

When University Students Peer Coach Professional Skills Do they Also Counsel, Mentor, and Tutor?

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The purpose of this study is to investigate what really happens when university students do peer coaching of professional skills. Student peer coaches and student coachees participated in this course-based research of peer coaching professional skills at MacEwan University. After each peer coaching, session data was gathered through completion of coachee reports. In the initial study the highest number of requests, in descending order, for coaching the professional skills was: writing, presentations, library research, technology, team work, and case study analysis. As well, coachees made requests for help in other areas that were not identified as a professional skill, which is the purpose of this study, i.e. does counselling, mentoring, or tutoring also take place?

INTRODUCTION

This study starts by providing literature reviews of (1) professional skills and (2) peer coaching. Then it provides the (3) background context of the development of an undergraduate business Advanced Leadership course where students are peer coaching other students in the development of professional skills. This section also provides research completed on the course. Next, it presents a (4) model of authentic peer coaching. After this the (5) methodology and results are given. Then the (6) three research questions asked in this study are discussed. This also provides evidence for the authentic peer coaching model. This is followed with (7) conclusions and recommendations for peer coaching implementation and future research.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS LITERATURE REVIEW

For nearly 30 years, associations, foundations, governments and their agencies, commissions, councils, and departments have encouraged and promoted characteristics in university business graduates which employers and society want. These characteristics are beyond typical university specific content discipline knowledge which business schools provide, such as accounting, human resources, management, marketing, etc. (See Table 1) (Bath, Smith, Stein, & Swann, 2004; Benson, 2018; De La Harpe, Radloff, & Wyber, 2000; Emberg & Benson, 2010; Robley, Whittle, & Murdoch-Eaton, 2005; Sumsion & Goodfellow, 2004). As well, American and European university accrediting bodies have

recommended and required universities and colleges to prepare students for workforce employability after graduation by developing within them these characteristics (AACSB, 2017; EFMD (EPAS), 2017).

TABLE 1
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENT WORKFORCE
EMPLOYABILITY CHARACTERISTICS

Country	Agency	Year
Australia	Dearing Report	1996
	Finn Committee	1991
Canada	Conference Board of Canada	2012, 2000, 1992
European Union	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)	2009
	European Ministers of Education Agreement	1999
United Kingdom	Kennisnet University of Twente (KUT)	2010
	Confederation of British Industry	1998
	Medical Council	1992
United States	National Research Council (NRC)	2012, 2011,
	Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills Project (ATC21S)	2010
	Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE)	2010
	Hewlett Foundation (HF)	2010
	Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)	2007
	Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC)	1991

Emberg and Benson (2010) asserted the concept of professional skills has been confusing because it has not been clearly defined. They found that in the literature vague descriptions of these sets of student characteristics, which educational institutions wished to have embodied in their graduates has resulted in a jigsaw or matrix narrative vs. an accurate definition. They go on to provide the example of how the terms attributes, capabilities, competencies, qualities, skills, and traits have been joined with the terms core, generic, life-long learning, non-technical, personal, professional, and transferable to describe these sets of characterize. As well they provide specific definitions which a variety of researchers have been using including:

- (1) ... these student characteristics have come to be accepted as being the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of university graduates, beyond disciplinary content knowledge, which are applicable to a range of contexts (Barrie, 2004).
- (2) ...understandings a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution and which go beyond the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has typically formed the core of most university courses (Bowden et al., as cited in Barrie, 2007).
- (3) ...those skills, abilities, and personal attributes that can be used within the wide range of working environments that graduates operate in throughout their lives (Fraser as cited in Sumsion & Goodfellow, 2004).
- (4) ...skills essential for employment and for personal development, fulfillment, community life and citizenship (Gibb as cited in Cushinahan & Tafe, 2009).

Inconsistent terminology in these student characteristics, has resulted in the lack of clarity in defining, using, and understanding the meanings of the terms (Bath, Smith, Stein, & Swann, 2004; Bridgestock, 2009; Clanchy & Ballard, as cited in De La Harpe, Cushinahan & Tafe, 2009; Robley, Whittle, & Murdoch-Eaton, 2005; and Sumsion & Goodfellow, 2004).

