

Mentorship: The Key to Student Success

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Abstract:

COVID-19 has wreaked worldwide havoc on the economy, individual and collective health, employment, and education. In higher education, we have noted an increase in fear of returning to the classroom, stress of adjusting to educational settings, personal and mental stress that impacts the educational process, lack of belonging, financial hardship, and lack of post-graduation job prospects. The previously mentioned issues have led to less than desirable experiences that have negatively impacted the higher education environment and caused significant stress for students. Mentoring is a great way to address these issues and help students develop long-lasting relationships. The mentoring relationships provide mentees with psychosocial and career functions. Psychosocial functions allow mentees to experience increased personal growth, self-worth, and self-efficacy. Career functions provide coaching that assists the mentee to prepare for advancement.

Primary Stakeholders:

- Master of Social Work students (mentees)
- School of Social Work alumni (Mentors)

Key Steps/Activities:

- Creation of a small workgroup
- Develop/revise the goals and objectives of the program
- Develop a flyer for distribution
- Develop a mentor/mentee profile
- Develop an orientation for the mentors/mentees
- Pilot the program
- Evaluate the program
- Present findings to senior management

Effectiveness Measures:

- Mentor/Mentee satisfaction surveys
- Pre/post surveys measuring the goals and objectives of the program

Communication/Engagement:

- Create a mentoring email address for two-way communication
- Develop a list-serv for those in the mentoring program
- Development of an infographic to share the pre/post survey data and lessons learned

Current Status/Future Directions:

- The project is in the development phase of convening a small workgroup and working to secure funding for the mentor training and orientation.
- The program will run as a pilot during the fall 2023 semester with approximately 6-9 students (2-3 from each campus), based on feedback from the pre/post surveys the program could expand during the spring.

Proposed Timeline:

