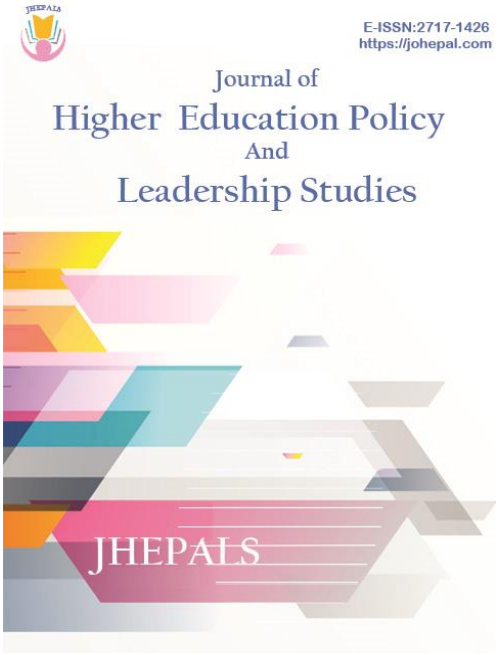
Journal of
Higher Education Policy
And
Leadership Studies

JHEPALS (E-ISSN: 2717-1426)

https://johepal.com




# The Post-tenure Apex: Unrewarding, Unproductive, Unhappy. Is Continuing Learning a Remedy for Mid-Career Misery?

**Heather Kanuka** *
Email: hakanuka@ualberta.ca
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8266-5633

**Jonathan Anuik** *
Email: anuik@ualberta.ca

* *Educational Policy Studies Department, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, CANADA*

| Article Received | Article Accepted | Published Online |
|---|---|---|
| **2021/02/06** | **2021/04/03** | **2021/04/10** |

Cite article as:

Kanuka, H., & Anuik, J. (2021). The post-tenure apex: Unrewarding, unproductive, unhappy. Is continuing learning a remedy for mid-career misery? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Leadership Studies*, *2*(1), 6-27. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.29252/johepal.2.1.6

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

# The Post-tenure Apex: Unrewarding, Unproductive, Unhappy. Is Continuing Learning a Remedy for Mid-Career Misery?

Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies (JHEPALS)

E-ISSN: 2717-1426
Volume: 2 Issue: 1
pp. 6-27
DOI:
10.29252/johepal.2.1.6

**Heather Kanuka** *
**Jonathan Anuik**

## Abstract

Academics who are in mid- to late-stages of their career are often overlooked as participants when leaders of higher education are planning continuing learning opportunities. The reasons are varied but typically originate from a lack of understanding about this long and important phase in an academic's career. Prior research has reported that a crisis can happen at this career apex, illustrating a need for continuing learning. Many academics who move into mid-career encounter issues such as plateauing (e.g., no longer finding new research results), career disappointments (e.g., no longer able to attain research funding), and changing perspectives about their priorities (e.g., publication outputs are no longer a priority). The purpose of this study was to extend our understanding of the value of continuing learning for mid- to late-career faculty. We conducted a study on the perceived value and impact of continuing learning for mid- to late-career academics. Our findings indicate that when development centres are planning activities for mid- to late-career faculty, it will have the greatest value when (a) based on career-stage appropriate needs (e.g., high priority areas identified); and (b) activities are directed to mid- to late-career academics. While prior research has shown that interaction and collaboration are important for mid- to late-career academics, findings from this study indicate technical and practical knowledge are a higher priority.

**Keywords:** Mid- to late-Career Academics; Continuing Education; Research Intensive Universities; Post-tenure; Career Plateau

*Corresponding author's email: hakanuka@ualberta.ca

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

## Introduction

In the early 1800s, Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts introduced opportunities for faculty growth and revitalization through sabbatical leaves (at half pay every seventh year), in addition to attending annual meetings and conferences to maintain and/or increase disciplinary related knowledge, skills and research – or what we might refer to today as continuing academic learning. By the 1930s, 178 institutions in the United States implemented sabbaticals and by 1992, 84% of all 4-year colleges instituted leave programs (Kang & Miller, 1999). The primary aim of a sabbatical was, and continues to be, to provide an opportunity for academics to regenerate new ideas and pursue professional growth. Kang and Miller's synopsis of the literature supports the view that providing continuing learning opportunities for renewal and professional growth have a positive effect on faculty and make a difference in an academic's career.

While sabbaticals and annual conferences in the early 1900s provided opportunities for academics to revitalize during their mid- to late-career stages, there was little understanding (or awareness) about the effects of continuing education on adult development. At this point in time, it was generally assumed that human development ceased in adulthood. However, by the late-1950s research began to emerge on human adult development (e.g., Erikson, 1959) that questioned this assumption, and by the 1980s research was emerging on the impact of adult development, continuing education, and the larger construct of lifelong learning (e.g., Candy, 1991; Cross, 1981; Hiemstra,1994; Houle, 1980; Knowles, 1984; Mezirow, 1985; Tough,1978). Prior to the 1980s, little attention was given to the provision and need for continuing education since formal learning (typically credentialed) served professionals well throughout their career (Queeney, 2000). However, the social and technological changes that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, alongside the emergence of accredited knowledge and professional organizations around the same time, gave rise to the need to continue to develop knowledge and skills through formal learning activities (Cervero, 2000, 2001; Cervero & Daley, 2011; Wilson & Cervero, 2006).

Today a robust body of research exists on how adults learn and the benefits of continuing education (e.g., Field, 2012; Hällsten 2012; Hennekam, 2015; Kilpi-Jakonen, Sirnio, & Martikainen, 2015; OECD, 2006, 2013, 2017; White, 2012). And while we have a fairly solid understanding of continuing adult learning and the benefits, an overview of the applied research shows that most continuing education activities continue to have a content focus rather than a learning focus. A focus on learning involves enhancing development, and is "typically referred to as continuing professional development" (Coady, p. 28). This concern was first identified in Houle's (1980) seminal research which established a strong link between continuing education and the experience of lifelong learning. One of Houle's key findings was that across the groups studied, experiential knowledge (informal learning) acquired from practice was perceived by his participants as more practical than what was being acquired through more formal continuing education opportunities. In particular, Houle observed that his participants were self-directed individuals, capable of assessing their workplace learning needs. However, the continuing education services provided prioritized the content (updating) over the support of self-directed continuous learning needs from experienced practitioners who assessed their own learning needs.

