From foundations to outcomes: Evaluating the effectiveness of central mentor training in a peer mentoring program in the Griffith School of Environment.

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Session Overview

Our Roles
Mentoring Program and Training
Evaluation results
Facilitated group discussion
First Year Advisor

- Established in 2006 in all UG programs
- Address first year student issues at the local level
- Initiate and oversee activities to support transition
- Griffith School of Environment Peer Mentoring Program
  - 1 mentor (volunteers) to 10 mentees matched by discipline
  - Supported by A Guide to Mentoring and Mentor Handbook
Coordinator, Student Mentoring and Development

- Established in 2009 in response to *Mainstreaming Griffith Mentoring* project
- Centralised program to support and advance mentoring practice at Griffith
- Gathering and sharing resources, online program management database, central mentor training
Central Mentor Training

• Generic training program
• Interactive session
• Collaborative learning approach with group discussion and sharing of knowledge
Evaluation Findings

• Evaluations at time of training very positive
• Indicated satisfaction with training and belief that it had prepared them to undertake mentoring duties
• Focus group and survey evaluations at the conclusion of the program indicated some areas required further development
Most useful aspects of the training

• Definition of the boundaries of the role of the Mentor
• Communication skills
• Cross-cultural awareness and strategies to assist international students
• Referral techniques and information on support services available to students
• Group facilitation, including conducting the first meeting and managing challenging behaviour, for example, dominant group members
Areas for Improvement

• Strategies to maintain engagement and participation of mentees in the program
• Intergenerational interaction, particularly between a younger mentor and older mentee
• Promoting positive behaviours amongst students in the face of potential bullying or harassing behaviour
Finally

• Central mentor training works!
• Evaluation is important
• Collaborative approaches (such as ours) enhance the efficacy of central mentor training
  – Collaborative research such as this matters!
• Need to disseminate our approach and our findings
  – A journal publication
Thank you.

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Instructions for Group discussion

• Break into 3 groups with each group addressing one of the following issues raised by our evaluation: (5-10 min discussion)
  – Strategies to maintain engagement and participation of mentees in the program?
  – Intergenerational interaction, particularly between and younger mentor and older mentee?
  – Promoting positive behaviours amongst students in the face of potential bullying or harassing behaviour?