However, other researchers, organizations, and governments continued to sort and label these student characteristics including Ananiadou & Claro, 2009; the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), 2010; Binkley, Erstad, Herman, Raizen, Ripley, & Rumble, 2010; Conley, 2007; Finegold & Notabartolo, 2010; Hoyle & Davisson, 2011; Salas, Bedwell, & Fiore, 2011; and Voogt & Roblin, 2010. Examples of these student characteristics include: abstract thinking, conflict resolution, creativity, critical analysis, ethics, goal and priority setting, improving own learning, information technology, interpersonal skills, literacy, numeracy, oral communication, presentations, problem-solving, research, self-awareness, teamwork, time management, and writing (De La Harpe et al., 2000; Bath et al., 2004; Robley et al., 2005; and Tariq et al., 2004).

However, it took Jackson & Chapman (2012) to reexamine and classify these student characteristics into 19 non-technical skills required in business graduates with the skill name and the behaviors associated with each skill. These are confidence, core business skills, critical thinking, decision management, environmental awareness, formal communication skills, innovation, leadership, oral communication, organizational skills, performance, personal ethics, professional responsibility, problem solving, self-awareness, self-discipline, work ethic, and working with others. Although still not operational definitions, this provided a more systematic framework to analyze these characteristics.

PEER COACHING LITERATURE REVIEW

First, it is essential to understand the distinctions among the definitions of the terms coaching, mentoring, and counselling as confusion results because they are often used interchangeably; although some argue they are equivalents (Parker, Hall, & Kram, 2008; Sperry, 1996; Watt, 2004). Robbins & Hunsaker (2005) provide a clear understanding of these terms by defining them as: (1) Coaching is the ongoing process of helping people improve their job performance, (2) Counselling is the discussion of an emotional problem to resolve it or cope with it such as social adjustment, illness, addictions, or family issues, and (3) Mentoring is when a more experienced person formally pairs up with a less experienced person to help him or her achieve their career goals.

Next, in the literature Holbeche, (1996) defines peer coaching as the developmental relationship with the clear purpose of supporting individuals within it to achieve their job objectives and it is generally agreed that peer coaching is more focused than general peer learning (Parker et al., 2008). This definition aligns with Robbins and Hunsaker's (2005) definition of coaching, and this definition is the one used in this study. The essential characteristics of peer coaching include (1) equal status of peers, (2) personal and professional development of both peers, (3) integration of reflection and practice, (4) attention to process, and (5) accelerating career development (Parker, Hall, & Kram, 2008).

Since its inception in the 1980s, peer coaching has been demonstrated to be effective in a variety of disciplines, including counselling, education, nursing, medical education, patient education, and staff development (Arnau, Kahrs, & Kruskamp, 2004; Gattellari et al., 2005; Holbeche, 1996; MacPherson, Joseph, & Sullivan, 2004; Parker et al., 2008; Sekerka & Chao, 2003).

Noufou, Rezanian, & Hossain (2014) identify that in higher education, students may be mentored by professionals in their disciplines of study, by their instructors, or by peers. Thus, the mentor task function is related to course work and the mentor psychological function is related to emotional and psychological support. They further note that mentoring programs in universities may serve as a task function or a psychological function or both. They further note that mentoring programs in universities may serve as a task function or a psychological function or both. In addition, they found literature that demonstrated that peer mentoring positively impacted students' academic performance, socialization, and the cultural adjustment of international students. When using their term, peer mentoring, it combines all three aspects of Robbins and Hunsaker's (2005) terms coaching, counselling and mentoring.

As well, Bachkirova, Arthur, and Reading (2015) assert that coaching is a complex intervention subject to contextual issues which influence the interaction of the client's attitude and coach's ability, within the coach/client relationship.

