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Don't Count Me Out! The Impact of Mentoring on the Persistence of African-American Male Students at Predominately White Institutions (PWI)

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Consultancy Project Executive Summary

Organization: Gardner-Webb University School of Education

Project Title: Don't Count Me Out! The Impact of Mentoring on the Persistence of African-American Male Students at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs).

Candidate: Darryl E. Hylton, Jr.

Consultancy Coach: Lisa Wachtman

Defense Date: June 12, 2019

Authorized by: Jeff Hamilton, Ed.D.

Amendment History

<u>Version</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
#1	May 7, 2019	Initial version.
#2	May 16, 2019	Second version.
#3	May 30, 2019	Revisions for Editor

Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Darryl E. Hylton, Jr. under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

Jeff Hamilton, Ed.D., Faculty Advisor
Gardner-Webb University

Date

Lisa Wachtman, Site Advisor
Director of Student Persistence

Date

Acknowledgements

“When my time on earth is finished, I want my legacy to be one that provided others the space to create their own.”—Darryl Hylton, Jr.

I would like to start off by saying this doctoral journey has been a humbling yet rewarding experience. It was a true test of patience, resilience and grit. My passion for education serves as a catalyst for me to remain a servant leader in my approach to helping others succeed. As such, I would like to dedicate this research consultancy project to Blake Aspen Bunch, Vernon Tayvon Swanson, Jr., Tai Warfield, and Ra’Shad Frazier. Let this project serve as a reminder for each of you are enough and are deserving of all the great things this world has to offer. Never let anyone diminish your value, your story, or your life.

As my educational journey comes to an end there are a few individuals I would like to acknowledge who have provided support to me in a variety of ways. First and foremost, a special acknowledgment and thank you to my father and grandmother, Darryl Hylton, Sr. and Shirley Hylton. Thank you for sticking by my side throughout my educational journey. From the time I declared my passion for education until now, you have supported me and for that I am eternally grateful. To my best friends: D’Andre Manns, Derron McDuffie, and Carnell Williams, thank you for your constant encouragement, accountability, and friendship throughout this journey. To the members of my cohort: Jacqueline Brown, Michael Chapman, Sheldon Gathers, Terence McCrimmon, Katie Munger, Sheila Persons-Scott, Lisa Thompson, and Tracey Thurnes. Your support throughout my development in this program is very much appreciated. I am a better person and leader because of you. To my faculty advisor, Dr. Jefferey Hamilton,

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Lastly, I would like to extend a special thank you to the following persons for their contributions, love, and support throughout my educational journey: My Educational Role Models (Elizabeth Furns, Dr. June Montgomery, Eleanor Peck, Stephanie Price, Dr. Leon Rouson, Vincent Tucker, Dr. Sterling White, and Antwan Wilson); My family and friends (Jonathan Bowser, Malcolm Bunch, Brian Cousin, Gregory Dendy, D'Andra Drewitt, Antonia Elam, Jamie Enge, Taya Gaskins-Scott, Jay'len Hollis, Dr. DeAndre Howard, Taneshia Moore, Ms. Velma Naylor, Pairrys Ransom, Vernon Swanson, and the T.O.W.E.R.S Step Team at Norfolk State University); and all my students at the various educational institutions I served. Because of them, I am a better leader, teacher, mentor, advocate, and person. I am truly grateful. It is
FinishEd.D.

Abstract

Don't Count Me Out! The Impact of Mentoring on the Persistence of African-American Male Students at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs). Hylton Jr., Darryl E., 2019, Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University: Digital Commons/Mentoring/Male Students of Color/Predominately White Institutions (PWIs)/Persistence/African-American Male/Retention

Over the years, more opportunities have been provided to individuals of all ages due to more and easier access to higher education; however, despite these opportunities, major barriers still exist that impact the success of a specific demographic—African-American males. While students of color had the greatest growth in postsecondary enrollment in 4 decades (Fry, 2010), research indicates a deficit trend of undergraduate males of color who fail to graduate once enrolled in colleges and universities (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). To address this issue, institutions of higher learning have implemented programs, initiatives, and other strategies in an attempt to help these students persist to graduation.