Within universities, when academics move into mid-career many begin to encounter some of these same issues with respect to the lack of support for self-directed continuous learning. The result can be plateauing (e.g., no longer finding new results in their research), career disappointments (e.g., no longer being able to attain research funding), and changing perspectives about their academic

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

priorities (e.g., publication outputs are no longer a priority) (Mathis, 1979; Menges, 1985). With respect to the changing priorities, Wheeler (1997) reports that "over 70% of [mid-career] faculty see a preferred role in teaching, with many expressing little interest in research" (p. 44). Backdrop this prior research with the fact that mid- to late-career faculty currently comprise the largest segment of academia in most countries (Strage & Merdinger, 2015; Whelch, Bolin, Reardon & Stenger, 2019), and it is difficult to understand how leaders of academic institutions have not spent more time and resources on continuing learning with this group of academics. Strage and Merdinger (2015) go on to assert further that established faculty can be either "allies or stubborn opponents … [who] play vital roles sustaining their institutions" (p. 41). And yet,

> … [have] been largely ignored in higher education policy and practice. There has been little acknowledgment of this long and important phase of academic life or of the distinctive challenges it presents. We know even less about what colleges and universities do specifically to support mid-career faculty. To a large extent, faculty in the middle years are taken for granted and expected to fend for themselves as they carve a path into the uncharted middle years of the academic career. (Baldwin & Change, 2006, p. 28)

Supporting this assertion, Baldwin, DeZure, Shaw and Moretto's (2008) research revealed one clear theme: "the need for more training and development for mid-career faculty, as well as for chairs in their efforts to support mid-career faculty" (p. 53). Though, their research also revealed many in the academy believe that the institution's focus should be only on early-career faculty. Specifically, there is also an enduring belief that established academics "should be independent scholars and self-starters capable of supporting themselves. As one chair noted, 'they get less, and they deserve less'" (p. 54) – meaning mid- to-late career academics were provided with resources when they were new faculty, and they should now no longer require supports.

At present, it would seem that there is a lack of awareness about the importance of continuing education for mid- to late-career academics. The purpose of this study was to extend our understandings of the perceived value and impact of continuing academic development opportunities for established faculty.

## Overview of the Studies on Mid- to Late-Career Academics

Scholars have shown that once a faculty member has earned tenure and promotion the excitement of achieving this status is short lived. Research by Mathews (2014) observed that the feeling of accomplishment and relief when tenure and promotion is attained "cedes quickly into a 'let down.' Along with tenure comes an increased teaching load, greater expectations for service and advising, a more competitive market for grants, and the disappearance of mentoring programs that supported them as early-career faculty" (p. 1). Matthew's research also revealed that two out of five established faculty believe senior administrators do not care about their quality of life.

Perhaps the most cited literature on middle year academics is a study by Baldwin and Chang (2006), which found faculty in this stage of their career should incorporate (a) career reflection and assessment (e.g., mentoring, networking, collaborating with colleagues), (b) career planning of short- and long-term goals (e.g., specific scholarly outputs, applications for grants, time for research, etc.), and (c) career action/implementation (e.g., planning for when to apply for rewards, developing strategies to recognize one's achievements, etc.). Within these three areas collegial and

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

organizational support was also found to be important. Similarly, Pastore (2013; see also Grappa, Austin & Trice, 2007; Mansbach & Austin, 2018) finds that middle year academics believe collegial support and collaborations are important for their continuing development as academics, as well as contribute to feelings of fulfilment from their work. Similarly, Strage, Nelson and Meyers (2008) find that established faculty who remained engaged and enthused by their work "were more likely to be able to articulate specific professional goals, they were more likely to feel a sense of control, and they were less likely to be derailed or discouraged by challenge or failure" (Strage & Merdinger, 2015, p. 42). Though, Strage and Merdinger note further that not all established faculty members can facilitate collegial interaction and/or collaborations without supports. Nevertheless, we know that collegial interaction and collaboration facilitates engagement and productivity (e.g., Creswell, 1985; Finkelstein, 1982).

Although the literature has been consistent for about four decades about the needs of established academics, this group continues to be bypassed when planning for continuing academic development (Baldwin & Chang, 2006; Pastore, 2013) "despite the fact that they are responsible for more than half of the teaching, research and professional outreach conducted on their campuses and that they play a critical role in advancing the missions of their universities" (Strage, Nelson & Meyers, 2008, p. 71). Baldwin and Blackburn (1981) reported mid-career faculty were concerned about remaining current with respect to research capacity in their fields, as well as staying informed about new pedagogies to adequately meet the needs of their students. Campion, Bhasin, Beaudette, Shann and Benjamin (2016) report that a "professional crisis or apex" (p. 50) can happen mid-career, further illustrating a need for continuing education programs that target this group. Boice (1993) and Murray (1994) describe mid-career academics as often being stuck, stagnant and in need of renewal. Strage and Merdinger (2015) conclude that it is "hardly surprising" (p. 41) that academics in this phase of their career find it unrewarding and unproductive and are unhappy given that many feel "stymied by a generation of what they perceive to be poorly motivated, easily distracted and under-prepared students" (p. 41; see also Simpson, 2009) in addition to feelings of insufficient support from their chairs, deans and institutions. These feelings arise largely from being "frequently ineligible for many forms of institutional recognition–internal grants and awards and incentives are typically directed toward junior faculty still working their way to tenure" (Strage & Merdinger, 2015, p. 41).

A final aspect that is important to note is that employment data has also shown departure rates for this group are significantly lower in the post-tenure years than in the pre-tenure years (Kaminsky & Geisler, 2012). By mid- to late-career, academics will also be at the high end of the salary scale. As such, mid- and late-career academics are an institution's most valuable (and expensive) resource. Based on the research about mid- to late-career academics, why institutions of higher education do not invest in the ongoing growth and development of their most valuable resource challenges logic.

## Methodology

### Focus of the study

This study focused on the period of an academic's career from achieving promotion (associate professor status) and tenure to retirement; in this study we refer to this group as established academics. This definition is in alignment with other literature on this topic such as Baldwin, et al. (2008) who describe mid-career as the lengthy period between the end of an academic's

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

probationary years and preparation for retirement. This definition has not changed significantly over time or across professions, as can be illustrated by Hall's (1986) definition over three decades ago: "the period during one's work in an occupational (career) role after one feels established and has achieved perceived mastery and prior to the commencement of the disengagement process" (p. 127). The terminology used to refer to established academics in the literature is varied, including middle-career faculty, mid-range academics, mid- to late-career academics and experienced academics, and is (mostly) used interchangeably to describe academics who are in post-tenure and non-probationary or contract positions.

The focus of this study was narrowed further to continuing teaching growth based on Carnegie studies, which show that over 70% of established faculty have an interest and need in furthering their teaching skills and knowledge (Wheeler et al., 2019). The focus on teaching also worked well given that the lead researcher has held the position of (now past) director for a teaching centre. Arising from this past role, we were able to implement continuing learning activities related to teaching.

## Theoretical framework

The framework used to underpin the study was Cervero (2000)'s theory on continuing education. Cervero's continuing education theory was selected because it aligns closely with much of the prior research on mid- to late-career academic development, especially with respect to reflection and judgement. Cervero argues that continuing education is usually conceived as a narrow conceptualization of keeping individuals up to date in their knowledge base, with episodic updates of technical and practice knowledge. The growing use of continuing education to regulate practice produces an entrenched belief that practitioner skills consist of instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique. Cervero proposes a broader conceptualization of continuing education that encompasses technical knowledge (formal learning), as well as practical knowledge (informal learning) where the accumulation of tacit knowledge (implicitly understood) gained from experience contributes to wisdom and an ability to exercise discretionary judgment in practice. Cervero also emphasizes self-reflection as a domain for knowledge generation, which is consistent with Baldwin and Chang's (2006) model for mid-career academics.