In their study of 140 professional coaches Coutu and Kauffman (2009) found that even though their professional coaches' contractual agreements stipulated they were to deal only with work-related issues, 76% (106/140) of the coaches stated they worked on personal issues with their coachees. This aspect of employees receiving coaching in non-work-related topics was also emphasized by Collins and Palmer (2011). Spaten and Flensburg (2013) concluded that even though the objectives in employee coaching are work-related outcomes, the discussion of personal issues positively affected the coaching sessions. This is the gap in the peer coaching literature, especially in peer coaching of university students. The first question of this study is does counselling, mentoring, or tutoring also take place during coaching sessions? The second question is how much counselling, mentoring, or tutoring takes place? The third question is what specific topics are counselled, mentored, or tutored? This study aims to address this gap in the literature by researching these three questions within the context of university peer coaching professional skills.

However, there are still requests from researchers for more coaching studies that have strong empirical designs, especially those that investigate coaching-based leadership and the effects of peer coaching on both the coaches and the coachees (Coates, 2009; Emberg & Benson, 2010).

BACKGROUND CONTEXT OF THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND PEER COACHING AT MACEWAN UNIVERSITY

In 2005, based on a thorough literature review with faculty involvement, the specific professional skills of case study analysis, ethical practice, group work, presenting, research, technology, and writing, were defined, developed, and integrated into a four-year Bachelor of Commerce (BCOM) program at MacEwan University, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (Emberg & Benson, 2010). To integrate the professional skills, they needed to be aligned with learning outcomes and assignment assessments. The recommendation to have a declared, delivered, and learned curricula; as well as, an assessed map in the curriculum mapping process was followed (Robley et al., 2005). Emberg & Benson (2010) continued this evolution and added that the professional skills had to (1) be evaluated in a course assignment and (2) there should be quantitative and/or qualitative research-based evidence of students learning the professional skills. This evidenced-based evaluation is also supported by Coates (2009).

McDermott, Levenson, and Newton (2007) note there are considerable differences in how coaching programs are designed, delivered, and assessed. This means there is no one best way to create a peer coaching program because it depends on the objectives of the peer coaching program and how the program coaches and coachees will be assessed. Parker, Hall, & Kram (2008) noted the essential characteristics of peer coaching included (1) equal status of peers, (2) personal and professional development of both peers, (3) integration of reflection and practice, (4) attention to process, and (5) accelerating career development. These five characteristics of peer coaching (Parker et al., 2008) were integrated into the Advanced Leadership course structure via the Coaching Professional Skills Forms and Reports. The peer coaching course structure included the following activities: (1) Coach-Profile & Assessment of Strengths, (2) Coach Skills & Learning Inventory, (3) Recruiting Coachee's, (4) Coachee Skills & Learning Inventory, (5) Coaching Sessions Reports, (6) After Coaching Session Reports, (7) Coaching Debriefs, (8) Evaluation of Coaching Sessions, (9) Coaching Team Meetings, and (10) Leadership Coaching (Gurney, Benson, & Enström, 2015).

The specific Coaching Session Report (#5 above) completed by the coach documented information about the coachee's demographics; skills requested, and coaching strategies addressing the skills requested. The specific After Coaching Session Report (#6 above) completed by the coachee helped anchor the coachees coaching experience and helped move them into action. The coachee was required to answer the following questions, and then share this report with their coach. The questions were: (1) What have I (coachee) learned, realized, or discovered in today's coaching session?, (2) The most important

SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-based) I (coachee) am committed to create for the next coaching session are?, (3) The three major actions I (coachee) am committing to [doing] between now and the next coaching session are?, and (4) My (coachee) present level of confidence in the skills developed from working with the skills coach is... (Rate low to high on a 1-10 point scale.) (Gurney, Benson, & Enström, 2015).

Based on the lessons learned in the pilot study (Gurney, Benson, & Enström, 2015), changes were made in fall 2014 to form teams of coaches, as opposed to individual coach pairings, as not all the coaches may be proficient in all the professional skills. Also, the coaching teams were required to determine all coach members' levels of abilities in all the professional skills. Then the coaching teams were required to review and teach each other the different professional skills. As well, coaches were required to recruit coachees and complete a coachee recruitment form. After this the course instructor then assigned a coachee to a coaching team. Depending on the help sought, the coaching team then determined who was best suited to help the coachee. Last, each coach was now required to complete a minimum of 10 hours of coaching (Gurney, Benson, & Enström, 2015).

