Being ‘good company’ on the student journey – exploring roles and relationships in student support

How to cite:

Talley, Janine and Sandra, King (2014), Being ‘good company’ on the student journey – exploring roles and relationships in student support. The Open University, Milton Keynes.

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Version: Version of Record
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Being ‘good company’ on the student journey – exploring roles and relationships in student support
Who are we?

- Dr Janine Talley, Senior Lecturer, Staff Tutor
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Health and Social Care Faculty
What are we doing in our scholarship project?

• Relationships – a key element of a student’s experience of higher education.
• With other students, academics and support staff.
• Our interest is in some of the roles and relationships that play a part in supporting students successfully in their learning journeys.
• One-to-one and coaching
Why are we doing it?

- Student support is a topical area - increasing emphasis in the higher education on retention, progression and completion.
- Work in OU in reviewing and developing student support strategies.
- Greater emphasis on personalised support and on-to-one in HSC e.g. K101 and Masters.
How have you done it?

• Looking at the literature.

• Looking at the terms used to describe student support in universities in two sample regions of the UK.

• Information publicly available on websites
Some of our findings

A diverse range of terms used to describe academic related student support:

- Personal tutoring
- Learner support
- Learning advisor
- Study support
- Study skills
- Coaching
- Mentoring
Varied areas of focus:

• On the task e.g. study skills such as essay writing.
• On the person e.g. personal tutor
• On the process e.g. mentoring
Different ways to describe roles:

• Advising
• Coaching
• Guiding
• Mentoring
• Supporting
• Tutoring
Does it matter what we call it?

- We would argue that it does, and that further work is needed to look at the roles and relationships involved in student support.
- Our particular interest is in coaching. This is an area that has not attracted significant interest in relation to student support in higher education UK. It is however, a common approach to student support in the US.
Student journey theories
Baxter Magolda (2002)
Self Authorship

1. Following formulas
2. The crossroads
3. Becoming the author
4. Having an internal foundation
Phases

Following Formulas
Believe what “authority” believes
Crossroads
See need for own vision
Author of One’s Life
Choose own beliefs
Internal Foundation
Grounded in internal belief system

Cognitive development: How do I know?

Intrapersonal development: Who am I?
Define self through external others
See need for internal definition
Choose own values, identity
Grounded in internal coherent sense of self

Interpersonal development: How we construct relationships
Approval seeking in relationships
See need for authenticity
Being true to self – mutual needs met
Grounded in mutuality
Changing levels
Changing roles
Jones (2009)

Level 3
Academic Coach

Level 2
Academic Advisor

Level 1
Academic Personal Tutor

Personal Tutor Scheme

Increasing Independence
How it has influenced practice

• Incorporation into staff development

• Feeding into development of tuition strategy on Masters
The academic support shapeshifter!
'Pooh and Piglet walked home thoughtfully together in the golden evening, and for a long time they were silent'