Reflection, according to Cervero, provides an opportunity to become a critically reflective practitioner who is "critically aware of the limitations of their previous knowledge and perspectives and [seeks] to change their understanding of that information (constructing new meaning frames) based on experience" (Coady, 2015, p. 31) (see also Schön, 1983). Daley (2000) and Mott (2000) suggest further that practitioners make knowledge meaningful by establishing connections through continuing education, their previous experiences, the contexts in which they find themselves and their perceptions of their contexts. Hence, this process is about how one develops the ability to reflect, and is an essential learning dimension to be incorporated into both practitioner and continuing education efforts (Schön 1983; Wilson, 2001).

## Research Design

The study was designed using a multi-method, multi-year case study approach (Stake, 2006). Broadly, case study research was selected because it involves the in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life context that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon in a bounded context (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2006). The phenomenon being

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

explored in this study was continuing education for experienced academics situated in a large Canadian medical doctoral university, which is classified as a research-intensive university in Canada (Gopaul, Jones, Weinrib, Metcalfe, Fisher, Gingras, & Rubenson, 2016). While the institution selected for this study can be considered as representative of other large, publicly funded, research intensive universities in North America, the rationale for collecting data from this particular university was ease of access to the participants, as well as access to continuing education offerings through the institution's teaching centre. The duration of the data collection occurred over five years. Following the completion of the initial need assessment three sets of data were collected: participation registration tracking (an online system that collects participant attendance), semi-structured interviews and a web-based survey. Table 1 provides an overview of the research design, including stages, descriptions and data collection and analysis.

Table 1
Stages for data collection and description

| Stage | Description | Data collection and analysis overview |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Needs assessment with key informants (Heads of Departments or Units; N=72) | Semi-structured interviews. Analysis of priority areas: curriculum development, peer connections, technology, active and engaged learning, assessment and evaluation strategies and large enrolment classes offered in both *ad hoc* and structured formats |
| 2 | Participation data | Participation rates were tracked in years one, three and five. Participants were counted only once, irrespective of how many sessions each participant attended |
| 3 | Teaching workshop feedback | Session feedback forms were collected after each teaching development activity, followed by recommendations for changes and/or additional program design revisions but were not used as part of the research data; the purpose of the session feedback was to serve as an ongoing need assessment on the activities offered. |
| 4 | Semi-structured interviews with peer observations (N=7; N=5) | The perceived value of the collegial collaboration (peer observations by teaching award winners) was explored in years one (N=7) and three (N=5) using a semi-structured interview with those who participated. Member checks for the interviews were conducted twice; once for transcript accuracy and once for accuracy of themes and topics. |
| 5 | Web-based survey for teaching enhancement workshops (*n*=95) | In year five, a web-based survey was administered. The survey consisted of five sections, aligned with the high priority needs, related literature and Cervero's theoretical framework. The survey sections included demographic data, perceived value, practical knowledge, access format and technical knowledge. A final question was asked to survey participants. It related to Cervero's "judgement in practice" idea and asked whether they applied what was learned in their teaching practices and whether it was effective (based on their self-reflection and judgement). To ensure there was an arm's length distance with the teaching unit staff and the lead researcher who implemented the continuing academic development activities for this study, the survey was administered, and the data analysed by an external body within the university that specializes in program evaluation and survey research. |

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

### *Post-tenure Apex*

*Stage 1: Needs assessment*

A needs assessment was conducted to guide the design and development of continuing education activities for established academics. There are several ways that a needs assessment exercise can be conducted, including the use of focus groups, key informant (someone with an informed perspective and first-hand knowledge) consultations and/or surveys. A need assessment is a quick and efficient inquiry to gain information on career-related needs for the purpose of identifying priorities. In this study, interviews with heads of departments were used as the key informant consultations. The rationale for selecting heads of departments was threefold: (1) as heads of departments are, themselves, established academics, (2) as mid-level administrators (e.g., those who report to senior administrators such as provosts or vice-principals and oversee regular academic staff, such as department heads or centre directors) they have acquired knowledge with respect to understanding both departmental and disciplinary needs of their established academics, and (3) as heads of departments they write and submit recommendations for annual evaluations of their academic members, they have access to information about their mid- to late-career academics' strengths, and know their difficulties with respect to their continuous learning.

All heads of departments were asked to participate in the need assessment and all agreed to participate (N=72). The following question was asked: What are the high priority needs related to teaching for established academics in your department/unit? While the need assessment was a preliminary aspect to the research design, institutional ethics approval for the study was obtained.

There was notable consistency by the department heads in their responses to the question asked: curriculum (re)development (e.g., to consider matters such as inclusive education, constructive feedback, and diverse evaluation strategies), managing high enrolment courses, integrating of technology and awareness changes in the student body. Other frequently mentioned topics included engaging students through active learning and critical thinking exercises. Many of the discussions during the interviews were consistent with much of the literature on whether it is worthwhile to direct continuing education activities to mid- to late-career academics. For example, one head of department mentioned it might be best to "dig where the ground is soft," implying that focusing on new academics and graduate students to participate in teaching development is time better spent than on established academics.

More than half (n=39) of the department heads also noted that their established academics were, largely, overworked with respect to service responsibilities and graduate student supervision, with added stressors of performance reviews that require them to be increasingly productive (e.g., publications, grant funding). As a result, it can be challenging for teaching responsibilities to be a priority for mid-career academics. It was also noted by about a third (N=24) of the department heads that there is a tendency for established professors to view continuing education sessions as a stigma. Specifically, if experienced faculty are attending workshops, then there is an inclination for others to think something must be wrong with their performance. Finally, there was further criticism on the institution's workshop format with a view that the one-off workshop offerings do not work for anyone (sessional lecturers/adjuncts, professors, teaching assistants, graduate students). Additional comments revolved around the workshop offerings as having little relevance to issues arising in everyday classroom teaching.

Using the outcomes of the need assessment, the related literature on mid- to late-career academics and Cervero's theoretical framework, continuing education activities were designed for this study that focused on teaching. The activities were designed with ongoing and structured practical and goal-oriented resources, with collegial supports and socializing activities (e.g.,

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

opportunities for collegial connections through panel presentations and discussions) that targeted experienced academics. Since participants in the need assessment indicated that established academics likely need flexible offerings, in addition to having unique needs, the activities were offered in a variety of formats (e.g., print-based, online, face-to-face). As the purpose of this study was to extend our understandings of the perceived value and impact of continuing teaching opportunities for established faculty, designing activities based on the needs of this group of academics was essential to encourage their participation. At the onset of this study, for example, there were only four established academics that participated in the teaching centre's workshops (see table 2). Using the activities, which were targeted to established academics, the study was designed to explore the value and impact of continuing education activities over five years.

