. 334–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.02.007>

¹⁸⁴ Rollnik-Sadowska E., Ryciuk U., Glińska E., Bartkute-Norkuniene V., Jodiene R., Sprudzane S., Zvaigzne A., Marzano G., Jechava V. Factors affecting mentoring services: Cross-national perspective. *Engineering Management in Production and Services*. 2023. № 1. C. 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.2478/emj-2023-0008>

¹⁸⁵ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

¹⁸⁶ Womack V., Wood C., House S., Quinn S., Thomas S., McGee R., Byars-Winston A. Culturally aware mentorship: Lasting impacts of a novel intervention on academic administrators and faculty. *PLoS ONE*. 2020. № 8. C. e0236983. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236983>

– **Development of soft skills**, including communication, critical thinking, leadership, intercultural competence, and digital literacy (Goeltz & Duran, 2018¹⁸⁷; Allocco et al., 2022¹⁸⁸).

A number of shared success factors have emerged across institutional and national contexts:

1. **Individualized support and relational trust** – Mentees benefit most when mentorship is personalized and built on open communication, psychological safety, and mutual respect (Allen & Eby, 2003¹⁸⁹; Pfund et al., 2022¹⁹⁰).

2. **Clear expectations and structured objectives** – Formal mentoring agreements and individual development plans (IDPs) promote accountability, transparency, and alignment of goals (Dorner et al., 2020¹⁹¹).

3. **Mentor competence and training** – Pedagogical expertise, ethical responsibility, and cultural sensitivity are essential attributes of successful mentors (Krishna et al., 2019¹⁹²; Karikari et al., 2025¹⁹³).

4. **Institutional recognition and support** – Mentoring is most impactful when supported by dedicated infrastructure (e.g., mentoring centers, digital

¹⁸⁷ Goeltz J., Duran R. Best practices in mentoring undergraduate researchers for placement in an international setting. *Advances in Mentoring Undergraduate Students*. 2018. C. 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2018-1275.ch017>

¹⁸⁸ Allocco A.L., Vandermaas-Peeler M., Hall E., Ketcham C., Idris M., Hamel J.A., Marshall D.J. Undergraduate Research in the Global Context: Models and Practices for High-Quality Mentoring. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2022. № 1. C. 106–123. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2022.2031084>

¹⁸⁹ Allen T., Eby L. Relationship effectiveness for mentors: Factors associated with learning and quality. *Journal of Management*. 2003. № 4. C. 469–486. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(03\)00021-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(03)00021-7)

¹⁹⁰ Pfund C., Sancheznieto F., Byars-Winston A., Zárate S., Black S., Birren B., Rogers J., Asai D. Evaluation of a culturally responsive mentorship education program for the advisers of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Program graduate students. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2022. № 3. C. ar50. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.21-11-0321>

¹⁹¹ Dorner H., Mišić G., Rymarenko M. Online mentoring for academic practice: Strategies, implications, and innovations. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14301>

¹⁹² Krishna L., Renganathan Y., Tay K., Tan B., Chong J., Ching A., Prakash K., Quek N., Peh R., Chin A., Taylor D., Mason S., Kanesvaran R., Toh Y. Educational roles as a continuum of mentoring's role in medicine – A systematic review and thematic analysis of educational studies from 2000 to 2018. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019. № 19. C. 439. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1872-8>

¹⁹³ Karikari L., Obiri J., Mensah C., Nyame K., Botsyoe M. The role of mentorship and support systems in enhancing women's academic advancement in higher education. *Path of Science*. 2025. № 4. C. 100–112. <https://doi.org/10.22178/pos.114-6>

platforms) and embedded in university strategy (Esplen et al., 2025¹⁹⁴; Sakarias et al., 2024¹⁹⁵).

In **European universities**, mentorship is more often **formalized, inclusive**, and digitally supported, reflecting broader institutional capacities and alignment with EU policy frameworks such as EHEA and the Sustainable Development Goals (Maguire et al., 2024)¹⁹⁶.

In **Ukrainian universities**, mentorship remains **in transition**, often informal and uneven, yet increasingly dynamic due to war-related reforms, Erasmus+ projects, and cross-border collaborations such as ESPERIDTA (Ivanytska, 2024¹⁹⁷; Fast, 2024¹⁹⁸).

