Doing More with Less: The Evolution of a Peer Mentoring Program

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Purdue University

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Session Agenda

- Why Mentoring?
- Program Overview
  - History of Purdue Promise
  - Mentoring in Purdue Promise
  - Stretching our dollars
- Assessment
  - How we assess our program
- How it can be replicated
Why Mentoring?
Importance of Mentoring

- Literature & Research

  - Peer groups are primary forces influencing college student development - Chickering, 1969

  - “The most potent environmental influence on student development in college is the peer group.” – Brown, 1972 (p. 31)

  - “Interaction with peers is probably the most pervasive and powerful force in student persistence and degree completion.” – Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005
Importance of Mentoring

Benefits to the Program/Institution

- Cost effective
- Personal touch without staff burnout
- Creates leadership opportunities (More benefits!)
- Evidence of increasing student satisfaction and retention
History of Purdue Promise’s Mentoring Program
In Fall 2006, a mentoring program was created for Purdue Opportunity Awards Scholars

- For low-income and first-generation students from the state of Indiana who are receiving the Purdue Opportunity Award financial aid
- Served 80-90 incoming first-year students each year
- Mentoring program grew from about 25 mentors to 45 mentors by 2008
In Fall 2009, Purdue Opportunity Awards Program evolved into the Purdue Promise Program

- For low-income and first-generation students from the state of Indiana area who are receiving the Purdue Promise Scholarship and Purdue Opportunity Award
- Initial cohort had 171 incoming students
- Mentoring program continued with about 55 mentors
- Added students receiving the Emerging Urban Leader Scholarship in Fall 2010
- Program is very successful and thus continues to grow...
## Growth Continues...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Mentees</th>
<th>Mentors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>253</td>
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Unforeseen growth has created strain on financial resources.
More Background: Purdue Promise

The intentional combination of financial support and academic programming to enhance Purdue’s access and success of Twenty-first Century Scholars, Emerging Urban Leaders, and Purdue Opportunity Awards Scholars.
The support services are designed to help students succeed both academically and socially in a structured academic and co-curricular success effort.
Three Major Areas

- Academic Enhancement
- Social Integration and Mentoring
- Leadership Development
Purdue Promise Mentoring Program: What we do
Mentors serve as trained student leaders who help their mentees successfully transition to Purdue by:

- Being a welcoming & approachable role model
- Helping mentees access resources at Purdue
- Encouraging academic success
- Providing a listening ear
- Creating community within Purdue Promise and the University at-large
Position Responsibilities

Mentors will:

- Have 3 contacts a month.
  - One must be in person.
  - One must encourage personal well-being.
  - One must encourage academic success.
- Hold one office hour a week in the office
- Attend bi-weekly mentor meetings
- Attend all trainings
- Aid in completing Passport to Success
- Meet 2 - 4 times throughout the year one-on-one with mentees
- Attend all large social events
- Make time and be available for mentees
Mentoring Expectations

- Expectations:
  - Meet all position responsibilities
  - Maintain a 2.5 GPA
  - Abide by all University & Program policies
  - Be a good role model
  - Maintain a positive attitude
  - HAVE FUN!!!
Staffing Structure
Mentor Leader Position

Mentor Leaders

- Supervise/Mentor the Mentors
- Plan & Implement Large Social Events
  - In charge of 1-2 events a year
  - Assists with running all large events
- Communicates between SST/P-Staff and Mentees
  - Answers questions
  - Assists with paperwork
- Meets once a week
  - Bi-weekly with SST and P-Staff
  - Opposite weeks with Mentor Team
- Holds 2 office hours a week
Mentor Recruitment & Selection

- **Recruitment**
  - Advertise in classes
  - Nominations from other mentors and staff
  - Facebook
  - Youtube videos
  - Callouts

- **Selection**
  - Online Application
    - Include important dates on the application: interview days, trainings, large fall events
  - Interviews
  - Upper level student leaders involved
Recruitment & Selection

- **Interviewing**
  - We interview all candidates who meet initial criteria
  - Peer Mentors & Student Success Team interview the mentors
  - Interview Set-up

- **Selection & Notification**
  - P-Staff involved in selection
  - We over select the number we need
  - No waitlist or alternatives
  - Power in not accepting 100%
Timeline

- Recruitment begins the moment mentees meet their mentors
- November – Official Recruitment Begins
- Early January - Callouts
- Mid January - 8 days to apply & sign up for interviews
- Late January – Mentor Leaders Interview & are selected and notified
- February – Mentors Interview & are selected and notified
- March & April
  - Mentors have 3 evening 3 hour trainings
  - Mentor Leaders have an additional 2 trainings and a summer retreat
Trainings