*Stage 2: Participation rates in the continuing education activities.*

Collection of data on participation rates were tracked using an online event registration program. Table 2 shows the attendance pattern over a five-year span indicating a, somewhat, notable increase in attendance by established professors (total N=129). While attendance by established faculty in year five continued to be what might best be described as lacklustre, there was a noteworthy increase from the number of academics that attended the continuing education activities at the onset of the study (year 1).

Table 2
Participation*

| | Year 1 | Year 3 | Year 5 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Percent participation professors (tenured faculty) based on overall numbers** | 0.18% N=4 | 2.25% N=48 | 3.60% N=77 |

* Only unique registrations were included in the participation rates (i.e., each participant was counted only once, irrespective of how many sessions that participant attended). The participation rates shown did not include the peer observations.

** The approximate number of faculty for the duration of this study was ~2100 for each year; established academics comprised slightly less than half of the total academic positions.

*Stages 3 & 4: Continuing education activities*

Two types of teaching development activities were developed and targeted to established academics: (a) peer observation conducted by faculty who were teaching award winners and (b) teaching enhancement workshops. The interviews on the effectiveness of the peer observations of teaching were guided by Cervero's (2000) continuing education theoretical framework. In years one and two there were 19 requests for peer observations. All participants were invited to participate in the interviews; seven agreed to participate. The interview questions asked the participants: (1) whether the peer observation met their needs (for technical knowledge) and why, (2) if the peer feedback offered new ways to improve their teaching (or their practical knowledge) and if not, suggestions for improvement in the delivery of the activity, (3) if they changed their practices based on the peer consultation feedback (did they experience knowledge generation/transfer) and if so how and (4) whether the changes were enduring, specifically, whether they felt the changes were effective (based on their judgement in practice and reflections). The interviews ranged from 20 to 45 minutes and were recorded directly onto a computer; transcript checks were conducted at the conclusion of the interview. Thematic analysis was conducted, and the transcript was coded into various categories. The data were also analysed for connections between the knowledge learned

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

through the peer feedback, their previous experiences teaching and their current context. In this part of the analysis, we were again looking for alignment with Cervero's (2000) theoretical framework related to judgement in practice and reflection.

Data from the interviews revealed that while the interview participants were satisfied with the peer consultations and believed the advice provided could potentially improve their teaching, none of the participants reported changes to their teaching practices. Rather, the interview participants stated that the most useful aspect of the peer observation feedback was for their annual reports, to illustrate they were making a concerted effort to improve their teaching. Reasons provided for not implementing changes in their classroom teaching revolved around feedback that was not disciplinary relevant and a lack of understanding of the teaching contexts. As one participant shared,

> [the peer consultant] may very well be an accomplished award-winning teacher in chemistry but he was so very ill-informed about teaching first year Sociology. I enjoyed getting to know [my colleague] and enjoyed our visits, my teaching evaluations have tanked over the last few years…I've gone from being assigned classes that had 15 or so students since I joined [the academy] to classes that are now 200-plus over the last few years, and I'm struggling with how to meet my students' needs in these larger classes. I don't know how to design my courses–the seminar style does not work for 200 students. His advice to me, which was based on teaching chemistry, was disconnected to teaching sociology. This said, I used his consulting report for FEC [Faculty Evaluation Committee] to prove I have been trying to address my low teaching evaluations….What I need is help on organizing the content.

While there was evidence (as this quote illustrates) related to the value of collegial interaction, a decision was made to integrate the educational developers from the teaching centre for the peer observations. The following year, participants who used the educational developers for peer observations were again invited to participate in follow up interviews. Five agreed to participate in the follow up interviews. As with the first set of interviews, participants enjoyed the peer consultations and they believed the advice provided could potentially improve their teaching. Mindful that there were only five who participated in the follow up interviews, participants stated they were willing to explore using the information provided by the educational developers in their classrooms. The following comment is representative:

> [The educational developer] made me immediately aware of some of the things that I was doing, for many years, that I needed to watch out for–things like not being as clear as I could be about evaluating students, and how to align my teaching activities and assessment with my learning outcomes. My students have always complained my exams were not fair…I now know why, and I now know this was a problem with my course design and not, entirely, a problem with the students.

Given the second set of interview data suggested that the use of educational developers might be more effective in providing technical and practical knowledge on curriculum redevelopment than the use of peers who were teaching award winners, this format was continued.

The other teaching development activity offered to established faculty was the teaching enhancement workshops. The teaching enhancement workshops was a series of systematically designed sessions aimed to provide established faculty, who are already experienced instructors, with further information on the priority areas identified in the need assessment. The sessions

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

included research-informed course designs for a variety of formats (face-to-face, blended, online) that align learner outcomes, instructional strategies and assessment strategies. Many workshops incorporated the use of educational technologies, as well as active learning strategies. For participants teaching large enrollment classes, specific sessions were offered that focused on how to design and integrate active and engaged learning strategies for large classes.

*Stage 5: Survey results*

In year five, a web-based survey was sent to participants who had registered in the teaching development activities (the peer observations and teaching enhancement workshops). While the focus of this study was on established academics, a decision was made to also collect data from new faculty and adjunct/sessional professors to determine if there are perceived differences between respondents about continuing education opportunities provided for each group.

The survey response rate was 28.5% (n=241). Of the 241 survey respondents, 95 respondents were categorised as established academics. Recognizing that different references advocate differences in acceptable return rates for online surveys, in general, an acceptable return rate for an internally conducted online survey tends to be around 25-30% (Sheehan, 2001), as such, the survey response rate can be considered within an acceptable range. Slightly more than one third (38%) of respondents were post-tenured academics. Survey questions used a 5-point Likert-type scale. Chi-square tests, median tests and one-way ANOVAs were conducted at an alpha level of 0.05 to determine whether the differences between groups reflected statistical significance. Thematic analysis was also performed on the comment data, and coded into various response categories. After the initial coding, comment data were analysed separately, peer debriefing was used to corroborate the themes and topics.

## Demographic Data

The demographic data from the survey showed the established academics who responded were generally over the age of 50 (71.3%). The majority had more than 15 years of teaching experience. Eighty-seven percent of the survey respondents were teaching face-to-face, 5% were teaching fully online, and 8% were teaching some form of blended learning.