Overall, the findings point to a growing convergence in mentorship goals – namely, promoting learner-centered education, emotional resilience, and professional empowerment – while also highlighting persistent divergences in institutional capacity, policy integration, and cultural attitudes toward mentorship.

5.2. Core factors shaping mentoring effectiveness

The success of academic mentorship is not determined solely by the presence of a mentor – mentee relationship, but by the quality of institutional, relational, and pedagogical conditions in which it unfolds. Mentoring thrives when embedded within a supportive academic ecosystem – one that values student development, promotes equity, and provides adequate resources for sustained engagement.

A central determinant of mentoring success is the degree of formalization and support offered by the hosting institution. Universities that integrate mentoring into their strategic plans – through formalized programs, mentoring offices, digital platforms, and professional development – tend to foster more

¹⁹⁴ Esplen M.J., Fiksenbaum L.M., Lin E., Darani S.A., Teshima J., Vigod S.N. Identifying the mentorship needs among faculty in a large department of psychiatry – support for the creation of a formal mentorship program. *BMC Medical Education*. 2025. № 1. C. 47. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06629-y>

¹⁹⁵ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

¹⁹⁶ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

¹⁹⁷ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

¹⁹⁸ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

consistent, equitable, and impactful outcomes (Ivanytska, 2024¹⁹⁹; Nuis et al., 2023²⁰⁰; Stoeger et al., 2020²⁰¹). For instance, institutions participating in projects like **ESPERIDTA** or **PASS** have demonstrated that structural coordination enhances mentor accountability and cross-departmental learning.

Supportive *leadership culture* is equally vital. When rectors, deans, and department heads champion mentoring, allocate time and resources, and recognize mentors' contributions, mentorship becomes normalized rather than viewed as a voluntary or burdensome task. In contrast, in environments where mentorship is viewed as peripheral, programs often struggle with low participation, unclear expectations, and high mentor fatigue (Shlieina & Zimonova, 2025²⁰²).

Mentoring cannot be “one-size-fits-all.” Programs that neglect to address disciplinary needs, institutional constraints, or learners' social realities often fail to engage participants meaningfully. Effective mentoring frameworks are those that are adaptable and grounded in local relevance – whether by aligning with specific fields (e.g., mentoring for researchers in STEM, humanities, or applied sciences), responding to national educational reforms (e.g., Ukraine's integration into the EHEA), or being sensitive to wartime conditions and trauma (Fast, 2024²⁰³; Hairon et al., 2020²⁰⁴).

International programs further reinforce the need for intercultural fluency: cross-border mentorship must account for differences in academic norms, feedback styles, and relational expectations, requiring mentors to adapt and develop inclusive practices.

Beyond institutional scaffolding, the interpersonal dynamics between mentor and mentee play a decisive role. Studies show that alignment in communication style, values, and expectations leads to more productive and

¹⁹⁹ Ivanytska O. Academic mentoring at higher educational institutions of Ukraine. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*. 2024. № 54. C. 63–66. <https://doi.org/10.24144/2524-0609.2024.54.63-66>

²⁰⁰ Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

²⁰¹ Stoeger H., Balestrini D., Ziegler A. Key issues in professionalizing mentoring practices. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2020. № 1483. C. 5–18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14537>

²⁰² Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. C. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

²⁰³ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogy/2023.4.15>

²⁰⁴ Hairon S., Loh S., Lim S., Govindani S., Tan J., Tay E. Structured mentoring: Principles for effective mentoring. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2020. № 1. C. 105–123. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-019-09251-8>

emotionally fulfilling mentoring relationships (Allen & Eby, 2003²⁰⁵; Rollnik Sadowska et al., 2023²⁰⁶). Mentees are more likely to engage and persist when they feel understood, respected, and guided by someone who shares their goals or has overcome similar challenges.

Some programs use matching algorithms or pre-mentoring interviews to ensure compatibility. Others rely on mentor constellations (as in Dutch universities), where students are supported by a team with complementary perspectives.

Communication is consistently cited as one of the most important dimensions of mentorship success. Active listening, constructive and timely feedback, and openness to dialogue allow mentors to identify student needs, challenge limiting beliefs, and co-create strategies for growth (Nuis et al., 2023)²⁰⁷. Poor communication, by contrast, is a leading cause of mentoring failure, often resulting in disengagement or misaligned expectations.

