



EU-project: Grundtvig 2 Programme

A EUROPEAN MENTOR PROGRAMME FOR UNIVERSITY WOMEN – AN INTERCULTURAL STUDY

PROJECT MEETING

28 – 31 August 2009,
Tropenhotel, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Participants:

The Netherlands:

Doesburg Lydia
Joordens Angeline
Zakrzewska Ewa
Van der Meer Willemijn
Van Doorne-Huiskes Anneke
Pijnappel Adriënne
Van der Sloot Astrid

Finland:

Dahlín-Jansson Siv
Viv-Ann Myllyniemi
Höstman Sonya
Kjerulf Jannica
Martín Carita
Pihlgren Camilla
Salparanta Anna-Maria

Turkey:

Belet Nuran
Erol Ayten
Hincal Tanguil
Maktav Serap
Platin Nurgün

DAY 1 - SATURDAY 29 AUGUST 2009

10.00 – 13.00

Workshop III - chair Sonya Höstman, notes Ewa Zakrzewska

'Knowledge dissemination'

The main objective is to develop marketing tools for finding female mentors.

Website materials

- Links to the information about the Mentoring programme have been placed on the home pages of the Dutch and Finnish Federations.
- A similar link will also be placed on the UWE-Website
- A 'bank' of possible mentors of the UWE-website would be a welcome desideratum. The privacy of the mentors is a central issue in this context.
- All the website materials should be continuously updated and maintained.

Printed materials

Leaflets proved not very effective. Still they can be useful if accompanying personal contacts and other activities, such as conferences and seminars. Both Finnish and Turkish partners have distributed leaflets at some universities and banks. Also the Dutch partners have recently leaflets printed.

Seminars, workshops and conferences

The Dutch, Turkish and Finnish partners have held meetings and workshops on mentoring on the level of their national federations. Such activities will be reiterated in the future.

Participation in the related events of other organizations

Sonya Höstman, as the coordinator of the current project will take part in an international congress on mentoring in Amsterdam on Nov. 26th, 2009.

The Dutch partners intend to promote their activities via the Dutch Women's Council, a nation-wide umbrella organization.

Conclusion

All the three participating Federations have taken sufficient measures in order to spread knowledge about the advantages of mentoring for university women. Besides, these activities will be continued in the future.

Points for further consideration

- Sonya suggests a 'bottom up'-approach in promoting the programme. While the stress was first on finding mentors, more attention should now be given to mentees. A possible activity could be a round-table discussion for mentees among themselves.
- Intercultural aspects of the programme can be promoted in two ways:
 - o as 'cross-border' mentoring, i.e. mentoring of women from a different country who seek specific expertise not available in their own country
 - o as mentoring of migrant or expat women resident in a given country.

Both ways of mentoring are actually implemented by the participating Federations.

Discussion on the handbook

Sonya has written a new version of the Table of Content, less abstract and therefore more accessible.

The following procedure has been agreed upon:

1. The new Table of Content will be discussed and fixed during the plenary meeting on Aug. 30th, 2009.
2. Each of the three participating partners will be assigned to deliver a specific section of the Handbook and to pass it on to the other partners. The division of tasks and the deadlines will likewise be fixed during the plenary meeting on Aug. 30th, 2009.
3. There will be an Editorial Board appointed in order to edit the Handbook as a consistent whole.

Ed. Board members:

- Finland: Sonya Höstman, the coordinator of the current project
- The Netherlands: Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes, the president of the Dutch Federation
- Turkey: the member of the Ed. Board will be appointed as soon as possible.

10.00 – 13.00

Intercultural Workshop - Presentation/tutor Jan Cornelis, notes Lydia Doesburg

Present: two mentees: Dian Paramita (Indonesia), Fanny Morales de Coenen (Nicaragua) and representatives from Turkey, Finland and the Netherlands.

Who are we? What do people think we are?

What is our identity? We can have different identities and positions.

What can members of a group have in common?

The language, womanhood, marital status

How are the Dutch people judged by others?