## Preferred support access format

This section of the survey sought to determine preference of delivery formats for the continuing education activities. As table 3 shows, preferred formats were in both face-to-face and online, closely followed by formats that focused on disciplinary-specific pedagogical knowledge. Table 3 also shows that program material access preferences of experienced academics were slightly different than sessional/lecturers and significantly different than early academics for certain formats. Somewhat surprisingly, early academics were more likely than established academics to prefer print-based materials and discussion panel formats.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

### *Post-tenure Apex*

Table 3
Access Format

| *How likely were you to access the following support services?*† | Post-tenure Academics (%) | Sessional/Adjunct (%) | Pre-tenure Academics (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| - Online teaching program materials | 95 | 93 | 95 |
| - Specific instruction targeted at your discipline | 92 | 90 | 92 |
| - Face-to-face instruction on active learning strategies | 92 | 85 | 97 |
| - Informal group discussions with colleagues about instructional practices | 79 | 75 | 92 |
| - Guest presenters by teaching award winners | 73 | 63 | 68 |
| - One-on-one consultations (e.g., peer consultations; peer coaching) | 67 | 67 | 82 |
| - Student discussion panels | 54 | 48 | 82* |
| - Print-based teaching program materials | 53 | 59 | 95* |

* p≤0.05, Chi-square test, Medians test
† Includes items 4 & 5: likely, very likely on a 5-point Likert type scale.

### Program topic areas

This section of the survey sought to determine the value of the different kinds of instructional strategies associated with active and engaged learning. As Table 4 shows, the sessions that were perceived to be of most value were engaging students, fostering critical thinking, improving student assessment and effectively integrating technologies into their classrooms. There were again differences in respondent groups with respect to perceived value of the sessions offered. In particular, early academics (pre-tenure) indicated their preferences were in learning how to evaluate their teaching, how to give effective feedback and how to develop learning outcomes while established academics were significantly less interested in these topic areas.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

Table 4
Interest in Teaching Program Topic Areas

| *Please identify the most valued topic areas* † | Post-tenure Academics (%) | Sessional/Lecturer /Adjuncts (%) | Pre-tenure Academics (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| - Engaging students | 97 | 100 | 97 |
| - Fostering critical thinking | 97 | 97 | 92 |
| - Improving student assessment | 93 | 97 | 97 |
| - Incorporating technology into your courses | 91 | 93 | 95 |
| - Giving effective feedback | 88 | 86 | 100* |
| - Evaluating your teaching | 86 | 93 | 100* |
| - Student centered instruction | 86 | 93 | 90 |
| - Inclusive instruction | 83 | 93 | 92 |
| - Instructing millennial students | 75 | 78 | 86 |
| - Developing learning outcomes | 74 | 89* | 89* |
| - Incorporating opportunities for undergraduate research | 74 | 75 | 78 |
| - Instructional strategies for online learning | 73 | 71 | 84 |
| - Instructional strategies for large classrooms | 67 | 63 | 92* |
| - Incorporating community service learning into your courses | 66 | 66 | 81 |

* p≤0.05, Chi-square test, Medians test
† Includes items 4&5: 'interested' and 'very interested' on a 5-point Likert type scale.

## Judgement in practice

Framed in Cervero's theory, Table 5 provides the survey results for practical knowledge, technical knowledge and judgement in practice. For this section of the survey, only established faculty were invited to provide responses. The survey data indicate that the teaching development activities designed for this study were perceived by most survey participants as resulting in changes to their teaching practices (judgement in practice).

Table 5
Impact of sessions offered

| Survey response options: Yes/No | Yes (%) |
|---|---|
| *Do you believe the sessions increased your pedagogical knowledge? (Technical knowledge)* | 88 |
| *Did you change your teaching practices based on the information provided? (Practical knowledge)* | 72 |
| *If you made changes to your teaching practices, do you continue to use these changes in your teaching practices? (Judgment in practice)* | 98 |

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

### *Post-tenure Apex*

#### Survey comments

Established faculty who indicated that they had changed their teaching practices as a result of the continuing education activities were asked to provide examples in the comment section of the changes made. Nearly half of all responses indicated that they had increased their use of web-based course management software. Other frequently cited changes included changing to a learning centred pedagogy, a greater focus on assessing learning outcomes and an increased emphasis on student engagement and active learning strategies. Table 6 provides a thematic breakdown and examples of respondent comments.

Table 6
*Changes to Teaching Practices*

| Category of Comment | Representative Comments |
|---|---|
| Active / Diverse Instructional Strategies | • *I now consider the use of multiple learning approaches and teaching/activity styles.*<br>• *I'm teaching using more contemporary techniques.* |
| Focus on Learning Outcomes | • *I make my course content consistent with the course objectives. I find I can better justify the exams I give.*<br>• *I evaluated and changed assignments to better reflect my intended learning outcomes.* |
| Encourage Student Engagement, Interaction | • *I have modified my lecture style to be more interactive with my students*<br>• *I've incorporated some additional teaching methods. Strategies to increase classroom engagement (such as the 1-minute papers).* |
| New Assessment Methods | • *Changed exam question style and content.*<br>• *I'm trying to be sure that the assessment strategies I use are appropriate for the material that was presented and my course objectives* |

A comment box was also provided for established faculty who indicated that they had been unable to sustain changes to their teaching practices. They were asked to describe the barriers they encountered. Responses were disparate, ranging from barriers that included "class sizes are too large," and "teaching subject would not be suitable," to "cost and convenience" and "lack of extra time to prepare." A somewhat frequent comment was that some established professors still did not find the information useful with 12 of 33 comments indicating this was the case. When asked to describe further suggestions on how the teaching sessions could better support their instruction, responses were again disparate, making it difficult to form categories for future improvements. However, a number of the comments were similar in that they expressed an ongoing need for increasing the number and availability of seminars, relating back to the issue of addressing preferred access formats.

Established faculty were also asked to explain what was valued most about the teaching development activities. The most frequent response was the practicality of the sessions, which made clear not only how the information presented can enhance teaching and learning but how the information can be applied in their classrooms. Table 7 provides an overview of the categories that the experienced faculty valued most.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

Table 7
What was Valued Most

| Category of Comment | Representative Comments |
|---|---|
| Useful Content | • *Concrete ideas that I can implement in my classes were most valuable for me.*<br>• *Encouraging and realistic tips. Instead of feeling overwhelmed with more to do, I left feeling I could implement some changes.* |
| Educational Developers / Session Instructors | • *The instructors have generally been very motivated and eager to provide any assistance that they can.*<br>• *Appreciated the research/evidence integrated into the sessions, provides credibility to the sessions.*<br>• *Having instructors who have expertise in this area is so much better than having [my colleagues] telling me how to teach.* |
| Small Groups, Individualized Instruction | • *The relatively small groups* [with the educational developers*] permitted extensive consultation with the instructors.* |
| Hands-On Approach | • *Resources were provided to allow us to work on the session topics; the hands-on type attitude.* |
| Organized, Clear, Effective | • *Effective, clear and concise instruction.*<br>• *The session was nicely broken down into learning chunks.* |
| Short, Convenient | • *Short 1-hour courses that fit into my schedule. I also appreciated the offerings in spring and summer, when I have time to attend.* |
| Take-Home Materials | • *Resources and handouts that we could use as reminders when we actually started building the courses.* |

Established faculty were asked to suggest what they would like changed. The most frequent suggestion involved changes to session length and pacing. Session availability and location (preferred access formats) was again another theme (more frequent offerings and in various campus locations), as was small session sizes and individualized support services.