Successful mentors tailor their communication to the mentee's preferred learning and feedback style – whether formal and structured, or informal and conversational – and regularly revisit the goals of the relationship.

While academic guidance is essential, emotional support cannot be overlooked. Effective mentors demonstrate emotional intelligence, empathy, and cultural humility, especially when working with students from underrepresented or vulnerable backgrounds (Shlieina & Zimonova, 2025²⁰⁸; Hurkova et al., 2022²⁰⁹). Creating a psychologically safe space – where mentees feel comfortable expressing doubts, fears, and aspirations – is a precondition for authentic learning and transformation.

In this context, soft skills become just as crucial as scholarly credentials. Mentors who can balance authority with approachability, and who recognize the affective dimension of education, are often the most impactful in shaping mentees' confidence and resilience.

²⁰⁵ Allen T., Eby L. Relationship effectiveness for mentors: Factors associated with learning and quality. *Journal of Management*. 2003. № 4. C. 469–486. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(03\)00021-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(03)00021-7)

²⁰⁶ Rollnik-Sadowska E., Ryciuk U., Glińska E., Bartkute-Norkuniene V., Jodienė R., Sprudzėnė S., Zvaigznė A., Marzano G., Jecheva V. Factors affecting mentoring services: Cross-national perspective. *Engineering Management in Production and Services*. 2023. № 1. C. 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.2478/emj-2023-0008>

²⁰⁷ Nuis W., Segers M., Beausaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

²⁰⁸ Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. C. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

²⁰⁹ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Supl/665>

5.3. Ukrainian and European models: differences and convergence

The comparative landscape of academic mentorship in Ukraine and Europe reveals a complex interplay of historical trajectories, institutional capacity, pedagogical priorities, and political realities. While European systems offer examples of long-established and formally embedded mentorship practices, Ukrainian institutions are navigating a transitional phase – shifting from supervision-based traditions toward more diversified and student-centered mentoring frameworks.

One of the most visible distinctions is the degree of formalization and institutionalization. In Western and Northern European universities, mentoring is often governed by codified policies, supported through dedicated funding streams, and aligned with broader strategic priorities such as research excellence, inclusion, and internationalization (Lobanova et al., 2024²¹⁰; Nuis et al., 2023²¹¹). Mentors may receive training in pedagogy and intercultural communication, while mentees are engaged through clear expectations, feedback cycles, and milestone tracking. Examples include individual development plans (IDPs), mentor training modules, and digital portals that manage communication and progress.

By contrast, Ukrainian mentorship is still largely emerging from informal, personalized, or institution-specific formats, often without formal policy frameworks or standardized evaluation criteria. In many institutions, mentorship remains a voluntary or expected role that lacks administrative support, recognition, or dedicated resources. However, this is changing: reforms associated with the Bologna Process, wartime adaptation, and European collaboration programs (e.g., Erasmus+, ESPERIDTA) are accelerating systematic transformation toward greater formalization and transparency (Shlieina & Zimonova, 2025²¹²).

Pedagogically, European mentoring models tend to emphasize reflection, critical thinking, inclusivity, and digital literacy. They are often framed within broader discourses on lifelong learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and **civic engagement**. For example, Dutch blended mentoring models promote resilience and intercultural competencies, while Scandinavian institutions

²¹⁰ Lobanova A., Prykhodko O., Karytka V., Slavina D. Social mentoring in the European communication space: Cases of the Russian-Ukrainian war. *Social Communications: Theory and Practice*. 2024. № 16(1). С. 121–136. <https://doi.org/10.51423/2524-0471-2024-16-1-9>

²¹¹ Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. С. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

²¹² Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. С. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

integrate mentorship with democratic education and student well-being services (Goeltz & Duran, 2018²¹³; Maguire et al., 2024²¹⁴).

In contrast, Ukrainian mentorship has been more pragmatic and professionally oriented, with a strong focus on professional identity formation, teaching adaptation, and research supervision (Ponomarenko et al., 2024²¹⁵; Hurkova et al., 2022²¹⁶). Traditional curatorship and scientific supervision still dominate the mentoring landscape, often emphasizing academic discipline, discipline, and resilience in the face of disruption – particularly during and after the full-scale war (Fast)²¹⁷.