The following two studies demonstrate this integration with MacEwan BCOM students' peer coaching other university students in the professional skills in an Advanced Leadership course as part of their leadership development. These studies also demonstrate the research-based evaluation of peer coaching helping other students learn these professional skills.

In the fall of 2013 the student peer coaching in two Advanced Leadership courses was piloted with a total of 69 coaches and 35 coachees (Gurney, Benson, & Enström, 2015). Lessons learned from these pilot courses were incorporated into the 10 sections held between the 2014 and 2015 semesters in which approximately 250 peer coaches and 365 coachees participated in over 1400 peer coaching sessions of the professional skills in the BCOM program at MacEwan University.

One study focused specifically on coaches' development of their own professional skills because of peer coaching the professional skills and on the development of their peer coaching self-confidence. Specifically, the peer coaching in the Advanced Leadership course was an effective way for coaches to improve their own professional skills and increase their peer coaching self-confidence confidence (Benson & Enström, 2017; Benson & Enström, 2016).

A second study focused specifically on coachees development of their professional skills because of being peer coached. Data was collected to determine which MacEwan University programs and majors the coachees were enrolled in, which professional skills coachees requested help in, and coachees perceptions of their level of confidence in the professional skills developed from working with their peer coach in each coaching session (Benson & Gurney, 2016).

The data (See Table 2) shows there is a hierarchy and grouping of coachees requests for help in the professional skills. The first order is writing (43.56%) and presentations (41.64%). The second order is technology (27.67%), research (21.1%), and group work (20.55%). The third order is case studies (7.95%). A fourth order is other (17.26%), which were requests in an area that was not identified as a peer coaching professional skill. The implications for peer coaching are to ensure special attention is given to ensure coaches are competent in writing and presentations; and in coaching writing and presentations. Then to ensure coaches are competent in technology, research, and group work. The last focus is case studies. This is a Utilitarian approach that is being suggested for the good of most coachees. However, it is realized that each coachee is special with his or her need.

After each coaching session, each coachee completed an After-Coaching Session Report and shared this with their coach. One of the questions was "My (coachee) present level of confidence in the skills developed from working with the skills coach is ... (Rate low to high on a 1-10-point scale)." The data in Table 4:C & D also shows that based on over 1400 per coaching sessions, the coachees level of confidence (1 is low and 10 is high) in all the professional skills after working with their coaches was high (Writing-8.3, 390 sessions; Presentations-7.9, 359 sessions; Technology-8.1, 222 sessions; Group Work-8.5, 118 sessions; Research-8.2, 108 sessions; and Case Studies-8.2, 50 sessions) with no significant differences among any of the professional skills. This shows the coachees believed they were learning the professional skills and the peer coaching sessions were effective. All of this shows that being peer

coached in the Advanced Leadership course was an effective way for coachees to improve their professional skills at MacEwan University. A summary of the data surrounding the professional skills, coachees requests for each professional skill, coaches who coached each professional skill, number of coaching sessions, and coachees level of professional skill confidence (Average 8.19) from being coached is found in Table 2 (Benson & Gurney, 2016).

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, COACHEE REQUESTS,
COACHING SESSIONS AND CONFIDENCE LEVELS

	A	B	C	D
Professional Skills (PS)	% & # of 365 Coachees Who Requested each PS	% & # of 251 Coaches Who Coached each PS	% & # of 1408 Coaching Sessions for each PS	Mean Scores out of 10 of Coachee Level of Confidence in the PS from Working with Their Coach
Writing	43.56% (159)	49.8% (125)	27.7% (390)	8.3
Presentations	41.64% (152)	52.19% (131)	25.5% (359)	7.9
Technology	27.67% (101)	35.06% (88)	15.77% (222)	8.1
Group Work	20.55% (75)	25.5% (64)	8.38% (118)	8.5
Research	21.1% (77)	25.9% (65)	7.67% (108)	8.2
Cases Studies	7.95% (29)	11.16% (28)	3.55% (50)	8.2
Other	17.26% (63)	22.31% (56)	11.43% (161)	8.1