Individualistic, hardworking, direct, open-minded, patronizing, need consensus. Good qualities, when extreme, may become the opposite.

Quick results may be obtained by bribes, whereas in patient discussion you do not need to pay. Better be patient, humble and polite, use step-by-step method.

How are non-Europeans judged by the Dutch?

Non-Europeans can't say no, they will say yyeesss...; it means no.

They try to create harmony.

Hofstede: "allemaal andersdenkenden"

In his book on Cultures and Organizations:

Software of the Mind (ISBN 0-07-143959-5), he distinguishes between individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity, long-term and short-term orientation and how the different cultural poles produce different ways of life. Also how societies deal with uncertainty and ambiguity.

In mentoring, you have to know the social codes

The Dutch have the clock, non-Europeans have the time.

Attitude: adapt but be proud of your own identity.

Start integration as soon as possible by networking.

Assertiveness is not in the dictionary.

Define your own rights but with respect for others.

Dutch have become more assertive over the years

Non-Europeans less assertive than the Dutch

Assertive Dutch seem aggressive to immigrants; their 2nd generation is more assertive, becoming aggressive.

Older Dutch like to be taken care of by immigrant nurses and staff.

Advice: Take more time for mentor/mentee relationship. "Discuss" is a 'heavy' word for immigrants. Be cautious; listen to them in an unbiased way. Afterwards summarize and ask if you have understood it correctly. Ask confirmation of what the mentee says.

14.00 – 17.15

Plenary Session: Lectures, presentations and debate – chair Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes, notes Astrid van der Sloot

The plenary session is chaired by Prof.dr.J.(Anneke) van Doorne-Huiskes and starts with words of welcome and a short introduction of the project, mentoring and Grundtvig by Ewa Zakrzewska, head of the Dutch program. Sonya Höstman,

coordinator for the European project, speaks about mentoring and the European project. In Finland the focus is on academic working women. The cooperation between Finland, Turkey and the Netherlands will result in a handbook with practical examples, not just another textbook. Willemijn van der Meer, president of UWE talks about mentoring being a good tool to attract and retain young members for our association and she asks us all to become involved.

After this **Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes** presents her lecture **“Empowering of women in a non-profit organisation”**. Mentoring is about sharing experiences and is a mean for cohesion within an organisation. Anneke starts by showing us some facts and figures about women in the Netherlands: Women stay in the labour market during the course of their lives now and the opportunities and content of jobs become more important for working women. 70% of the female labour force consists of part time workers and there are low percentages of women in the top positions of organisations.

Mentoring can be a tool to empower women to reach the top or work in more interesting and important jobs. The problems in the world are too big to be solved by men only. And the solutions given by men are not very impressive so far.

Mentoring within the VVAO is meant to increase participation of their members into society. The mentee gets support from her mentor to build a significant network, and will gain an insight into her own functioning. Of course the mentee is responsible for her own success. Different models of mentoring are used in the VVAO.

Specific mentoring benefits for women are: the strengthening of support relationships, the expanding of career horizons and bridging of career breaks. Also the understanding that examining the past is or could be valuable for providing clear insights into the future.

Mentoring in an academic setting (University of Utrecht). Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes has designed a mentoring program at the University of Utrecht. They started with the issue that only 14% of professors are female. Why are there so few? There are several answers to this question:

- Women work in part time jobs
- Are the opportunity costs for women higher than for men?
- Taking small steps can have large consequences. Women underestimate the cumulating effects of decisions they make during their life course
- Are you doing things right or doing the right things in your career?
- Visibility is a huge factor, as is the perception of risks in the traditional frames and patterns of the university.

Mentors can provide (younger) women with some help because they know the ins and outs of academic life. They should remember how they reached the position they are currently in, what did they do and what they didn't do to get to the position of professor? What was lost on the way? Also mentors should imagine themselves as mentees, what question would you ask your mentor and discuss this. Mentors don't tell the mentee what to do, they listen and ask questions.