This contrast reflects broader educational paradigms: European mentorship is deeply linked to student empowerment and participatory culture, while Ukrainian mentorship has historically centered on knowledge transfer, authority-based guidance, and adaptation to national reforms. Yet this distinction is also narrowing, as Ukrainian institutions adopt student-centered reforms and promote innovation in response to external pressures.

Both European and Ukrainian contexts are increasingly turning to digital tools to enhance mentorship accessibility and scalability. European institutions often leverage robust digital ecosystems (e.g., Moodle, MS Teams, mentor–mentee platforms) that enable flexible, hybrid, and cross-border mentoring. Ukrainian universities – initially less resourced in this area – have made rapid strides during wartime, using open-access tools and asynchronous communication to sustain mentoring relationships in conditions of displacement, infrastructure loss, and crisis.

Transnational collaborations such as **ESPERIDTA** have played a key role in mutual adaptation: European institutions adopt more trauma-sensitive and flexible practices, while Ukrainian universities adopt digital and inclusive mentoring frameworks. This cross-pollination of practices points to growing convergence around resilience, equity, and digital innovation.

²¹³ Goeltz J., Duran R. Best practices in mentoring undergraduate researchers for placement in an international setting. *Advances in Mentoring Undergraduate Students*. 2018. C. 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2018-1275.ch017>

²¹⁴ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

²¹⁵ Ponomarenko M., Aryna F., Iryna M., Marharyta V. The role of mentoring in fostering the professional identity of future teachers. *Conhecimento & Diversidade*. 2024. № 41. C. 11507. <https://doi.org/10.18316/rcd.v16i41.11507>

²¹⁶ Hurkova T., Lozenko A., Hroshovenko O., Tsapko A., Zubtsova Y., Onyshchenko N. Mentoring and coaching in the training of teachers for the New Ukrainian School. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*. 2022. № 4Supl. C. 360–376. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/14.4Sup1/665>

²¹⁷ Fast O. Doctoral students at risk academic and professional support: Quality management issues. *Академічні студії. Серія «Педагогіка»*. 2024. № 4. C. 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.52726/as.pedagogiy/2023.4.15>

Despite institutional differences, both Ukrainian and European systems share a growing recognition of mentorship as a multifunctional educational tool – supporting research productivity, emotional well-being, academic integration, and career preparation. In both settings, mentorship is increasingly seen as a strategic investment, not just a personal gesture.

Converging trends include: increased attention to mentee agency and co-design of mentoring processes; recognition of mentorship as part of institutional quality assurance; efforts to link mentoring with social justice, inclusion, and sustainable development goals; integration of mentoring across academic levels, from undergraduate onboarding to doctoral supervision and early-career researcher development.

Ultimately, both regions are moving toward models that combine structure with flexibility, academic rigor with psychosocial care, and traditional mentorship roles with emerging needs, such as digital literacy, mental health, and global mobility.

6. Research gaps and future directions

A critical review of the current literature on academic mentoring reveals several persistent research gaps, particularly relevant to the Ukrainian context in light of recent geopolitical and educational disruptions.

One of the most significant shortcomings in the current body of research is the lack of empirical studies on mentoring practices in crisis contexts, such as war, forced displacement, pandemics, or systemic educational instability. While much of the global literature on mentoring assumes a stable institutional backdrop, this assumption overlooks the realities faced by students and faculty in Ukraine and other crisis-affected regions. As noted by Cleary et al. (2023)²¹⁸, Walube et al. (2024)²¹⁹, and Sakarias et al. (2024)²²⁰, there is an urgent need for studies that explore how mentorship can be sustained, restructured, or innovated under such extreme circumstances.

While digital mentorship platforms have gained prominence – especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic – there remains a lack of large-scale, systematic research on their long-term effectiveness, equity of access,

²¹⁸ Cleary M., Thapa D., West S., Lopez V., Williamson M., Sahay A., Kornhaber R. Mentoring students in doctoral nursing programs: A scoping review. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2023. № 45. C. 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.01.010>

²¹⁹ Walube T., Rutanga M., Makoboza P. Academic staff mentorship at Makerere University: A qualitative study. *Pan-African Journal of Education and Social Sciences*. 2024. № 2. C. 123–140. <https://doi.org/10.56893/pajes2024v05i02.07>

²²⁰ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

and adaptability across learner demographics. Particularly in resource-constrained settings, evidence is scarce on how such platforms can be customized for scale without compromising quality. Scholars such as Lorenzetti et al. (2019)²²¹, Cleary et al. (2023)²²², and Sakarias et al. (2024)²²³ emphasize the need for comparative and impact-based evaluations of digital mentoring initiatives.

