



Peer Coaching as an Approach to Urban Retention

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- Fall 2006 Enrollment:
 - 14,213 Total
 - 7,344 Undergraduate
 - 77% Full Time
- Retention Rate for First-Time, Full Time Degree Seeking freshmen
 - 71% All
 - 70% White
 - 69% Black
 - 62% Hispanic
- Average age of undergraduates is 24

History of the Coaching Program

- Started in 2005 in response to low retention and graduation rates on campus
- Joint effort of the Center for Academic Development and the Office of Student Affairs with support from the H&R Block Foundation
- Increase students connections to university

Mission Statement

To provide students with the skills necessary for their journey at UMKC by assisting them in becoming engaged with the university community and promoting life-long learning through critical thinking and social awareness.

Components

- Peer Coaches
- Academic Coordinators
- Weekly Group Sessions
- Midterm Grade Tracking
- Program Coordinator

Goals

- Enhance Academic Performance
- Promote Personal Success
- Foster Increase in Retention & Graduation Rates
- Develop Leaders
- Increase Campus Connections
- Promote Students as "Lifelong Learners"

Students Served

- Trial Admit Freshmen
- Institute for Urban Education Students
- Scholarship Students
 - Henry W. Bloch Scholars
 - United Negro College Fund
 - Hispanic Matching
 - Herman Johnson

Program Funding

- Grant Funded
- Matching – Institution & Foundation
- Included:
 - Program Coordinator Salary
 - Peer Coach & Academic Coordinator Stipends
 - Program Materials
 - Social Events
- Alternatives Considered:
 - Release time for Academic Coordinators
 - Book scholarships for Peer Coaches
 - Minimizing program materials
 - Social events focused on community service projects

Edgar Palacios, Peer Coach



Ruben Douglas, Student



Peer Coaches

- UMKC Undergraduate/Graduate student
- One Coach per 3-5 students
- Serve as peer mentors to students
- Provide students one-on-one support in individual weekly meetings
- Attend weekly group sessions

One-on-One Meetings

- Initial Session
 - Establish Rapport
 - Set time & place for meetings
 - Review Courses
 - Campus Resources
 - Long Term Goals (semester, career, life)
 - Study Schedule
- Subsequent Sessions
 - Short term, weekly goals
 - Review from previous week
 - Set for following week
 - Check in regarding courses
 - Revising study schedule

Peer Coach Tracking Sheets

Peer Coach Weekly Tracking Sheet

Peer Coach: _____
Student: _____
Date: _____

Type of Contact: Email One-On-One Phone Call

Topics Covered: _____

Areas of Concern: _____

Referred to: _____

Follow up needed by: _____

Peer Coach Experiences

- First point of contact for students
- Resource of academic *and* social information
- Mentor, guide, listening ear, objective point of view

Academic Coordinator

- UMKC Faculty or Staff Member
- 1 Academic Coordinator per 10-15 students
- Facilitate weekly group session
- Meet individually with student 3 times per semester

Group Sessions

- Purpose:
 - To encourage critical thinking and model learning strategies and techniques, as well as increase engagement with other students and staff
- Structure
 - 1 hour meeting, 1 time a week
 - Eight sessions to choose from
 - Meet with the same group each week
 - Academic Coordinator leads group; Peer Coaches attend and provide support

Curriculum Descriptions

- Study Schedules
- Study Skills
- Time Management
- Test Taking Strategies
- Personal Responsibility
- Goal Setting
- Problem Solving
- Major & Career Exploration
- Critical Thinking
- Life-Long Learning

Academic Coordinator Experiences

- Building relationships with students
 - Level of preparedness and professionalism
 - Providing atmosphere for open communication
 - Concern with academic goals as well as social and personal goals
 - Establishing trust
 - Availability to help with academics or to listen to personal issues

Academic Coordinator Tracking Sheet

Coaching Program Student Contact Report

Academic Coordinator: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____

Type of Contact: Email One-On-One Phone Call

Type of Appointment: Beginning of Semester Mid-Term
 Pre-Finals Additional

Nature of Contact: Personal Academic Both

Approximate Length of appointment: _____

Location of appointment: _____

Notes: _____

Scenarios for Peer Coaches (interactive group)

- Your off-campus job increased your hours from 20 to 30, now you're too tired to study
- You have trouble understanding your history professor, and are afraid you are going to fail the exam
- Your boy/girlfriend broke up with you for "no reason" and you don't want to do anything
- You have stopped attending Psych 101 because it is a "waste of time"

Lessons Learned

- Need some kind of 'hold' over students (i.e. class credit, etc)
- Early contact is optimal
- If the program is a requirement, students need to be informed early and often
- First two meetings of the year are crucial to establish rapport between Peer Coach and student

Questions?



UMKC Coaching Program

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