According to Anneke van Doorne – Huiskes a good mentor:

- Gives time and attention to the mentee
- Recognises the competences and qualities of the mentee
- Is able to listen
- Is able to give feedback
- Communicates at a level that which is workable, useful to the mentee
- Has authority in the organisation
- Does not judge immediately
- Strengthens the chances of success for the mentee.

Within the University of Utrecht several mentors were trained according to this framework.

The next lecture **"Mentoring women for corporate success"** was given by **Mirella Visser**, president of the European Professional Women's Network. This lecture focuses on mentoring within profit organisations and on key success factors for setting up a project on mentoring in women's networks such as the VVAO. In her book "Women at Work" no. 7 Mirella Visser focuses on the ABN AMRO mentoring project. In this bank senior women started mentoring other women because they wanted to stimulate women to reach the top in a natural way. The definition of mentoring they used is: "Mentoring is a process that supports and encourages learning to happen, leading to personal performance improvement and development of leadership talent for the benefit of the organisation."

According to Mirella Visser it is very important to specify the objectives of the mentor program. Not everybody can be a mentor and mentoring is not about chatting and having coffee with a senior colleague.

Key words in corporate programs are:

- Senior women are in the lead
- Strategic alignment
- Internal communication
- Transparent matching process
- Voluntary nature
- Preparatory workshops for mentors
- Guidelines
- Continuous evaluation

Elements for a successful relationship between mentor and mentee in a corporate program are:

- Trust
- Reciprocity
- Skills
- Clarity on goals
- Planning
- Boundaries (confidentiality) There are things you need to know, things that are nice to know and things you don't want to know about your mentor or mentee.
- Emergency exit

The definition Mirella Visser gives us for mentoring in women's networks is:

"Mentoring is a voluntary developmental partnership through which a more experienced person shares her knowledge and skills to support someone else in achieving her career objectives."

Mentoring in women's networks is successful when the mentee is not afraid to ask any question that pops into her mind. Mirella Visser also stresses the importance of "informal" mentors. People that you perceive as mentor but you don't have a formal mentor-mentee relationship. For example a teacher, colleague, friend or family member.

Key success factors for mentoring in women's networks are:

- Establish guidelines
- Organise workshops for mentors and mentees
- Design and manage the matching process, for example by using "matchmakers"
- Provide documentation to the mentors and mentees
- Electronic follow-up

Mirella Visser's Guidelines for mentors and mentees are:

- Listen with an open mind
- Be receptive
- Observe without judging
- Be frank without being offensive
- Be punctual and respect each others timetable

- Follow up on commitments
- Encourage and support (new) behaviour
- Allow mentee to find her own solutions
- Express gratitude

The third lecture: **“Upward spiral of power”**, was given by **Astrid Elburg**, advisor of diversity projects. She chose a more personal point of view for her speech.

The first time Astrid Elburg came to the Netherlands she felt she was invisible. But being a typical social climber she wanted to be seen and people who are similar to her to show her the way.

She formulated goals for herself: discontinue invisibility and powerlessness, resistance against assimilation and social wishful behaviour. Then she took 2 steps to reach these goals:

1. Find out where the power is, be there and become visible
2. Find someone from the dominant culture to mentor you and help you with confrontations and hardships, to develop guts and the ability to sacrifice.

The results for Astrid Elburg were:

- She became an authentic person
- Felt she could make a difference
- Felt she mattered and found her ambition
- She felt empowered
- She felt passion
- Enjoys influence and power

To summarize; she felt like being a leader.

After this Astrid Elburg made the decision to become

- Someone that believes in life long learning
- A consultant and advisor
- An independent, certified coach and mentor for others
- Board member, because she wants to be among people in power and to create and find her own style
- A well connected person, with an extensive network

Astrid Elburg also tells us about trapdoors and pitfalls she encountered along the way. The main one is exclusion and rejection by the dominant culture (on the basis of gender, social status and class). As a person you should learn to recognise and be aware of this happening and then you have to develop the skills to deal with this exclusion and rejection. Sometimes you get humiliated and that can be very painful.

