

Fostering Independence

From *On Being a Mentor* by W. Brad Johnson

Chickering's Vector Theory of Identity Development (P. 120-121)

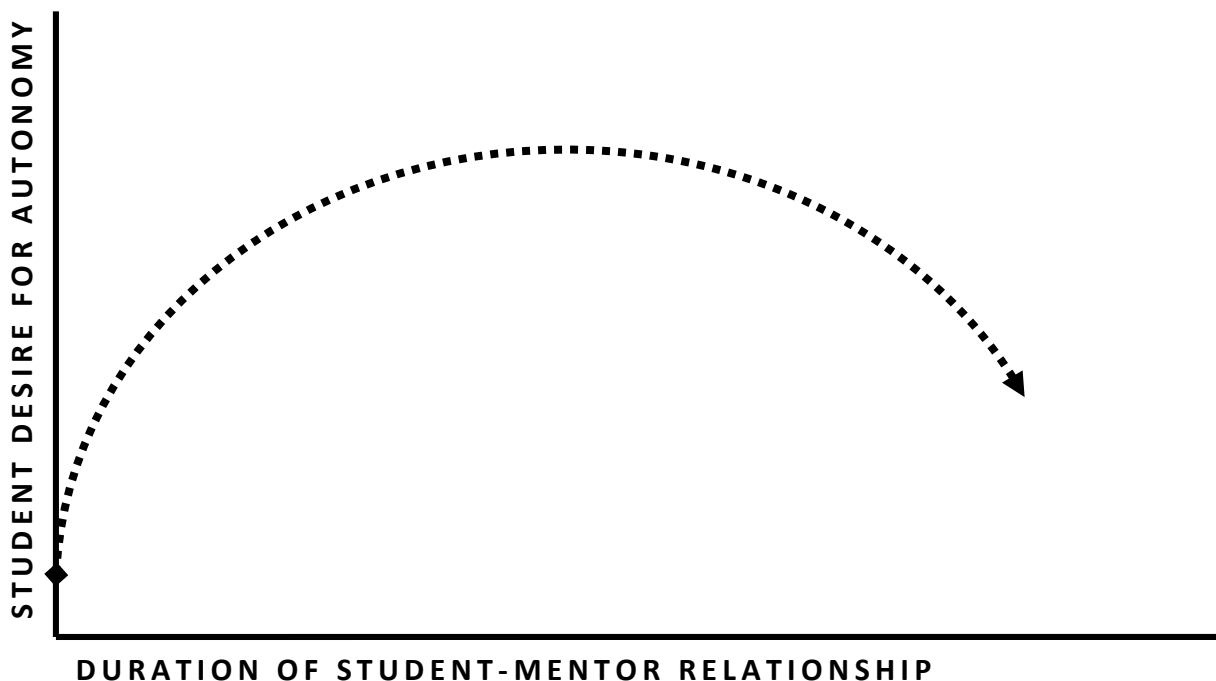
Chickering (1969) offered one of the most influential models of young adult identity development. The model is comprised of seven vectors of development—each with a magnitude and direction specific to an individual student—contributing to identity development.

Becoming autonomous: A salient task of young adulthood is development of freedom from requirements for constant reassurance, affection, and approval—scripts often learned in childhood. Mentors can help bridge the gap between developmental phases by offering more reassurance early on and gradually titrating back level of direction while remaining interconnected and encouraging of the protégé's progressive autonomy.

Need for Autonomy (P. 124)

Rice and Brown (1990)¹ noted that a college student's need for relational autonomy and readiness to become a protégé may be related in a curvilinear fashion during the undergraduate years. Early in college, students are often low in need for autonomy—they experience strong needs for a supportive and growth-facilitating relationship. Later, as they begin to wrestle with identity, the student may need to reject or diminish interaction with the mentor as a means for asserting autonomy and demonstrating independence (as much to self as to the mentor). Finally, after autonomy has been achieved, identity is coalescing, and the life structure is becoming clearer, the student may again be particularly receptive to mentoring—this time focused on career achievement. The stronger a student's sense of purpose and the more open he or she is to developing relationships, the more likely it is that the student will make a good protégé. Rice and Brown's model suggests that mentors to undergraduate students should be tolerant of phasic fluctuations in a protégé's developmental needs, desired mentor functions, contact frequency, and focus.

¹Rice, Mary Beth and Robert D. Brown. "Developmental Factors Associated with Self-Perception of Mentoring Competence and Mentoring Needs." *Journal of College Student Development* 31 (July 1990):293-99.



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CONTRACT

CONTACT INFORMATION | Student

Name: _____ CWID#: _____
Local Address: _____ Local Phone#: _____
E-Mail Address: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION | Faculty Mentor

Name: _____ College: _____
Department: _____
Campus Address: _____ Campus Phone#: _____
E-Mail Address: _____
Graduate Assistant (If Applicable): _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Title: _____
Description: Provide a brief project description, noting significant objectives.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS | Student

Time Commitment: _____ Start Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) End Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#) Hrs/Week: _____
Designated Tasks: Describe the tasks designated for the student specified above, noting meeting and reporting requirements.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS | Faculty Mentor

Role and Learning Outcomes: Describe the faculty mentor's role in the project described above, noting anticipated learning outcomes for the student specified above.

CREDIT (IF APPLICABLE)

Course#: _____
#Hrs. _____
Semester: _____

SIGNATURES

Student Date

Faculty Mentor Date