Another underexplored area is the misalignment between national regulatory frameworks and international standards of academic mentorship. In Ukraine, for instance, mentorship policies often lack clear legal definitions, implementation mechanisms, and connections to European higher education strategies. Walube et al. (2024)²²⁴, Sakarias et al. (2024)²²⁵, and Owan et al. (2023)²²⁶ emphasize the importance of examining how political, legal, and administrative barriers may impede the formalization and inclusivity of mentoring programs.

Based on these gaps, the following research and policy directions are recommended (Table 2).

To strengthen and sustain academic mentorship in both Ukrainian and broader European contexts, several future-oriented research and policy priorities emerge. These are essential not only for improving the quality and impact of mentoring programs, but also for ensuring their adaptability in the face of ongoing social, political, and technological change.

²²¹ Lorenzetti D., Shipton L., Nowell L., Jacobsen M., Lorenzetti L., Clancy T., Paolucci E. A systematic review of graduate student peer mentorship in academia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2019. № 5. C. 549–576. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2019.1686694>

²²² Cleary M., Thapa D., West S., Lopez V., Williamson M., Sahay A., Kornhaber R. Mentoring students in doctoral nursing programs: A scoping review. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2023. № 45. C. 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.01.010>

²²³ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

²²⁴ Walube T., Rutanga M., Makoboza P. Academic staff mentorship at Makerere University: A qualitative study. *Pan-African Journal of Education and Social Sciences*. 2024. № 2. C. 123–140. <https://doi.org/10.56893/pajes2024v05i02.07>

²²⁵ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

²²⁶ Owan V., Ameh E., Anam E. Collaboration and institutional culture as mediators linking mentorship and institutional support to academics' research productivity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2023. № 1. C. 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-023-09354-3>

Table 2

Promising research directions in academic mentoring

Priority Area	Recommendations	Key Sources
Crisis-Focused Studies	Conduct qualitative and longitudinal studies on mentoring during war, migration, and systemic disruption	Cleary et al., 2023; Walube et al., 2024; Sakarias et al., 2024
Digital Transformation	Design and evaluate scalable digital mentoring platforms tailored to low-resource environments	Lorenzetti et al., 2019; Cleary et al., 2023; Sakarias et al., 2024
Policy Harmonization	Analyze Ukrainian legislation and its convergence with EU standards; propose actionable reforms	Walube et al., 2024; Owan et al., 2023; Sakarias et al., 2024
Inclusive Mentorship	Develop mentorship initiatives focused on women in science, displaced students, and marginalized groups	Maguire et al., 2024; Williams et al., 2022; Haeger & Fresquez, 2016
Monitoring and Evaluation	Establish clear indicators and assessment frameworks for mentoring program impact and sustainability	Nasri et al., 2023; Owan et al., 2023; Sakarias et al., 2024

Crisis-Focused Studies

The escalation of armed conflict in Ukraine, increased levels of forced migration, and wider disruptions to educational systems globally underscore the urgent need for in-depth, longitudinal research on mentoring in crisis contexts. Such research should examine how mentoring relationships are initiated, sustained, or transformed during periods of institutional breakdown, displacement, and uncertainty. Qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews and narrative analysis, are particularly well-suited to capturing the lived experiences of both mentors and mentees navigating war, trauma, or exile. Longitudinal data can also shed light on how mentoring contributes to recovery, identity reconstruction, and professional continuity over time (Cleary et al., 2023²²⁷; Walube et al., 2024²²⁸; Sakarias et al., 2024²²⁹). A specific focus on resilience-building, emotional regulation, and academic re-entry will be essential in future studies involving displaced scholars and students.