The conclusion of Astrid Elburgs speech is summarized in a few keywords:

- Make a career plan (timing)
- Find yourself a mentor or a coach (formal and informal)
- Develop guts
- Be aware of sacrifice
- Train your elasticity (to bounce back from bad experiences)
- Dare to be vulnerable
- Prepare to be hurt

Astrid Elburgs tips/ trics tricks are:

- Keep a good physical condition (fit body)
- Keep a good mental condition (use the tools that are available to you)
- Keep a good spiritual condition, be self connected

Astrid Elburg ends her lecture with 7 conditions for a person to step into the upward spiral of power:

1. Work hard
2. Dream
3. Face your fears
4. Stop denials
5. Include rejection
6. Give back

7. Enjoy your success

After these lectures it is time for **the debate on mentoring by mentors and mentees**. The debate is chaired by Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes and everyone is invited to join in the discussion. The first issue we talk about is: Men help each other. Women don't. That makes mentoring by women to women very important. We agree on this these that it is getting better and that women are on the right track, but helping each other is still something women have to learn.

The second issue we discuss is: Migrant women, generally highly ambitious and very feminine, make excellent career women and mentors. We perceive a contradiction in the Netherlands between femininity and ambition. If you are a feminine woman you cannot be very ambitious. We agree that this is an old fashioned point of view. The attitude towards migrant women in the Netherlands should change because they too are career women that combine their femininity (looks/outfit/appearance) with more masculine behaviours and attitudes. Perceptions are very important and women are called to: "Don't try to be cute, try to be competent". Also we need to change the pattern and frame of thinking that when women enter a profession it devaluates. The last issue we talk about is: Mentoring is only worthwhile in the case of young high potentials. We all agree that mentoring is for all ages and for everyone. One is never too old to learn. There is a shift in the attitude towards coaching and mentoring. It is now seen as a positive thing rather than a sign of weakness. After this inspiring lectures and discussions Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes closes the meeting and we all have the opportunity to network during drinks at the bar.

DAY 2 - SUNDAY 30 AUGUST

09.00 – 18.00

Discussion Handbook: Table of Content, Conclusion and Wrap Up – chair Sonya Höstman, notes Angeline Joordens and Serap Maktav

Angeline Joordens:

Resume. What was done so far, what can be done

Finland. Send questionnaires for mentor and mentee but did not get much response. Website material is necessary for young people.

Marketing. One brochure is not enough, publish and repete. Publishing a brochure is better than just sending per email and print. Make a combination with other activities, meeting with schools, universities, target groups.

Seminars are important. A seminar in Vaasa about mentoring had about 55 or 60 persons. Business schools in Vaasa had a mentor project. Camilla's Martha project is well known, just by talking about it all the time.

Round table discussions for mentors are a good proposition. Also for mentees? Finland decided to concentrate more on mentees.

Turkey will wait till the end of the european project before starting.

The Netherlands. In october is a VVAO meeting on thirty something. There will be workshops where mentoring can be a part of, for example about life work balance.

November 26: big international congress in Amsterdam about mentoring (very expensive): Sonya will go.

General set up.

Editorial commission of 3 persons, one out of every country. (Sonya, Nurgun, Anneke van Doorne)The turkish section will supply the theoretical part, the Finnish and Dutch will supply the practical examples. Deadline is the end of december. Handbook for mentor program will be published on the Uwe-website, 20 pages is maximum.

Contents will be discussed. For whom do we write it. It is for women with an academic training, it should not be too simple (Serap). Making it very theoretical might be scary (Jannica)

Texts are sent via email to everybody. Jannica and Camilla receive all the texts and will do the finalizing and send the last version to the editorial committee. Email might not be sufficient, a discussion via skype could be complementary (better than video-conferences).

Sonya wants to write a part about theory and praxis.(f.e. to make clear that it should not be mixed up with coaching). Sonya has written already a text, that she is referring to.