Liberal Arts University, an enrollment-driven, small, private, liberal arts institution located in North Carolina has seen firsthand the impact of the low retention and persistence rates of male students of color—more specifically, African-American males. Institutional data reinforce this issue. This consultancy project was designed to spearhead an opportunity to address the retention and persistence of the African-American male population at the University through the development of a mentoring program. The goals, objectives, and various strategies for effective implementation will be the focal point of this executive summary.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Project Purpose.....	1
1.2	Associated Documents.....	1
1.3	Project Plan Maintenance	1
2	Project Scope.....	3
2.1	Outline of Partnering Organization’s Objectives	3
2.1.1	Objectives.....	3
2.1.2	Success Criteria	3
2.1.3	Risks.....	3
2.2	Outline of Student’s Objectives	3
2.2.1	Objectives.....	3
2.2.2	Success Criteria	4
2.2.3	Risks.....	4
2.3	Definitive Scope Statement.....	4
3	Deliverables	5
3.1	To Partnering Organization.....	5
3.2	From Student.....	5
4	Project Approach.....	6
4.1	Project Lifecycle Processes.....	6
4.2	Project Management Processes	6
4.3	Project Support Processes	7
4.4	Organization.....	7
4.4.1	Project Team.....	7
4.4.2	Mapping Between Liberal Arts University and Student.....	7
5	Communications Plan.....	8
6	Work Plan	9
6.1	Work Breakdown Structure	9
6.2	Resources	9
7	Milestones	10
8	Metrics and Results	11
9	Risks, Constraints, Assumptions.....	17
9.1	Risks	17
9.2	Constraints	18
9.3	Assumptions.....	19
10	Financial Plan.....	20
11	Quality Assurance Plan	21
	References	23
	Appendix	24

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

Liberal Arts University is a private, 4-year liberal arts institution located in the mountains of western North Carolina. Founded in 1856 by Baptist families of the region, it is the oldest institution of higher learning in western North Carolina on its original site. Despite its roots of origin, the university manages to admit a significant amount of diverse students. Liberal Arts University is recognized among its peer institutions within the Appalachian College Association as one of the most diverse campuses within the association.

As a predominately White institution (PWI), Liberal Arts University is one of many universities that struggles with undergraduate African-American males persisting towards graduation. Many of these students are classified as first generation; low socioeconomic status; and/or in many cases, underprepared for the rigors of collegiate life. Anonymous (personal communication, 2016) described how negative experiences in the classroom impact a student's ability to connect with the institution. Unfortunately, these experiences eventually result in students transferring, dropping out, and/or failing out of their first year of college.

To address this significant challenge, this consultancy project worked in collaboration with the Center for Student Success at Liberal Arts University to develop a foundational mentoring program framework to provide supplemental (and even primary) support for African-American male students matriculating at the university.

Terminology and Definitions

- **Predominately White Institution (PWI).** An institution of higher learning/education in which the majority of the student population demographic served is of the Caucasian or White race.
- **African-American male.** An individual who identifies as both male and of the African-American decent/ethnicity.
- **Persistence.** The continuous matriculation of students towards the completion of their degree.
- **Retention.** The ability to keep students enrolled at the institution.

1.2 Associated Documents

- See Appendix: Program Strategy & Outcomes

1.3 Project Plan Maintenance

From its inception, the project has been regularly discussed with the appropriate university stakeholders. As feedback was provided by these constituents, the doctoral student made appropriate adjustments as needed. Additionally, each phase/milestone of the consultancy project was reviewed and evaluated by the

Gardner-Webb University DEOL faculty advisor Dr. Jeffery Hamilton to ensure satisfactory progress towards project completion was being made.

2 Project Scope

This section provides an overview of the project's objectives, both from the partnering organization's perspective and from the student's perspective. The key success criteria and major risks are highlighted.

2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives

2.1.1 Objectives

- Provided curricular and co-curricular initiatives that support the growth and development of African-American males.
- Increased retention and persistence rates of African-American males by a minimum of 10% over the next 4 years.
- Increased graduation rates of African-American males by a minimum of 10% over the next 4 years.
- An overall increased institution commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

2.1.2 Success Criteria

The success of the objectives identified above by Liberal Arts University was a comprehensive continuous process. In collaboration with the office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, the program coordinator (or designee) collected data on the mentoring program to be analyzed, synthesized, and reported within the timeframe established by the institution.