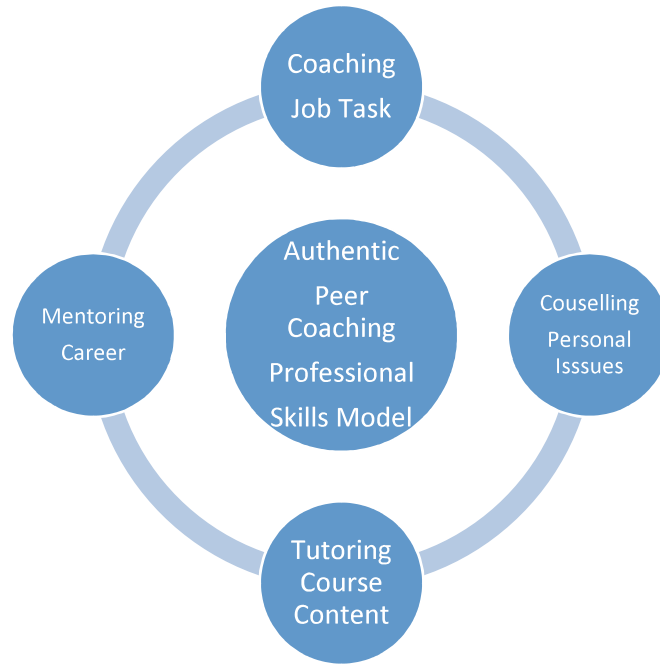
AUTHENTIC PEER COACHING MODEL

In their study’s conclusion, Benson and Gurney (2016) suggested that although the intent of the peer coaching program may be for only coaching professional skills all three other elements of mentoring, tutoring, and, counselling may take place in many coaching situations because of requests by coachees and cautioned that even though this is an unintended consequence, educators must be aware of this and provide resources and training to student coaches to deal with these requests when they are requested by student coaches.

From their initial study, Benson and Gurney (2016) proposed an authentic peer coaching model to highlight what really happens in peer coaching. In the Advanced Leadership course although the intent of the peer coaching was professional skills development which is a coaching/job/task element, there may be an elements of tutoring/course content, mentoring/career, and counselling/personal issues.

Benson and Gurney’s (2016) initial rationale for the model was: (1) professional skills by their nature may include a coaching (job/task) element and a tutoring (course content) element (See Table 2 above), (2) a mentoring (career) element may take place during the peer coaching session because of the trusting relationship developed between the coach and coachee, and (3) a counselling (personal issues) element may take place during the peer coaching session because of the trusting relationship developed between the coach and coachee. The elements of mentoring and counselling taking place during the peer coaching sessions were supported by the requests of coachees (17.26%) for help in non-professional skills in “Other” (See Table 2:A above); the number of coaches (22.31%) who coached “Other” (See Table 2:B above); the number of coaching sessions (11.43%, 161 sessions) held for “Other” (See Table 2:C above), and the level of confidence of the coachee (8.1) from working with the coach in “Other” (See Table 2:D above).

FIGURE 1
AUTHENTIC PEER COACHING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS MODEL
BENSON AND GURNEY (2016)



METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The first question of this study is does counselling, mentoring, or tutoring also take place during coaching sessions? The second question is if so, how much counselling, mentoring, or tutoring takes place? The third follow-up question is what specific topics are counselled, mentored, or tutored? This study aims to address this gap in the literature by researching these three questions within the context of university students peer coaching professional skills. Answers to these questions will provide new insights into what really takes place in the university student peer coaching experience and has ramifications for educators and business professionals who implement peer coaching initiatives.