Nurgun. Editorial board should be about 'wording', not so much about content. It will not be a duplicate of something.The examples make it unique for this project.

Serap Maktav:

Agreements on the Table of Content, Responsible for writing, Timeline, Contact Persons, Editorial Board and Final Project Meeting

Introduction

1. What is mentoring?
2. Definition
- 2.1 Formal and informal mentoring
- 2.2 Mentoring and other methods (training, coaching)
 - 2.3 Characteristics of mentoring
3. Why a mentoring programme?
 - 3.1 Why have mentors
 - 3.2 Model of mentoring
 - 3.3 The role of the mentor
 - 3.3.1 Who can become a mentor
 - 3.3.2 what you need to know as a mentor
 - 3.3.3 What to expect as a mentor
4. Mentoring Process
 - Stage 1 Confirm the development plan
 - Stage 2 Encourage the mentee on her own learning and development
 - Stage 3 Support during the process
 - Stage 4 Closure
 - Stage 5 Assist the evaluation of development
5. Setting up a Mentoring Programme
 - 5.1 Objectives
 - 5.2 Guidelines
 - 5.2.1 Creating the conditions
 - Commitments
 - Confidentiality
 - 5.2.2 Establishing structure
 - 5.2.3 Finding mentors
 - 5.2.4 Self-assessment of mentor and organization
 - 5.2.5 Orientation on mentoring programme
 - 5.2.6 Training and supporting mentors

- Attitude
- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- 5.2.6.1 Training mentors
(Closure to be included)
- 5.2.6.2 Supporting mentors
- 5.2.7 Matching mentors and mentees
- 5.2.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 6. Networking:
 - 6.1 Individual/professional network
 - 6.2 Mentoring network
 - 6.3 Joining a mentoring pool/ bank/network/
- 7. Conclusion

Annex 1: Best Cases
one mentee and one mentor experience from each country.

Appendix 1: Checklist

- 1.1 organization
- 1.2 mentor

Appendix 2: Questionnaires

- 2.1 Mentor
- 2.2 Mentee
- 2.3 Mentoring Evaluation

Appendix 3: Contract

Responsible for writing:

Part I: Theory (Chapters: Introduction, Parts 1,2,3,4)- Turkey to write and send each finished chapter/part to Dutch and then Dutch to Finnish group (Jannica). Finally to Editorial Board.

Part II: Theory and Practice (Chapter 5)- Sonya to write, send to Dutch, Dutch to Finnish and finally to Turkish group. Then to Editorial Board.

Part III: Networking (Chapter 6) to be written by the Dutch group, then to Turkish and to Finnish.

Part IV: Conclusion (Chapter 7) to be written by Jannica (after the handbook is finalized, and during the final session)

Timeline:

End December 2009: all chapters to be agreed upon by the three groups.

End January 2010: The complete draft Handbook to be ready before to be sent to the Editorial Board.

Contact Persons:

Dutch: Lydia, Angelina

Finnish: Jannica and Camilla

Turkish: Tangul and Nuran

Editorial Board:

Dutch: Anneke

Finnish: Sonya

Turkey: Nurgun

Final Project meeting:

Date: 23-25 April 2010

Venue: Helsinki

Duration: 3 days

- 1 day Cultural

- 2 days workshop

(may extend by one extra day to 26th, if necessary)

DAY 3 - MONDAY 31 AUGUST 2009

10.00 – 14.00

**Study visit at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University), Amsterdam,
notes Adrienne Pijnappel****PARTICIPANTS**

