Who Mentors? Student Involvement and Perceptions of Hartford

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Why Mentoring?

• My experience
• Community-university partnerships
  – Long-term community service projects that benefit both the volunteers and the community members
• Contact theory
  – Minimal level of contact needed to break down prejudice and stereotypes between groups
  – Through contact with other groups, individuals get to know one another and, over a series of experiences, generalize these experiences to the group as a whole (Erickson and O’Connor, 2000, p.63)
Past Research

• Al Kandari and Al Shallal (2008)
  – through participation in community service, students become more aware and accepting of other cultures, personal and social values and community issues and also develop leadership skills

• Cruce and Moore (2007) found that students are more likely to mentor if they possess the following characteristics:
  – Female students
  – Traditional aged students
  – Minority students
  – Full time students
  – On campus students
  – Education majors
  – Biology and social science majors
What makes mentoring a high quality community service placement?

- Minimal time commitment
- Familiar environment
- Similar schedule
- Eyler and Giles (1999)
  - Meaningful work and responsibilities
  - Continues for a sustained period of time
  - Work directly with community
Research Questions

• Who mentors?
  – Are certain students more likely to mentor than other students?

• Do students that mentor have a different perspective than students that do not mentor?
Survey

• Online Questionnaire
• Survey for First year students
  – Demographic questions
  – Club and group membership
  – Questions about mentoring
  – Career goals
• Survey for “upperclassmen”
  – Demographic questions
  – Club and group membership
  – Questions about mentoring
  – Career goals
  – Perspective questions
Findings

• 376 Trinity College students
  – 174 first year students
  – 202 “upperclassmen”

• Mentoring programs
  – Rising Stars
  – V.A.M.P
  – Big Brother/Big Sister
  – Connectikids
  – Dream Camp
Female students are significantly more likely to be involved in mentoring \((p<.001)\).

Figure 2. Distribution of male and female students in Mentor and Non-Mentor groups.
Students that lived in a neighborhood with a higher number of non-white residents were more likely to be involved in mentoring (p<.05).

Figure 3. Distribution of Neighborhood Race/Ethnicity for Mentors and Non-Mentors
Career Goals

• Students that hoped to pursue a career in the non-profit sector were significantly more likely to be involved in mentoring (p<.01).
• Students that hoped to pursue a career in the social services were significantly more likely to be involved in mentoring (p<.05).
Time Involved in a mentoring program

![Bar chart showing time involved in mentoring programs.]

- One Semester or less: 25
- More than one semester but less than one year: 35
- 1-2 years: 25
- 2-3 years: 5
- 3-4 years: 5
- Other: 0
Why and how do students get involved in mentoring?
How important is this to you?
Mentors are more likely to participate in community service as a part of a class than students that do not mentor (p<.05).
Mentors are more likely to go to dinner in Hartford than students that do not mentor (p<.05).
Students that mentor are significantly less likely to consider living in Hartford than students that do not mentor (p<.05).
Percentage of mentors involved in each mentoring program

- Rising Stars: 45.1%
- VAMP: 17.7%
- Big Brother/Big Sister: 30.1%
- Dream Camp: 3.5%
- Other Mentoring Program: 3.5%
- Connectikids: 19.5%
Limitations

• Perception is difficult to measure
  – Differences between feelings about the city and feelings about the residents

• The “learning corridor” and the proximity of most mentoring programs to Trinity’s campus
  – All programs except Big Brother/Big Sister are held on campus (or at the learning corridor)
Where are these programs located?

• Rising Stars
  – Held at Hartford Magnet Middle School
• V.A.M.P
  – Held at Hartford Magnet Middle School
• Big Brother/Big Sister
  – Held at elementary schools in Hartford
• Dream Camp
  – Held at Trinity Ice Rink
• Connectikids
  – Students from M.D. Fox elementary
References