This current study uses the same data base as Benson and Gurney's (2016) study as reported in section 3. Background Context of the Professional Skills and Peer Coaching at MacEwan University and Table 2: Summary of Professional Skills, Coachee Requests, Coaches, and Confidence Levels. What is being analyzed in the data in Table 3 is the Summary of Other Professional Skills taken from Table 2. In the data from Table 2: 17.26% (63/365) of the coachees made coaching requests other than for the professional skills; 22.31% (56/251) of coaches coached things other than the professional skills; 11.43% (161/1408) of the coaching sessions were for things other than professional skills; and coachees level of confidence in being coached in Other was high at 8.1/10. What is being studied is this "Other." Benson and Gurney (2016) have proposed that "Other" are requests for counselling, mentoring, and tutoring, but is this so?

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF OTHER PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FROM TABLE 2

	A	B	C	D
Professional Skills (PS)	% & # of 365 Coachees Who Requested Other	% & # of 251 Coaches Who Coached Other	% & # of 1408 Coaching Sessions for Other	Coachee Level of Confidence in Other from Working with Their Coach
Other	17.26% (63)	22.31% (56)	11.43% (161) *Note: 86 different types of requests from the 161 coaching sessions.	8.1 (Mean Scores out of 10)

From the data in Table 2:C; the number of coaching sessions for other is not being analyzed because a preliminary review determined the data was too variable to provide useful information. For example, coach #1 may have had three different types of requests for help and may had for request #1-3 coaching sessions, for request #2-1 coaching session, and for request #3-5 coaching sessions. Another example is coach #2 may have had one request and only one coaching session. As well, coach #3 may had only one request but did 4 coaching sessions on that one topic.

However, the Other data from Table 3:C from the 63 coachees had a thematic content analysis to categorize the types of the 86 requests (See Table 4) coachees requested. This determined which specific areas students requested help in.

From the data in Table 4 there are three major areas that coachees requested help in. These areas are: (1) Counselling Personal Issues-52.31% (45/86), (2) Mentoring Career-18.6% (16/86), and (3) Tutoring Course Content-15.12% (13/86). Two other areas were (1) Unclassified-12.79% (11/86) and (2) Not Declared-1.16% (1/86).

Based upon a detailed thematic content (See Table 4); two important themes emerged. From Counseling Personal Issues 28 coachees made coaching requests for help in self-management with respect to procrastination, motivation, goal setting, priorities, organizing, time management, study skills, and stress reduction at school because of excessive workload. From Mentoring Career 16 coachees made requests for help around career; specifically, career choice/education, resumes, interview preparation, marketing and networking oneself.

TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORIES
OF OTHER COACHEE REQUESTS

Other A 63 Coachees Who Made 86 Requests for Other	Counselling Personal Issues 52.31% (45/86) Female 28 Male 17	Mentoring Career 18.6% (16/86) Female 9 Male 7	Tutoring Course Content 15.12% (13/86) Female 7 Male 5 Not declared 1	Unclassified 12.79% (11/86) Female 5 Male 6	Not Declared 1.16% (1/86) Female 1
Themes	Self-management with respect to procrastination, motivation, goal setting, priorities, organizing, time management, study skills, and stress reduction at school because of excessive workload.	Emphasized career; career choice and education, resumes, interview preparation, marketing, and networking oneself.	No themes emerged.		

DISCUSSION

The first question this study asked was, “Does counselling, mentoring, or tutoring also take place during peer coaching sessions?” The results clearly show that even though the intent of the Advanced Leadership course was only for peer coaching professional skills, all three elements of counselling personal issues, mentoring career, and tutoring course content took place because of requests by coachees. These results support the findings of Coutu and Kauffman (2009); Collins and Palmer (2011), and Spaten and Flensburg (2013) who researched within the business context and found that counselling of personal issues also took place. This study’s results add to the literature on peer coaching; especially within the university/college student peer coaching context.

The second question asked was “How much counselling, mentoring, or tutoring takes place?” The results showed the three areas coachees requested the most help in were (1) Counselling Personal Issues-52.31% (45/86), (2) Mentoring Career-18.6% (16/86), and (3) Tutoring Course Content-15.12% (13/86). Two other areas were (1) Unclassified-12.79% (11/86) and (2) Not Declared-1.16% (1/86). In the business context Coutu and Kauffman (2009) found 76% (106/140) of the coaches stated they worked on personal issues with their coachees. Benson and Gurney’s (2016) study found that only 17.26% (63/365) (Table 2:A) of student coachees made requests for help in Other. This study also found that the greatest number of requests in Other was for Counselling Personal Issues (Table 4:52.31%-45/86). However, Coutu and Kaufman did not define what types of personal issues these were. Could these have also included mentoring and career, or how to deal with co-workers, clients, or superiors? If so, then this study would support that because 18.6% (16/86) of the Other coaching sessions focused on Mentoring Career (Table 4).