Finally, in the open-ended comment box (which asked: do you have any other comments?) a number of comments by established academics focused on a desire to participate in face-to-face sessions, primarily so they could (re)connect with colleagues across campus. Specifically, comments indicated participants valued meeting and/or reconnecting with colleagues from different disciplines. The opportunity to socialize with colleagues seemed to motivate some participants to attend the continuing education sessions.

## Discussion

Is continuing education a remedy for the mid- to late-career unhappiness described in much of the prior research? The straightforward answer is no. However, the findings from this study provide a few insights on the value and impact of continuing education for established academics, providing additional contributions to the prior research with respect to collegial and organizational support for this group of academics. The following is a discussion of the data as they illuminate matters related to needs, participation, perceived value and impact, contribution to theory, limitations and further research.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

### *Post-tenure Apex*

#### Identification of needs and the link to participation, value and impact

With respect to participation in continuing education activities, there were a number of aspects that encouraged established academics to attend the continuing education sessions. The first is that conducting a need assessment can be a starting point for practical directions for the design of continuing education activities for established academics. The survey results indicate that pre-tenure academics' and sessional/adjuncts' needs are significantly different from the needs of established academics in specific areas. As such, continuing education activities should make accommodations for these differences. Further, the need assessment emphasized the necessity to integrate strategies to normalize participation for established academics. Given these latter aspects (normalizing participation and recognizing the unique needs of established academics), planning for continuing education sessions independent from early and sessional/adjunct instructional staff can have an influence on participation and as importantly contribute to the need for renewal as Boice (1993) describes it, and perceived support by their institutions (Simpson, 2009).

The survey data also indicated a perceived value for the ability to connect and socialize with colleagues across campus, and was a motivator for participation for established academics. While workplace autonomy is valued by academics and, arguably, important to research productivity, at the same time it can create an environment where there is a lack of contact between colleagues, and a lack of identification with the institution. As identification with an institution and commitment decreases so does the contribution to the institution (e.g., assuming leadership and administrative roles) and job satisfaction (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer, David, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnysky, 2002). Fouche (2006) shows that feelings of isolation decrease when there is regular contact with colleagues and opportunities for collaboration and/or socializing amongst colleagues, with the most effective activities being the provision of regular training and skill development activities (see also Wheeler, 2004). Beyth-Marom, Harpaz-Gorodeisky, Bar-Haim and Goder (2006) note further that offering continuous learning activities results in improving relationships between employees and the institution.

#### Contribution to theory

There are a number of adult learning and development theories that have been used in other studies on established academics. Strage, Nelson and Meyers (2008) for example used Erikson's stage of human development (generativity versus stagnation) and Dweck's (2016) construct of growth mindsets. Erikson's (1964) work on psychosocial development is relevant with respect to middle adulthood (ages 40-65) experience, and a need to create and/or nurture in a manner that will benefit others, creating a sense of being part of the bigger picture during this period of one's life. This, in turn, leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment and in this respect, also relevant to the prior research on mid- late-career academics who find themselves plateauing.

Dweck's (2016) growth mindsets theory is similar to Erikson's generativity versus stagnation theory. Dweck's learning theory is also dichotomic (similar to Erikson's generativity versus stagnation theory) where adults have a fixed mindset (e.g., "I'm too old to learn how to use a tablet") versus a growth mindset (e.g., "It will be challenging for me, but one way or another I'm going to learn how to use a tablet"). Welch et al.'s (2019) research on established academics integrates Levinson's (1986) theory on adult development as a way to frame established academics' development. Levinson's work demonstrates that during mid-life, adults vacillate between phases of stability and achievement to instability and uncertainty. Levinson's theory posits new priorities can potentially have an impact on their work during periods of instability, which also links to Super's (1990) theory

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

on career recycling (e.g., individuals adapt to internal changes or opportunities that cycle over a lifespan) and personal development. It should also be noted that over 30 years ago, Hall's (1986) model of organizational career stages also illustrated mid-career as a time of unpredictability and complexity, and when triggered in the work environment can result in either career maintenance, growth or stagnation. Hall and Mervis' (1995) later work re-examined traditional career stages and development, concluding the need "for continuous learning as a means of providing lifelong development for workers of all ages" (p. 269). The research on theories of adult and mid-career development suggests that there are unique challenges that have an impact on established academics at this time of career, mostly revolving around stagnation versus growth. Prior literature indicates that feelings of stagnation can be an issue for established academics (e.g., Mathis, 1979; Menges, 1985) with many looking to focus on their teaching responsibilities in terms of growth (e.g., Wheeler, 1997).

The results in this study are in alignment with many aspects of these theories of adult development. Specifically, Tables 5, 6 and 7 provide data on perceptions of career development that are consistent with the adult psychosocial theories' assertions of growth, generation and triggers in the work environment that can result in personal growth. Based on the study results, it is possible to conclude that the trigger that precipitated the participants' perceived development and/or growth was the continuing education activities. Based on the data in this study, these are areas worthy of further study.

The results of this study also provide support for Cervero's (2000) continuing education theory. Cervero proposes a view of continuing education that encompasses (1) technical knowledge (gained from formal learning settings) and (2) practical knowledge (gained from informal learning opportunities) where the accumulation of tacit knowledge is gained from experience that contributes to (3) wisdom and an ability to exercise discretionary judgment in practice. Cervero also emphasizes self-reflection as a domain for knowledge generation. Table 5 reveals that most of those who participated in the continuing education activities believe the continuing education activities provided technical knowledge, practical knowledge and opportunities for judgment in practice. On the issue of collegial connections/interactions (via the peer observations), the data were less supportive. While the survey data comments indicate many participants enjoyed (re)connecting with colleagues and socializing with them, and 79% (table 3) agreed or strongly agreed they enjoyed the informal group discussions with colleagues about instructional practices, they did not value these interactions in the peer observation activity. Based on these data, as well as the comments on the "what was most valued" section in the survey (Table 7), it would appear that socialization is perceived as valued, but technical knowledge and practical knowledge is prioritized over collegial interaction and collaboration.

The data in this study did not provide insights and/or support with respect to wisdom as Cervero (2000) describes it. Based on several adult developmental theories such as, for example, Erikson's (1964) notable work on human development theory, wisdom should follow the generation stage. Cervero's continuing education theory also links to wisdom, which develops from self-reflection. While there is good support in the research literature that continuing education can have a positive impact on attitudes and beliefs, there is a rather scant understanding on whether this knowledge is transferred to practice, with the wise practitioner ensuing in the last stages of one's career. The findings in this study did not support this aspect of Cervero's theory. Even if academics could agree on what it means to be a wise professor, it is doubtful research can determine if continuing education facilitates wisdom through reflective practice.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

***Post-tenure Apex***

## Conclusion

Academics that are no longer in the early stages of their careers are often overlooked as targeted participants when planning for the provision of institutionally supported continuing education initiatives. In Canada, approximately two-thirds of full-time faculty at the G15 Universities (Canada's research focused universities) are over the age of 50 and are in the mid- to late-states of their careers. In spite of the large numbers of these academics, academic development programs continue to prioritize graduate students and early career faculty (Romano, Hoesin, O'Donovan & Weinsheimer, 2004).