²²⁷ Cleary M., Thapa D., West S., Lopez V., Williamson M., Sahay A., Kornhaber R. Mentoring students in doctoral nursing programs: A scoping review. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2023. № 45. C. 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.01.010>

²²⁸ Walube T., Rutanga M., Makoboza P. Academic staff mentorship at Makerere University: A qualitative study. *Pan-African Journal of Education and Social Sciences*. 2024. № 2. C. 123–140. <https://doi.org/10.56893/pajes2024v05i02.07>

²²⁹ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

Digital Transformation

The acceleration of digitalization in higher education presents an opportunity to reimagine mentorship through scalable and accessible platforms. There is a pressing need to design, implement, and assess digital mentoring tools that are user-friendly, multilingual, and compatible with low-resource or crisis-affected environments – such as war-torn regions or rural academic institutions. Such platforms must go beyond basic communication functions to include goal-setting, tracking progress, feedback loops, and access to open mentoring resources. Future research should explore best practices in user interface design, cross-cultural adaptability, and digital literacy support within mentoring platforms (Lorenzetti et al., 2019²³⁰; Cleary et al., 2023²³¹; Sakarias et al., 2024²³²). Studies should also assess the efficacy of hybrid models that blend in-person and digital mentoring, especially in supporting non-traditional students.

Policy Harmonization

With Ukraine striving to align its education system more closely with European Union standards, a key research priority lies in the systematic analysis of Ukrainian educational legislation in relation to EU mentoring frameworks. This involves mapping existing policies on academic supervision, faculty development, and student support against EU directives and best practices. Comparative legal studies could reveal gaps, overlaps, and opportunities for harmonization, paving the way for evidence-based policy reform (Walube et al., 2024²³³; Owan et al., 2023²³⁴; Sakarias et al., 2024²³⁵). These efforts should also address governance mechanisms, accountability structures, and funding models for mentorship programs,

²³⁰ Lorenzetti D., Shipton L., Nowell L., Jacobsen M., Lorenzetti L., Clancy T., Paolucci E. A systematic review of graduate student peer mentorship in academia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*. 2019. № 5. C. 549–576. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2019.1686694>

²³¹ Cleary M., Thapa D., West S., Lopez V., Williamson M., Sahay A., Kornhaber R. Mentoring students in doctoral nursing programs: A scoping review. *Journal of Professional Nursing*. 2023. № 45. C. 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2023.01.010>

²³² Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

²³³ Walube T., Rutanga M., Makoboza P. Academic staff mentorship at Makerere University: A qualitative study. *Pan-African Journal of Education and Social Sciences*. 2024. № 2. C. 123–140. <https://doi.org/10.56893/pajes2024v05i02.07>

²³⁴ Owan V., Ameh E., Anam E. Collaboration and institutional culture as mediators linking mentorship and institutional support to academics' research productivity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2023. № 1. C. 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-023-09354-3>

²³⁵ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

ensuring that reform proposals are actionable and aligned with both national priorities and European integration strategies.

Inclusive Mentorship

Another major research avenue is the development and evaluation of **inclusive mentorship models** tailored to the needs of marginalized and underrepresented groups. This includes women in STEM, LGBTQ+ students, individuals with disabilities, first-generation learners, and displaced or refugee scholars. Studies should explore how mentorship can foster equity by addressing specific barriers – such as academic isolation, language discrimination, or lack of access to research networks –and by amplifying mentees’ voices in curriculum design and institutional policymaking (Maguire et al., 2024²³⁶; Williams et al., 2022²³⁷; Haeger & Fresquez, 2016²³⁸). Pilot programs should be documented and analyzed to determine how intersectional identities shape mentorship dynamics, outcomes, and sustainability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Finally, the long-term success of mentorship programs depends on robust **monitoring and evaluation frameworks**. Despite widespread recognition of mentoring’s value, many institutions still lack clear indicators for assessing program effectiveness, participant satisfaction, and learning outcomes. Future research should focus on developing **evidence-based metrics** and **impact assessment tools** that can be adapted across diverse institutional contexts. These tools might include mentee self-assessment rubrics, longitudinal tracking dashboards, and institutional benchmarking instruments. Importantly, evaluations should be participatory, allowing mentors and mentees to co-define success and continuously refine the mentoring process (Nasri et al., 2023²³⁹; Owan et al., 2023²⁴⁰; Sakarias et al., 2024²⁴¹).