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT (FREE UNIVERSITY)	
Prof. dr. mr. M. Antokolskaia	Professor Private law, Faculty of law. Chair of the meeting
Wim Haan	Secretary and co-ordinator Steering Committee Diversity
Svetlana Khapova	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Tenure Track
Myra Malatic	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Advisor ICT&Education, Centre for Educational Training
Saima Bantvawala	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Assistant professor
Arlette Kock	Senior advisor Training and Education, Centre of Career and Development HRM manager
Elly Schouten	Careers advisor, Department of Student Services
Erna Klein Ikkink	Head of Department Student Services
Linda Mebus	Assessment and Research (CETAR). Assistant professor, Faculty of Social Sciences
Greetje de Jong	Department of Student Services
EUROPEAN MENTORING PROJECT: FINNISH DELEGATION	
Sonya Höstman	Economist. Self employed and teacher at university of Vaasa. Coördinator of the European Mentoring project
Vivi-Ann Myllyniemi	Medical Specialist (internal diseases). Retired
Camilla Pihlgren	Pedagogue. Project manager at the Swedish Martha Association, an NGO
EUROPEAN MENTORING PROJECT: TURKISH DELEGATION	
Nürgun Platin	Retired Professor in Pediatric Nursing, University of Ankara. Contact person of the Turkish delegation.
Nuran Belet	Economist. Gazi University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences
Ayten Erol	Assistant professor, Department of Watershed Management
Tangul Hincal	Economist. Bank manager
Serap Maktav	Psychologist. Retired consultant for UNICEF
EUROPEAN MENTORING PROJECT: DUTCH DELEGATION	
Lydia Doesburg	Translator in English. Contact person of the Dutch Delegation
Angeline Joordens	Art historian

Adrienne Pijnappel	Sociologist. Project manager international projects
Astrid van der Sloot	Psychologist, HR manager
Ewa Zakrzewska	Egyptologist. Referendary Byzantinology and New Greek, University of Amsterdam

The meeting was organised as part of the project meeting of the European project group in Amsterdam.

Goal of the meeting was to exchange experiences with mentoring and diversity and to learn from all the participants who presented their 'best practices'.

On beforehand everybody was asked to prepare the presentations with the following questions in mind: why is mentoring of higher educated women important?

Successes and failures? Dilemma's to share in the meeting?

The meeting was opened by the chair, Mrs. M. Antokolskaia. She introduced herself, welcomed the visitors of the European Mentoring project and invited everybody to a short introduction round. After that she invited Ewa Zakrzewska to present the European mentoring project.

First of all Ewa thanked the participants of the Free University for inviting us and for their willingness to share their experiences with us. She outlined the project and also signaled some common fields of interest between the approaches advocated within this project and various mentoring and mentoring-like activities which take place at the Free University of Amsterdam.

The European Mentoring project aims at developing tools for mentoring university women in the member countries of the European 'umbrella' organization, **University Women of Europe (UWE)**. The participants in the projects are Federations of University Women from three countries: Finland (the original initiator of the project), Turkey and the Netherlands. The project has been sponsored by the three respective National Agencies of the European Platform as a Gruntvig Partnership programme for Lifelong Learning.

What regards the common interests. Each of the Federations participating in our project has a slightly different focus for their mentoring activities but models for all these approaches can be found at the Free University. For instance, the Turkish partners would like to mentor female students and Ph.D. students, especially if they come from the countryside, the Finnish ones focus on young so-called high potentials who aspire to an academic career while the Dutch partners concentrate (although not exclusively) on mentoring graduate immigrant women whom we consistently see as 'high potentials' entitled to a suitable career and not as pityful refugees in need of help.

A leitmotief in all these approaches is to support women in transgressing the border of their own culture or subculture and in gaining an access to the 'networks of power'. These are very thorny issues, as we all know, and we would like to learn from the VU's examples how we can work, together with our mentees, at our common aim, which is obtaining a professional position on the basis of one's talent and efforts and not of one's sex, social origin or ethnic origin.

After the presentation of Ewa followed the presentation of Mrs. E. Klein Ikkink. She outlined the history of the VU in Amsterdam and characterized the University as inspiring, innovative and involved. The name is derived from the concept that the University is independent, has no connections with church or state. The VU has 12 faculties, more than half of the students population is female. In the academic staff very few women are found, in contrast with the non-academic staff. The student population has a very diverse background.

