Breakout session #1: *Mentoring at Play: Exploring the Creative Side of Mentor/Mentee Relationships*
Kasia Leousis, Jaena Alabi, Claudine Jenda, Pambinisha Whaley – Auburn University

*Mentoring at Play* discussed creative approaches to mentoring in the academic library setting. Mentoring plays an important role in bringing new librarians into an institutional culture. In a time of changing culture, it is especially important that this process is flexible and allows for creativity. Current trends in mentoring include peer mentoring, group mentoring, group networks, mentoring circles, and organizational mentoring. The academic library may benefit from looking at innovative businesses such as Google, Apple, and others. These businesses often have a less formal corporate structure, allowing for fun and playfulness, and being attentive to the whole person. What may seem like “just play” may have many benefits. In the speakers’ experience, playfulness and creativity in the workplace builds a sense of community. It is team building and incorporates new people. It allows for conversation and storytelling, where information can be shared in an informal setting. Ideally, this will reinforce an institutional culture which places an emphasis on open communication, valued relationships, high performing teams, risk taking, openness to new ideas, and a strong sense of community. Looking forward, the speakers will consider whether and how such a creative, playful approach to mentoring might be formalized.

Prepared by Jessica Evans Brady