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The Roles of Mentors in Electronic Learning Environments

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This article describes the roles of mentors to meet the need for mentors in electronic learning (eLearning) environments. The existing literature has documented factors impeding effective eLearning and the multiplicity of the faculty's roles that demands too much time on the faculty within eLearning environments. This article argues for the need for mentors to assist instruction and facilitate learning within eLearning environments. The roles of mentors built around the multiple roles of the faculty are then identified as teaching assistants, social connectedness initiators, and technical supporters. A guideline for mentors outlining mentors' roles, responsibilities, and contributions was proposed. This guideline may be adopted by mentors as a fundamental job-aid in practicing mentoring. An example of implementation of mentors in an eLearning environment, which resulted in higher learning achievement, was also presented. In conclusion, it is suggested that mentors should be employed within eLearning environments for assisting students overcoming eLearning barriers and achieving effective learning within eLearning environments.

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