²³⁶ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

²³⁷ Williams, J., Walker, R., Burgess, K., Shay, L., Schmidt, S., Tsevat, J., Campbell, J., Dawson, A., Ozieh, M., Phillips, S., & Egede, L. (2022). Mentoring strategies to support diversity in research-focused junior faculty: A scoping review. *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2022.474>

²³⁸ Haeger H., Fresquez C. Mentoring for inclusion: The impact of mentoring on undergraduate researchers in the sciences. *CBE Life Sciences Education*. 2016. № 3. C. ar36. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.16-01-0016>

²³⁹ Nasri N., Nasri N., Talib M. Understanding university professors’ best mentoring practices in undergraduate research. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 2023. № 1. C. 112–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2021.1988677>

²⁴⁰ Owan V., Ameh E., Anam E. Collaboration and institutional culture as mediators linking mentorship and institutional support to academics’ research productivity. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*. 2023. № 1. C. 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-023-09354-3>

To ensure the long-term resilience and quality of academic mentoring in Ukraine, stakeholders must move beyond imported models and address local complexities with context-sensitive, evidence-based solutions. In particular, future research should focus on building an empirical foundation for **mentorship under crisis**, advancing **digitally enabled models**, and aligning policies with **European best practices** while maintaining cultural and institutional relevance. Furthermore, investing in inclusive, gender-responsive, and cross-sectoral mentorship frameworks will not only bridge current gaps but also empower future generations of researchers, educators, and civic leaders.

By addressing these strategic areas, Ukraine can enhance the capacity of its higher education system to **adapt, innovate, and thrive**, even in times of profound uncertainty.

CONCLUSION

Academic mentoring has emerged as a pivotal mechanism in transforming higher education systems globally. It integrates both theoretical underpinnings – rooted in developmental, constructivist, and social learning theories – and practical models, such as peer, faculty-led, digital, and inclusive mentorship schemes. This dual foundation underscores the critical role of mentoring in shaping students' academic achievement, personal development, and professional trajectories.

At its core, effective academic mentoring fosters individualized, trust-based relationships that are grounded in open communication, constructive feedback, and the recognition of both the mentee's potential and the contextual challenges they face. As underscored by Shlieina and Zimonova (2025)²⁴² and Nuis et al. (2023)²⁴³, such relationships contribute to skill development across cognitive, emotional, and social domains, providing learners and junior academics with tools to navigate increasingly complex academic environments.

Mentoring contributes meaningfully to the sustainability of higher education institutions by fostering inclusive, student-centered, and future-

²⁴¹ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090179>

²⁴² Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. C. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

²⁴³ Nuis W., Segers M., Beusaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

oriented academic cultures. As Voinea and Adamuti-Trache (2025)²⁴⁴ emphasize, mentoring supports institutional resilience and adaptability in response to demographic shifts, technological disruption, and crises such as war or migration. Through structured programs and informal networks, mentoring enables knowledge transfer, leadership development, and integration of diverse learner groups – creating a robust foundation for socially responsive and ethically grounded universities.

Multidimensional mentoring frameworks – ranging from in-person faculty guidance to scalable digital models – enhance institutional capacity to retain talent, address inequality, and promote innovation in teaching and research. As demonstrated by the work of Stozhko et al. (2021)²⁴⁵ and Torrejón-Ramos et al. (2023)²⁴⁶, mentoring systems contribute to sustainable higher education by not only improving outcomes for individuals but also by fostering a culture of mutual support and lifelong learning within academic ecosystems.

To ensure that academic mentoring continues to serve as a driver of sustainability and equity, several key areas require attention:

(a) **Digital Mentorship and Access Equity**, i.e., future research must examine how digital mentoring platforms can be adapted for inclusive, cross-border use, particularly in under-resourced or crisis-affected contexts (Tinoco-Giraldo et al., 2020²⁴⁷; Sakarias et al., 2024²⁴⁸);

(b) **Policy and Institutional Harmonization**, i.e., there is a need for greater alignment between institutional practices, national legislation, and international quality benchmarks in mentorship, especially in transition economies like Ukraine (Sakarias et al., 2024²⁴⁹; Voinea & Adamuti-Trache, 2025²⁵⁰);

²⁴⁴ Voinea M., Adamuti-Trache M. The role of academic mentoring in building sustainable universities. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov. Series VII: Social Sciences • Law*. 2025. № 4. C. 123–134. <https://doi.org/10.31926/but.ssl.2024.17.66.4.4>

²⁴⁵ Stozhko N., Bortnik B., Sudakova N., Stozhko D. The mentoring system as a factor in the sustainable development of higher education. *Sustainability*. 2021. № 17. C. 9733. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179733>