The programme then continued with the presentation of 'best practices':

- **Network External Phd-students, by dr. Ewa Zakrzewska, University of Amsterdam, VVAO (Organization of women with an academic or graduate education):**

The so-called external Ph.D. candidates (in Dutch: *buitententpromovendi* (M) / *buitenpromovendae* (F)) are scholars who work on their Ph.D. without a salary or scholarship from the university. One paradoxical aspect of their situation is that the university actually earns money when they defend their dissertation but invests almost nothing in their scholarly progress. To put it simply: they only get a supervisor and the admission to the library but no money, no reimbursement of congress participation and even no workplace. What's more, and this is of crucial importance, they are systematically excluded from both the official consultative structures of the university and from the informal circuit, especially as regards their possible moving on to a regular position within the academia.

Being that isolated, and yet extremely motivated, they make rewarding candidates for mentoring. The VVAO, being an organization of highly educated women, has many external Ph.D. students among its members and one of our best practices which I would like to mention in this context is a country-wide network of external Ph.D. candidates established as a direct result of a mentor program for one of them in the VVAO branch of Amsterdam. This network is explicitly meant to break the isolation in which these women find themselves. We also received several request for individual mentoring but there is some difficulty there: most of the external Ph.D. candidates are graduates in the humanities while potential mentors usually represent exact science where the research culture is drastically different. We would like to invite a discussion about these paradoxical aspects of supporting independent researchers among us.

- **Zuidas Amsterdam Bright City & the VU Course and Career Centre (Department of Student Services). Student coaching on the Zuidas Amsterdam, by drs. Elly Schouten, Career Counselor, department of Student Services:**

This project started about 3 years ago when a manager of ABNAMRO came to the VU with the idea of stimulating more contacts between students of the VU and employees of the bank. Jointly they developed a plan of mentoring students in their last year of study. It was called "Zuidas meets VU talent".

The focus was on multicultural talent. Benefits for the graduates:

- increased self-awareness and guidance on development of specific skills
- open and safe forum for discussion
- additional networking opportunities

Benefits for the coaches:

- developing coaching skills.
- identifying areas for their own development
- identification with corporate identity

The program consisted of plenary meetings, coaching sessions and training days.

Some figures:

- In 2007 10 master students (5 faculties) and 10 coaches (men and women).
- In 2008 31 master students (6 faculties) and 11 coaches (men and women). Participating companies ABNAMRO, Yacht, Schiphol, KLM, IBM, Vesteda, KPMG. Cause of the decline in coaches was mainly the effects of the economic crises.

Criteria for selection of the students were motivation, commitment and grades. Criteria for the matching were the master program and interest.

Overall the evaluation of the program was very good. Bottleneck was the lack of diversity in the group of participants. The most important question now for the project is: how can we get them interested? Participants of the meeting had the following remarks/tips:

- give some intercultural training to interested (multicultural) candidates, before the real selection starts
 - people don't want to be addressed as 'different'
 - make use of the networks of multicultural students
 - interculturalization of the companies
 - more time to talk things over with the students in the selection period
 - selection must not be exclusively done by native dutch
 - make use of coaches who are not native dutch
- **The result of a mentoring process can be contradictory to the request by drs. Angeline Joordens, art historian, VVAO (Organization for women with an academic or graduate education):**

A woman graduated for a second time, in philosophy/ethics. She asked for mentoring in publishing articles at a high academic level (and finding her way into the editors world) Her mentor had worked at a university and had published many books. It was a very succesful match and mentoring. They both decided that publishing would be to much of an effort at that moment. The mentee choose to become active in the board of a women's organisation, and to participate in a political party. It happened before that the result of a mentoring was different than or even contradictory to the request. All the parties were satisfied about the mentoring and the result.

Dilemma for the matchmaker: will the mentees not be sorry afterwards about their mentoring?