The practice of "digging where the ground is soft" (to quote one of the department heads in this study, in reference to targeting graduate students and new hires for professional development initiatives) may be problematic for a number of reasons. To begin with, established faculty frequently provide mentoring and support to new faculty and graduate students, passing on the same teaching, and imaginably dated, practices they may still be using from when they joined the academy. Secondly, ignoring mid- to late-career faculty also promotes a perception that many are "deadwood who [have] stopped contributing to the institution the day they were tenured" (Romano et al., 2004, p. 25). This perception has tended to prevail in spite of literature that has shown most established academics enjoy their teaching and care a great deal about their students' learning (LaCelle-Peterson & Finkelstein, 1993; Kanuka, Jugdev & Heller, 2008). Research has also shown that "repetitive teaching assignments, lack of discussion about teaching at department meetings and the autonomy associated with their instructional role contribute to burnout" (Romano et al. 2004, p. 24). Finally, ongoing research since the 1990s has shown that academics' teaching is enhanced when their institutions offer structured programs with an opportunity to discuss and socialize with their colleagues (Jackson & Simpson, 1993; Kalivoda, Broder & Jackson, 2003). Consistent with Romano et al.'s (2004) findings, the data from this study indicate there are important reasons why established academics, who have many good years left in the academy, are provided with continuing education targeted to meet their unique needs. Without opportunities for growth, academics can often experience low morale, feel disengaged and isolated (Boice, 1992). The findings from this study also indicate earning tenure and promotion does not mean continuing education opportunities are no longer necessary. Not only is continuing education necessary for established academics, but the data indicate that when the identified needs are addressed, continuing education is valued and has an impact on practice. As such, based on the findings of this study it can be concluded that when planning continuing education opportunities for established academics the activities will have the greatest perceived impact when (a) based on identified needs (e.g., high priority areas identified in a need analysis); and (b) activities are offered directly to established academics.

## Limitations and Further Research

In addition to the limitations identified in each data set, the findings reported in this study are not intended to be generalizable. Rather, the findings of this study are intended to provide insights for leaders at other, similar institutions of higher education who may find the results of this study useful when designing continuing education opportunities for established academics. It is also important to note that participant bias was a factor in this study given those who participated in the continuing education activities were already motivated and open to changes in their academic practices. The research design also did not account for disciplinary differences. Disciplinary difference is an

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

important area of research for all institutionally provided academic development activities, given what we know from prior research that there are distinct disciplinary cultures in academia resulting in unique continuing education needs (Becher & Trowler, 2001). Finally, this study did not separate post-tenure associate professors form post-tenure full professors. Research by Mathews (2014) that shows that long-term associate professors (six years or longer), who are most often the largest group of academics, "appear to grow less satisfied with their institutions the longer they stay in rank" (p. 3). Future research might investigate the effects of continuing education targeted at this group and the effects on career satisfaction. This same research should examine whether it can have a positive affect when one moves to the full professor rank.

## References

Baldwin, R. G., & Blackburn, R. T. (1981). The academic career as a developmental process: Implications for higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education, 52*(6), 598-614. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.1981.11778133

Baldwin, R. G., & Chang, D. A. (2006). Reinforcing our "keystone" faculty: Strategies to support faculty in the middle years of academic life. *Liberal Education*, *92*(4), 28-35. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ746034.pdf

Baldwin, R., DeZure, D., Shaw, A., & Moretto, K. (2008). Mapping the terrain of mid-career faculty at a research university: Implications for faculty and academic leaders. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 40*(5), 46-55. https://doi.org/10.3200/CHNG.40.5.46-55

Becher, T., & Trowler, R. P. (2001). *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Culture of Disciplines* (2nd ed.). Buckingham, United Kingdom: SRHE and Open University Press.

Beyth-Marom, R., Harpaz-Gorodeisky, G., Bar-Haim, A., & Godder, E. (2006). Identification, job satisfaction and work motivation among tutors at the Open University of Israel. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning,* 7(2), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v7i2.302

Boice, R. (1992). *The New Faculty Member: Supporting and Fostering Professional Development.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boice, R. (1993). Primal origins and later correctives for mid-career disillusionment. *New Directions for Teaching & Learning, 1993*(55), 33-41. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.37219935505

Campion, M. W., Bhasin, R. M., Beaudette, D. J., Shann, M. H. & Benjamin, E. J. (2016). Mid-career faculty development in academic medicine: How does it impact faculty and institutional vitality? *Journal of Faculty Development, 30*(3), 49-64. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5145005/

Candy, P. C. (1991). *Self-Direction for Lifelong Learning: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Cervero R. M., & Daley, B. J. (2010). Continuing professional education: Multiple stakeholders and agendas. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd ed.) (pp. 127-132). Oxford, United Kingdom: Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-044894-7.00892-7

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

Cervero, R. M. (2000). Trends and issues in continuing professional education. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 2000*(86), 3-12. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.8601

Cervero, R. M. (2001). Continuing professional education in transition, 1981?2000. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 20*(1-2), 16-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/09638280010008282

Coady, M. J. (2015). From Houle to Dirkx: Continuing professional education (CPE), a critical state-of-the-field review. *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*, *27*(3), 27-41. https://cjsae.library.dal.ca/index.php/cjsae/article/view/3900

Creswell, J. W. (1985). Faculty Research Performance: Lessons from the Sciences and the Social Sciences. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 4*. *1985.* Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED267677.pdf

Cross, K. P. (1981). *Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Daley, B. J. (2000). Learning in professional practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 86,* 33-42.

Dweck, C. (2016). What having a "growth mindset" actually means. *Harvard Business Review*. Available online at https://hbr.org/2016/01/what-having-a-growth-mindset-actually-means

Erikson, E. H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers. Psychological Issues, 1,* 1–171.

Erikson, E. H. (1964). *Insight and Responsibility*. New York, NY: Norton.