²⁴⁶ Torrejón-Ramos M., Alonso-Muñoz S., Medina-Salgado M., Sánchez R. Trends in mentoring at higher education: A bibliometric analysis. *Proceedings INNODOCT/22. International Conference on Innovation, Documentation and Education*. 2023. C. 15704. <https://doi.org/10.4995/inn2022.2023.15704>

²⁴⁷ Tinoco-Giraldo H., Sánchez E., García-Peñalvo F. E-mentoring in higher education: A structured literature review and implications for future research. *Sustainability*. 2020. № 11. C. 4344. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114344>

²⁴⁸ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 2024. № 9. C. 2167–2185. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRIS.2024.8090179>

²⁴⁹ Sakarias S., Neema M., Du Plessis D. Mentorship of academics in higher education institutions: A scoping review and future research agenda. *International Journal of Research*

(c) **Impact Measurement**, i.e., more rigorous longitudinal studies are needed to evaluate how mentoring influences academic success, psychosocial well-being, and long-term career trajectories (Nabi et al., 2024²⁵¹; Nuis et al., 2023²⁵²);

(d) **Inclusive Mentorship Design**, i.e., special attention must be given to developing mentorship models that address the needs of marginalized populations, including displaced students, women in STEM, and first-generation university attendees (Shlieina & Zimonova, 2025²⁵³; Maguire et al., 2024²⁵⁴).

Academic mentoring, when implemented strategically and adaptively, holds the potential to transform higher education into a more inclusive, agile, and sustainable domain. It is not a one-size-fits-all solution, but rather a multifaceted process that requires contextual sensitivity, ongoing evaluation, and a commitment from the institution. In countries like Ukraine, where higher education systems are undergoing profound change, mentoring offers a uniquely human and relational pathway to recovery, innovation, and global integration.

As higher education continues to navigate uncertainty – from technological shifts to geopolitical crises – mentoring stands out as a proven, flexible, and impactful practice that bridges past legacies with future ambitions.

SUMMARY

This article examines the evolving culture of academic mentorship in Ukrainian and European universities, highlighting both convergence and divergence in mentoring models, institutional support, and inclusivity practices. Grounded in theories such as Social Learning Theory, Self-Determination Theory, and Kram's Mentorship Theory, the study analyzes

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²⁵⁰ Voinea M., Adamuti-Trache M. The role of academic mentoring in building sustainable universities. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov. Series VII: Social Sciences Law*. 2025. № 4. C. 123–134. <https://doi.org/10.31926/but.ssl.2024.17.66.4.4>

²⁵¹ Nabi G., Walmsley A., Mir M., Osman S. The impact of mentoring in higher education on student career development: A systematic review and research agenda. *Studies in Higher Education*. 2024. № 4. C. 739–755. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2024.2354894>

²⁵² Nuis W., Segers M., Beausaert S. Conceptualizing mentoring in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Educational Research Review*. 2023. № 41. C. 100565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100565>

²⁵³ Shlieina L., Zimonova O. Mentoring as an effective factor of influence on the development of the educational space. *Social Pedagogy: Theory and Practice*. 2025. № 1. C. 155–160. <https://doi.org/10.12958/1817-3764-2025-1-155-160>

²⁵⁴ Maguire K., Anderson A., Chavez T. Women in academia: Mentorship from a gendered perspective. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*. 2024. № 2. C. 203–218. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-10-2023-0094>

mentorship as a strategic educational tool for enhancing student success, professional development, and institutional resilience. In European contexts, mentorship is often formalized, inclusive, and embedded within quality assurance systems. In contrast, Ukraine remains a transitional nation, shaped by post-Soviet legacies, the ongoing war, and increasing international collaboration. The paper compares peer, faculty, blended, and inclusive mentoring practices, with a focus on structural integration, digital platforms, and support for vulnerable groups, including displaced and doctoral students. Drawing on examples such as the ESPERIDTA project and PASS programs, the study underscores the transformative potential of international mentorship initiatives. It also identifies key challenges in Ukraine, including underfunding, legal and policy gaps, and a lack of systematic evaluation. The article concludes by outlining strategic directions for developing sustainable, equitable, and context-sensitive mentorship frameworks in higher education, especially under crisis conditions. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on academic mentorship as a pillar of global educational reform and integration.

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