- **Mentoring for succesfull Tenure Track Experience by dr. Svetlana Khapova, director of doctoral education and associate professor Faculty of Economics and Business Administration:**
A tenure track means that the academic, in addition to a fixed appointment for a specified term (track), is offered an employment contract for an unspecified period (tenure). In combination with mentoring or another tool it can be successful as a mean to stimulate the participation of women/ethnic minorities in the academic staff. A tenure track helps to develop a specific identity and reputation.
Mrs. Khapova defines mentoring as a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person. Age, status or other constrains are of no importance. It is about any relationship of which you can learn. Therefore you should speak of a developmental network rather than mentoring. Very important is also to be a mentor for others, to invest time in developing others, especially students. Finally mrs. Khapova stressed the fact that it is better to have different mentors than one single.
- **Mentoring women from abroad by drs. Lydia Doesburg, translator in English, VVAO (Organization for women with an academic or graduate education):**
The Deventer VVAO was contacted by a Committee for Integration with the request to assist graduate women from abroad. Lydia Doesburg organised a mentoring project called "the Amazones". The committee delivered the women. The VVAO delivered the mentors, many having lived abroad. Many women had an "exact" training (engineers and so on), little feeling for language. Language was a main issue. And the had a lack of network. But it was very

successful: all the mentees got a job.

It lasted from 2005-2008. Then there was no deliverance of women anymore. The municipality policy and that of the Committee for Integration was changed: no longer highly educated women should be supported, but the lower educated.

A dilemma and regret: amongst those lower educated women were smart and ambitious women that surely deserved support. Alas, the VVAO-members were not interested in those women.

A question. How to make clear the value of these women and gain back the interest for mentoring?

- **Teaching in Diversity – Diversity in Teaching. A VU approach to teacher training (Vidivers project) and a VU teachers approach to cultural diversity in the classroom.** This subject was presented by **drs. Saima Bantvawala**, assistant professor Faculty of Economics and Business Administration and **drs. Linda Mebus**, advisor ICT & Education Centre for Educational Training, Assessment and Research (CETAR)
Mrs. Bantvawala and Mrs. Mebus made us very clear in their presentations that the necessity of developing specific intercultural training methods and training material is high in the Netherlands and especially in the big cities, such as Rotterdam and Amsterdam. At the VU there are 21.000 students, of which 31% are immigrants (non native Dutch). In the Vidivers project special material (video's, trainer manuals) will be developed on the base of interviews in the field, desk research and defining teacher competences (intercultural sensitivity f.e.). In a few years the material will be available and distributed on a national scale amongst schools and other educational institutions.

After the presentations there was little time left for the discussion. Serap Maktav (Turkey) explained that the issue of cultural diversity plays no role of importance in Turkey. In Turkey the focus is more on mentoring students who move from the countryside to the university towns. Compared to other fields of society Turkey has in universities the highest percentage of women on high positions. In Turkey there are not yet many examples of mentoring project, the concept is just starting to develop.

In Finland on the other hand there are examples of mentoring projects, in universities but also in the business sector. One of the participants in the project, a lawyer, working in a firm dominated by men, has fulfilled the role of mentor and mentee. Unfortunately she had to leave on Monday morning so she could not present her 'best practice'.

Sonya Höstmann (Finland) stressed that Finnish academic women are very ambitious, and the young women are 'going faster' than their mothers, in regards to their academic career. But also in Finland they have the 'pyramid model' At the bottom a huge population of female students, also very much represented at the middle but at the top just a few women are to be found in the academic staff.

After the discussion, Mrs. Antokolskaia thanked all the participants and ended the meeting with the following (slightly 'provocative') conclusions:

- the meeting gave us more questions than answers
- in regard to the ABNAMRO project: training before the selection is better than training afterwards
- in regard to the tenure track: try to 'make use' of several mentors or coaches
- well educated integrated women should mentor immigrant women

- all faculties should train their teachers in developing the right intercultural attitude
- it was interesting to compare the different dilemmas in the different countries.

In an informal setting the discussion went on during a delightful lunch in 'the Basket', a nice restaurant on the campus of the VU.