Field, J. (2012). Is lifelong learning making a difference? Research-based evidence on the impact of adult learning. In D. N. Aspin, J. Chapman, K. Evans, & R. Bagnall (Eds.), *Second international handbook of lifelong learning* (pp. 887-897). Dordrecht: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2360-3_54

Finkelstein, M. (1982). *Faculty colleagueship patterns and research productivity*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

Fouche, I. (2006). A multi-island situation without the ocean: Tutor's perceptions about working in isolation from colleagues. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 7*(2), 1-21. https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v7i2.295

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2007). *Educational Research: An Introduction* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Gopaul, B., Jones, G. A., Weinrib, J., Metcalfe, A., Fisher, D., Gingras, Y., & Rubenson, K. (2016). The academic profession in Canada: Perceptions of Canadian university faculty about research and teaching. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 46*(2), 55-77. https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v46i2.185269

Hall, D. T. (1986). Breaking career routines: Midcareer choice and identity development. In D. T. Hall & Associates (Eds.), *Career Development in Organizations* (pp. 120–159). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hall, D. T., & Mirvis, P. H. (1995). The new career contract: Developing the whole person at midlife and beyond. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 47*(3), 269-289. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1995.0004

Hällsten, M. (2012). Is it ever too late to study? The economic returns on late tertiary degrees in Sweden. *Economics of Education Review*, *31*(1), 179-194. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2011.11.001

Hennekam, S. (2015). Career success of older workers: The influence of social skills and continuous learning ability. *Journal of Management Development*, *34*(9), 1113-1133. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-05-2014-0047

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

Hiemstra, R. (1994). Self-directed learning. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Education* (2nd ed.). Oxford, England: Pergamon Press. http://roghiemstra.com/sdlhdbk.html

Houle, C. O. (1980). *Continuing Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jackson, W. K., & Simpson, R. D. (1993). Redefining the role of senior faculty at a research university. *New Directions for Teaching & Learning, 1993*(55), 69-79. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.37219935508

Kalivoda, P., Broder, J., & Jackson, W. K. (2003). Establishing a teaching academy: Cultivation of teaching at a research university campus. *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development, 21*(1), 79-92. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2334-4822.2003.tb00382.x

Kaminski, D., & Geisler, C. (2012). Survival analysis of faculty retention in science and engineering by gender. *Science, 335*(6070), 864-866. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1214844

Kang, B., & Miller, M. T. (1999). An overview of the sabbatical leave in higher education: A synopsis of the literature base. Available online at https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED430471.pdf

Kanuka, H., Heller, B., & Jugdev, K. (2008). The factor structure of teaching development needs for distance-delivered e-learning. *International Journal for Academic Development, 13*(2), 129-139. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13601440802076608

Kilpi-Jakonen, E., Buchholz, S., Dämmrich, J., McMullin, P., & Blossfeld, H. P. (2014). Adult learning, labor market outcomes, and social inequalities in modern societies. In H. P. Blossfeld, E. Kilpi-Jakonen, D. V. de Vilhena, & S. Buchholz (Eds.), *Adult Learning in Modern Societies: An International Comparison from a Life-course Perspective* (pp. 3-26). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781783475186.00008

Knowles, M. S. (1984). *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

LaCelle-Peterson, M. W., & Finkelstein, M. J. (1993). Institutions matter: Campus teaching environments' impact on senior faculty. *New Directions for Teaching & Learning, 1993*(55), 21-32. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.37219935504

Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*(2), 103-123. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030130202

Mansbach, J., & Austin, A. E. (2018). Nuanced perspectives about online teaching: Mid-career and senior faculty voices reflecting on academic work in the digital age. *Innovative Higher Education, 43*(4), 257-272. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-018-9424-4

Mathews, K. (2014). *Perspectives on midcareer faculty and advice for supporting them*. Cambridge, MA: The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE). Available online at https://coache.gse.harvard.edu/files/gse-coache/files/coache-perspectives-on.pdf?m=1447625224

Mathis, B. C. (1979). Academic careers and adult development: A nexus for research. *Current Issues in Higher Education*, *2*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.

Menges. R. J. (1985). Career-span faculty development. *College Teaching, 33*(4), 181-184. https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.1985.10532317

Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L., & Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61*(1), 20-52. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1842

Mezirow, J. (1985). A critical theory of self-directed learning. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 1985*(25), 17–30. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.36719852504

Mott, V. W. (2000). The development of professional expertise in the workplace. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 2000*(86), 23-31. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.8603

Murray, J. P. (1994). Why teaching portfolios? *Community College Review, 22*(1), 33-43. https://doi.org/10.1177/009155219402200105

OECD. (2006). *Live Longer, Work Longer: A Synthesis Report.* Paris: OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2013). *Ageing and Employment Policies: Norway 2013 Working Better with Age*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2017). Preventing Ageing Unequally. Paris: OECD Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264279087-en

Pastore, D. L. (2013). Faculty perspectives on Baldwin and Chang's mid-career faculty development model. *Journal of Faculty Development, 27*(2), 25-32. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1011196

Queeney, D. S. (2000). Continuing professional education. In A. Wilson & E. Hayes (Eds.), *Handbook of Adult & Continuing Education* (pp. 375-392). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Romano, J. L., Hoesing, R., O'Donovan, K., & Weinsheimer, J. (2004). Faculty at mid-career: A program to enhance teaching and learning. *Innovative Higher Education, 29*(1), 21-48. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:IHIE.0000035365.92454.a5

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. London, United Kingdom: Temple Smith.

Simpson, R. (2009). *The Development of the PhD Degree in Britain, 1917-1959 and Since: An Evolutionary and Statistical History in Higher education*. Lewiston, NY; Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen Press.

Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple Case Study Analysis*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Strage, A., & Merdinger, J. (2015). Professional growth and renewal for mid-career faculty. *Journal of Faculty Development, 29*(1), 41-50. https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/magna/jfd/2015/00000029/00000001/art00005

Strage, A., Nelson, C., & Meyers, S. (2008). "Stayin' alive:" Meeting faculty mid-career professional renewal needs. *Metropolitan Universities Journal, 19*(1), 71-83. https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/muj/article/view/20335

Super, D. E. (1980). A life span, life-space approach to career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 16*(3), 282-298. https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(80)90056-1

Tough, A. (1978). Major learning efforts: Recent research and future directions. *Adult Education Quarterly, 28*(4), 250-263. https://doi.org/10.1177/074171367802800403

Welch, A. G., Bolin, J., Reardon, D., & Stenger, R. (2019). Mid-career faculty: Trends, barriers, and possibilities*. The Journal of the Professoriate, 10*(1), 22-42. http://caarpweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Mid_career_Faculty_spring_2019.pdf

Wheeler, D. W. (1997). Mid-career and senior faculty: Maintaining vitality and productivity. *HortScience, 32*(1), 44-45. https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTSCI.32.1.44

Wilson, A. L. (2001). Professionalization: A politics of identity. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education, 2001*(91), 73-84. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.33

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]

Wilson, A. L., & Cervero, R. M. (2006). The song remains the same: The selective tradition of technical rationality in adult education and program planning theory. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 16*(2), 84-108. https://doi.org/10.1080/0260137970160202

**Professor Heather Kanuka** is a faculty member in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta, Canada. Heather's research focus revolves around orientations of teaching and technology, and academic development.

**Dr. Jonathan Anuik** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta, Canada. His research focuses on the history of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education in Canada. His research interests cross the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of childhood and youth, teaching, education, and learning, spirituality, and Indigenous studies.

[ Downloaded from www.johepal.com on 2026-11-08 ]

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) which allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.

[ DOI: 10.52547/johepal.2.1.6 ]