The third question asked was “What specific topics are counselled, mentored, or tutored?” Upon detailed thematic content analysis (See Table 4); two important themes emerged. From Counseling Personal Issues 28 coachees made coaching requests for help in self-management with respect to procrastination, motivation, goal setting, priorities, organizing, time management, study skills, and stress reduction at school because of excessive workload. From Mentoring Career 16 coachees made requests for help around career; specifically, career choice/education, resumes, interview preparation, marketing

and networking oneself. Of note, no reports were made of coachees requesting help in any medical or psychological areas such as depression or suicide. However, a few requests were made for help around stress reduction at school because of excessive workload.

Because of these unintended consequences of the coach-coachee relationship, educators and business professionals must be aware of this and provide resources and training to coaches to deal with these requests from coachees (Benson & Gurney, 2016). To meet this concern Benson and Gurney (2016) created two specific resource books to assist coaches with their peer coaching experiences in the Advanced Leadership course. The first resource book was *Peer Coaching Professional Skills* (Gurney, Benson, & Bilodeau, 2015) which focused on providing information to students on how to coach each of the professional skills. It included chapters on Guidelines for Conducting Effective Peer Coaching Sessions, Peer Coaching and the Professional Skills, Coaching and Ethics, How to Conduct Library Research for Resources, Coaching Teams in University Group Assignments, Coaching for Effective Presentations, Case Study Construction and Analysis, Social Media, and Coaching Technology.

The second resource book, *Peer Coaching: University Students and Workplace Employees* (Gurney, Benson, & Bilodeau, 2015) focused on coaching different types of students. It included chapters on Coaching is Not Mentoring, Coaching University Students and Workplace Employees, Coaching International Students, Coaching Aboriginal Students, and Coaching Student-Athletes. A specific chapter, *MacEwan Resources for Students*, was also created. It focused on “Suggestions for Action”, which includes coaches encouraging coachees to seek help from other university resources such as counseling services, university clubs, student advisors, bursaries, student food bank, etc. Based on this study, parts of this book will have to be revised.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate what really happens when university students do peer coaching of professional skills, i.e. does counselling, mentoring, or tutoring also take place? The results from this study clearly show that when university students do peer coaching of professional skills counselling personal issues, mentoring career, and tutoring course content also take place. Specifically, Counseling Personal Issues sessions focused around the theme of self-management with respect to procrastination, motivation, goal setting, priorities, organizing, time management, study skills, and stress reduction at school because of excessive workload. The Mentoring Career theme emphasized career; specifically, career choice/education, resumes, interview preparation, marketing and networking oneself. Tutoring Course Content was also verified as being coached but no theme emerged. This study also provides evidence for support of the Authentic Peer Coaching Professional Skills Model (Benson & Gurney, 2016).

Inclusion of 21st Century professional skills in university business schools is now a requirement for certification by accrediting bodies such as AACSB, EQUIS, and EFMD (EPAS). Introducing peer coaching of professional skills is one more way universities can provide evidence they are meeting these agencies' requirements for certification. As well, peer coaching of professional skills in university business schools is a pedagogy which provides opportunities for students; both coaches and coachees, to develop these professional skills which will help them with their employability after graduation.

This study is one of the first to look at peer coaching and professional skills development within the university and college business context. This study contributes to the peer coaching literature by introducing a model of authentic peer coaching for professional skills. It also contributes to the professional skills literature by providing research-based evidence of students learning the professional skills. As well, this research will be useful to educators who are considering implementing professional skills and/or peer coaching initiatives to increase student success in their courses and programs; and success with employability after graduation.

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