- Mentors will…
  - Understand the role and responsibility of being a peer mentor
  - Learn important skills to needed to be an effective mentor
  - Understand the University and Program policies & expectations of a peer mentor
  - Begin developing relationships with the other mentors
Mentors & Mentees

Matching Form
- Mentors fill out in April
- Mentees fill out online over the summer or at orientation in June/July

Matching Day
- End of July
- P-Staff take all the info & match
- Excel spreadsheets & a large white board
- Takes us about 6-8 hours
- Results are worth it!
Mentors & Mentees

- **Introductions**
  - Early August – Notifications
  - Mentors expected to contact mentees at least once before mentors return to campus

- **Week Before Classes Begin**
  - Thursday before classes begin
    - Mentor Leaders & Mentors move in early for training
  - Friday before classes begin
    - Fall Kickoff
Goals of the Event

- Get all the incoming cohort of students together for the first-time
- Share important information with all incoming students
- Mentors & Mentees get to know each other and start to build community!

Changed over time due to budgets, number of students, etc
Mentoring & Social Integration

Social Events Then
- First Week Catered Dinner
- Trips to Indianapolis
- Concerts
- Go Carts & Lazer Tag
- Plays & Musicals
- Dinners

Social Events Now
- First Week Ice Cream Social
- Trip to local corn maze
- Game & Craft Nights
- Lazer Tag
- Cookouts
- Movie Nights
- Holiday Parties
- Intramurals

Involvement & Retention have increased!
**Motivation**

- Compensation for our mentors
  - Scholarship recipients so many see this as a way to give back
  - Free T-Shirts
  - Professional Development Opportunities
    - Mentoring Symposium in Indianapolis
    - Nominations to participate in on-campus leadership opportunities
  - Letters of recommendation/references
  - Recognition Opportunities
What Have We Found?
Assessment Methods

Current Methods
- Mentor Meeting Database
- Mini Evaluations
- Social Event Attendance

Future Plans
- End of Semester Satisfaction Surveys
First Year Social Attendance
Fall 2010

Number of Events

Number of Students

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<tr>
<th>Bin</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>223</td>
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First Year Mentor Contact Hours

Approximately 4 hours per student
And 31.5 hours per mentor

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>23,715</td>
<td>395.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>16,545</td>
<td>275.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>13,005</td>
<td>216.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53,265</td>
<td>887.75</td>
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Focus Groups

- Held one at the end of Fall Semester 2010
- Offered free pizza
- About 8 mentors showed

Some findings
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cohort Year</th>
<th>Comparison Groups</th>
<th>Original Cohort</th>
<th>One Year Retention Count</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; to 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Yr Percent Retained</th>
<th>Two Year Retention Count</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; to 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Yr Percent Retained</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>Purdue Promise</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>87.13%</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>82.46%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TfCS not in Purdue Promise</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>82.53%</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>75.90%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All TfCS</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>84.87%</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>79.23%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pell w/TFI &lt; $40k</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>84.13%</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>76.65%</td>
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<td>University Retention Rate</td>
<td>6166</td>
<td>5486</td>
<td>88.97%</td>
<td>5089</td>
<td>82.53%</td>
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2010-2011

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<th>One Year Retention Count</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; to 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Yr Percent Retained</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purdue Promise</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>91.93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TfCS not in Purdue Promise</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>85.38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>All TfCS</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>89.52%</td>
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Assessment Results: Maintaining

- Matching Mentees with Mentors based on interest sheets
- Mentor Leader/Mentor Working Relationship
- Bi-Weekly Meetings
- Trainings
- Mentoring connection to class
Assessment Results: Changes

- Better online tracking contact log
- Added the mentoring one-on-ones
- Trying to increase number of mentors
- May add a mentoring retreat to increase training effectiveness
Applications for other campuses
New programs

- Get buy-in from University for funding
- Look for ways to collaborate
- Potential obstacles? Face them
- Start small with some really energetic and dedicated mentors
- Look for hidden leaders.
- Give the mentors opportunities for ownership – they will make it great!
Programs facing budget restrictions

- Be creative. Is there a more economical way to meet the same objective?
- Can be a great time to refocus program goals. Is this still important to us?
- Look for ways to collaborate with others
- Look for sponsorship opportunities
- If you have reached a tipping point of successful programming, voice your concerns
Wrap-Up

- Program has evolved to meet funding challenges
- We discovered that we can still meet goals with SOME budget reductions
- Creative solutions helped us meet our same objectives
- Through recent program outcomes and promotion of successes, may actually be receiving more funding to continue our program goals.


Questions?
Thank you!

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