Mentoring and Persistence of Low-Income First Generation College Students in STEM fields

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Recruit and Retain with Mentoring

- Programs and initiatives promoting recruitment
- Programs promoting retention or persistence

Mentoring is a Key Factor
- Distinguishes students who get interested
- Distinguishes students who stay
A focus on gender, race, class alternative pathways
Different definitions of college

Inspired by peers or faculty in community college setting

Credits do not transfer...need extended window of time

Packard & Babineau (in press); Babineau & Packard (2006)
Community College Pathways

College mentors get students “on track”; information access and quality uneven

College mentors inspire students to continue

Non-college supporters: resources
Workplace Case Studies

- Combining work and school – major challenge
- Tuition reimbursement policies facilitate
- Supervisor and co-worker facilitate
Summary: Key Factors in Persistence

Time and Money = Window

Success in Challenging Courses

Mentoring – In the field and from Home or Work
What do you mean by *Mentoring*?

For what goal?
Mentoring: Two main functions

- Socio-Emotional
  - Encouragement, role modeling, inspiration

- Instrumental
  - Academic, College, Career mentoring
    - Skills or Competencies (expertise-driven)
    - Facilitate with Resources (nonexpertise)

Mentor Roles that increase Instrumental–expertise: Coach, Develop/Challenge, and Sponsor

Higgins & Thomas (2001); Laden (1999); Packard (2004-5)
Multiple Mentors: Advisory Board

- “Chair” of Board: mainly coach, encourage
- Insider or Teammate
  - Essential “Step ahead” or Peer Coaches
- Developer—invests in competencies
  - In field, whether a professor or supervisor
  - Challenge student to do better work
- Sponsor—connections to opportunities (jobs)
- “Sage advice” guide has positive balance or spiritual/energy resources

Packard (2003)
Contexts of Mentoring
You can’t choose your family, but you can choose your mentors.
A Healthy Dose of Entitlement
Mentoring programs emphasize instrumental and strategy
Advising for advisors
College-level academics in vocational programs
Increase relevant work opportunities
Degree designs that facilitates transfer
Governmental aid timeframe and programs

Please visit www.mtholyoke.edu/~bpackard for references or email bpackard@mtholyoke.edu for additional information.