

Peer Mentoring in Social Work Education: Evaluation of Academic and Social Integration

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Does participation in the peer mentoring program increase academic integration for participants?
- Does participation in peer mentoring program increase social integration for participants?
- To what extent are academic, social, and personal goals attained in the peer mentoring program?
- What components of peer mentoring are most beneficial to participants?
- How is participation in a peer mentoring program beneficial to students' academic and social integration?

SAMPLE

	Mentors 6 2 nd year MSWs	Mentees 3 junior BSWs 7 1 st year MSWs
Gender	6 Females	8 Females 1 Male 1 Adrogyne
Race	6 White	6 White 1 Black 2 Hispanic
Age	25-50 (Med=30)	20-49 (Med=26)
Concentration or Practice Interest	3 Leadership 3 Mental Health	1 Health 1 Leadership 4 Mental Health 2 Schools 2 Undecided

METHODOLOGY

- Convenience sampling of IUSSW students participating in peer mentoring program
- Major components of peer mentoring program:
 - Mentor match day
 - Twelve weeks of peer mentoring
 - Three networking events
- Participants matched based on ranked preferences for age, gender, race, socio-economic status, concentration/practice interest, and personal interests
- Participants completed match survey, pre-test, six bi-weekly reports, and post-test

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

	Pre-test M (SD)	Post-test M (SD)
Academic Integration	30.33 (3.75)	38.94 (2.57)**
I understand the level of effort involved for me to succeed in my studies.	6.33 (.78)	6.75 (.45)
I feel empowered to lead my own academic development as a college student.	5.67 (1.07)	6.75 (.45)
I feel comfortable receiving help and support from my fellow students (i.e. study groups).	5.92 (1.51)	6.63 (.72)
I feel confident in the ability to achieve my professional goals because I have discussed them with my mentee/mentor.	4.17 (1.47)	6.13 (.89)
I feel confident in the ability to achieve my professional goals because I have networked with practitioners.	4.50 (1.68)	6.13 (1.03)
My interpersonal relationships with peers has had a positive influence on my academic interests and intellectual growth.	5.83 (1.19)	6.56 (.51)
Social Integration	33.67 (5.28)	31.69 (4.59)
I make personal connections with other students by getting involved with social activities.	4.17 (2.21)	5.25 (1.48)
I feel comfortable introducing myself to other students.	5.17 (1.53)	5.00 (1.27)
I develop effective working relationships with fellow students in my course.	6.00 (.60)	5.50 (.82)
I feel a sense of camaraderie with the students in my classes.	6.25 (.62)	5.31 (.87)
I feel a sense of camaraderie with the students in other classes.	5.50 (1.17)	4.94 (1.44)
I feel like I belong in the school of social work.	6.58 (.67)	5.69 (.60)

Note. AI and SI are 7-point scales from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" with 4 marking "Neither Disagree nor Agree." ** p < .001.

GOAL ATTAINMENT: Mentee Mentor

	M (SD)	Slightly	Somewhat	Very Well	Extremely Well
Academic	4.50 (.71)	-	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	6 (60.0)
	4.17 (.75)	-	1 (16.7)	3 (50.0)	2 (33.3)
Social	4.20 (1.03)	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	5 (50.0)
	3.67 (.82)	-	3 (50.0)	2 (33.3)	1 (16.7)
Personal	4.60 (.70)	-	1 (10.0)	2 (20.0)	7 (70.0)
	3.83 (.75)	-	2 (33.3)	3 (50.0)	1 (16.7)

BENEFITS OF PEER MENTORING

Highest Rated Components of Program

- Match Day (89%)
- Networking Event: Concentrations (87.5%)
- Networking Event: Post-Graduation (79%)

Top Rated Benefits of Program (mentees)

- Open, honest discussions
- Support regarding current classes and insight about future courses
- Networking with other students and developing professional relationships

Top Rated Benefits of Program (mentors)

- Providing support to mentees
- Identifying personal strengths and areas for growth
- Developing professional relationships

Post-Program Plans

- 100% mentees expressed moderate to definite interest in mentoring next year
- 62% of participants plan to continue meeting in the mentoring pair

"I need someone to talk to about self-care and time management with someone who's been through that semester before and how they got through it."

DISCUSSION

- Academic integration scores significantly increased, which may be attributed to the nature of goals developed and as well as general conversation occurring between mentors and mentees
- Social integration scores decreased, which may be attributed to the pressure placed on mentors to sustain relationships with a two- to three-person pod of mentees
- Mentees' perception of attaining goals was higher than mentors' perception of goal attainment
- Providing ongoing leadership training to mentors and decreasing their mentee burden may increase the potential that mentors fulfill their role to completion

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND APPRECIATION

- BSW and MSW participants in IUSSW Peer Mentoring Program
- Dr. Hea-Won Kim