

The Importance of Implementing First Year Student Mentoring Programs for Minorities

36th Annual Conference on the First Year Experience

Challenges that lead to student departure

- Personal (undisciplined and unmotivated)
- Social (alienation, isolation)
- Academic (unprepared academically)
- Life Issues (finances, family issues)
- Institutional Issues (poor teaching, lack of communication with faculty, operational issues)

Students must achieve acad

emic and social integration in order to experience successful student outcomes

- **Academic integration:** achieved through student's academic performance
- **Social integration:** achieved through peer and faculty interactions

Minority students find it necessary to create their own social and cultural networks in order to achieve satisfaction and social involvement (Allen, 1992; Hale, 2006; Johnson, 1999).

The History and Importance of Mentoring Programs

- Mentoring programs have been implemented to assist with integrating the social and academic needs of undergraduate students.
- Administrators believe that participation in mentoring programs has the potential to increase student satisfaction and persistence, along with assisting with professional development (Institution for Higher Education Policy, 2011).
- Mentoring can help students feel a greater connection their institution, promote student engagement and contribute to positive student outcomes (Institution for Higher Education Policy, 2011).
- Mentoring programs can assist in communication abilities, removing financial obstacles and eliminating institutional barriers that can contribute to a sense of alienation (Okoyi et.al., 2010).
- Minority students involved in mentoring programs are also more likely to persist and have higher grade point averages than minority students not involved in mentoring programs (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2011).

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Program Models

Institution/Institution Type	Name of Mentoring Program	Programming Components	Student Experiences
<p>The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (PWI) <i>Informal Mentoring</i></p> <p>Student Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“As a mentee, I had someone who introduced me to upper classmen which gave me a sense of inclusion and a network of future friends. Being a mentor allowed me to pay it forward”</i> • <i>“The program helped me to get adjusted to college life and form friendships”</i> • <i>“My advisor knew the ropes and was very helpful. She built my confidence and introduced me to Carolina culture. Also, my experience as a mentee encouraged me to become a mentor”</i> 	<p>Minority Advisory Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 424 African American and American Indian first year undergraduate students participated in 2011 • Approximately 328 (77%) students remained active in the mentoring program throughout the academic year • From 2011-2012, the number of participants grew from 146 to 424. • Spring Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 139 First Year Mentees ○ 93 Minority Advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority advisors meet with mentees at least twice per month during academic year • Minority advisors required to submit written progress report forms on a bi-weekly basis on how well their assigned student were adjusting to life at Carolina <p>Services Utilized by MAP first-year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting professors (78%) • Participating in informal study groups (53%) • Visit writing center (52%) • Peer tutoring (34%) <p>Mentee Contact Rate: 87%</p> <p>Meetings with Mentees: 71%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meetings in person: 49% ○ Text messaging: 22% ○ Facebook: 14% ○ Email: 13% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey in 2012 found that ninety percent (90%) of first year respondents found it important to have a peer mentor • Eighty-one percent (81%) found meetings meaningful • Minority advisors were successful in getting first year students to participate or pursue several retention activities • Sixty-nine percent (69%) were encouraged to attend campus events/programs • Sixty-six percent (66%) were encouraged to join student organizations • Sixty-four percent (64%) were encouraged to meet and interact with more people • Sixty-three percent (63%) reported they were more likely to contact instructors outside of class • Sixty percent (60%) were encouraged to seek tutoring • Fifty-two (52%) were encouraged to attend classes regularly • Forty-seven percent (47%) made achieving a 3.0 GPA a priority • Top Concerns: Time management; studying; dissatisfaction with grades; meeting people; too much time on social media

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<p>North Carolina Central University (HBCU)</p> <p><i>Informal Mentoring</i></p> <p>Student Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Most people only get to see college experiences form the images on TV, but peer leaders were able to tell us about specific things like school, financial aid, and friends”</i> • <i>“Having a peer leader made me realize how important mentors are”</i> • <i>“Being a peer leader made me aware of the things that I was doing because someone was looking up to me”</i> • <i>“I felt like they cared about me. I could ask them questions. It felt good”</i> 	<p>NCCU S.O.A.R.t.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 843 first year freshmen in Fall 2002 • NCCU showed an increase in enrollment in 2003-2004 school year <p>Note: Less data available due to program no longer being in existence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation program allowed incoming freshmen to gain real-life experience as college students by spending an overnight experience on campus • Students were divided into groups • Groups led by 3-4 peer leaders (upperclassmen) • Incoming freshmen able to move in early • Common themes of program: relationship building, advice, support, role models, advice and motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer mentoring had an impact on what career student selected • Receiving support early helped throughout their entire college experience • Participation contributed to their commitment to NCCU • Greatest success was giving back as a peer leader to other incoming first year students • Peer leaders viewed as role models • Relationship building and making friends with other in the program reduced anxiety when school year began • Positive outcomes for both the mentee and mentor • Commitment to NCCU after graduation

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