

**Stony Brook University
The Graduate School**

Doctoral Defense Announcement

Abstract

Mentoring: Perspectives from Attachment Theory

By

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This study examined the relationship between secure base script representations, mentor-student representations and entering college students' views and expectations of mentor like relationships. For this study, we used the original attachment script methodology to assess college students' knowledge and access to a secure base script. We adapted the narrative script methodology to include word prompts relevant to the experiences of students in academic settings to assess their views and representations of mentor-student like relationships. We constructed a First Year Student Survey (FYSS) in order to examine the impact of early experiences at home and in school prior to entering the University environment on college students' beliefs and expectations of mentoring relationships. The survey included items that tapped into demographic information, family academic history, cultural models, career goals, previous mentoring experiences in high school and at home as well as beliefs and expectations of close relationships and social support.

The attachment and mentor-student script representations were significantly and positively correlated $r=.44$, $p< .001$, $N=80$, suggesting that knowledge and access to a secure base script contributes to students' understanding and expectations of how mentor-student relationships work. Experiences at home and in school with mentors-like figures played a significant role in the consolidation of a mentor-student script. Furthermore, a principal component analysis of survey items that tapped attitudes toward mentoring relationships produced a primary variable that was best described as a "Positive Attitude toward Mentoring Relationships as both a Possible and Useful Resource". This principal component was significantly and positively correlated with attachment scripts, mentor-student scripts, previous high school mentoring experiences and total number of mentors.

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