2.1.3 Risks

The high risks associated with this project execution and/or effectiveness were the access to appropriate monies to fund the program, lack of faculty/staff support, and the untimely transition of key stakeholder supporters. Medium risks included student participants in the program show little to no growth in their academic success. To address these major risks of the program, the key stakeholders discussed opportunities to be cost effective while strategically researching funding sources (grants, etc.) to support the initiative. Additionally, the doctoral student consultant worked on developing several meaningful relationships to gain more faculty/staff supporters.

2.2 Outline of Student's Objectives

2.2.1 Objectives

Goal 1: Assist the university in increasing the retention and persistence percentage rate of African-American male students.

Objective 1: The doctoral student collaborated with various university constituents to discuss effective and efficient solutions for continuous strategic program development and implementation.

Goal 2: Expose Liberal Arts University and surrounding community to the needs, trends, and experiences affecting male students of color through the collaborative development of solutions.

Objective 2: Participants in the program coordinated a mini-research symposium conference addressing the various needs, issues, and experiences affecting male students of color.

Goal 3: Support and challenge male students of color participants to achieve academic excellence through leadership and career development opportunities.

Objective 3: The doctoral student designed a curricular framework for the mentoring program.

2.2.2 Success Criteria

The success of this project is determined by the development and implementation of the identified objectives.

2.2.3 Risks

Despite institutional research on the trends, issues, and needs of the African-American male population, the major risk associated with the abovementioned goals and objective mostly lies within the lack of adequate funding to support full program implementation.

2.3 Definitive Scope Statement

The scope of work for this mentoring program included all planning, implementation, and data analysis to assist and support male students of color matriculating at Liberal Arts University. With this implementation of this program, it is expected that the success of African-American male students will increase over the next 4 years. With leadership development and advocacy as a primary focus, the consultant worked primarily with the Center for Student Success to assist and provide supplemental support and perspective.

3 Deliverables

3.1 To Partnering Organization

Below lists the formal deliverables and the projected/estimated due dates.

Phase I

Finalize itemized budget	October 2017
Develop program curriculum	November 2017
Develop a team/committee of faculty/staff and students	November 2017
Develop an assessment plan	November/December 2017
Develop presentation for university administrators	December 2017
Develop sample program materials	December 2017

Phase II

Propose program to University administrators	January 2018
Request funds for program	January 2018
Identify prospective students for program	March-May 2018

Phase III

Implement program	August 2018-May 2019
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Phase IV

Assess student progress and program success	December 2018/May 2019
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3.2 From Student

There are no additional deliverables to be provided by the student.

4 Project Approach

4.1 Project Lifecycle Processes

The foundation of this project was rooted in the consultant's personal interest in the topic. As an educator on all levels by profession, the doctoral student has seen the opportunities to positively impact male students of color. While there are many challenges that impact the retention and persistence of all students at Liberal Arts University, institution data showed the most critical demographic was the African-American male. As a result, the consultant wanted to focus the efforts of this project on identifying any root causes and effective solutions to solve those problems. This project was split into four major phases with strategic emphasis on incorporating all key players at the institution at the "right time." Throughout the project's development, there have been various partners who have joined and/or separated themselves from the project; however, there are some staff members who have been consistent throughout this project's development.

4.2 Project Management Processes

Project	Constituents	Objectives	Deliverables
Phase I	Consultant, University Site Advisor, Faculty/Staff supporters	1. Identify members of the faculty/staff committed to this type of initiative. 2. Identify major key points for curriculum development.	1. Developed a team of faculty/staff members. 2. Developed a foundational curriculum and assessment plan for the mentoring program.
Phase II	Consultant, University Administrators, Undergraduate Students	1. Design formal presentation for university administrator approval. 2. Identify student participants for mentoring program.	1. Presented presentation to university administrators. 2. Selected initial cohort for mentoring program.
Phase III	Consultants, Students, Faculty/Staff supporters	1. Implement the first year of the mentoring program.	1. Implemented the mentoring program.

Phase IV	Consultant, University Site Advisor, Faculty/Staff supporters, University Administrators	1. Analyze the data yielded from the first cohort of students in the mentoring program.	1. Analyzed the mentoring program. 2. Made recommendations for future implementation.
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4.3 Project Support Processes

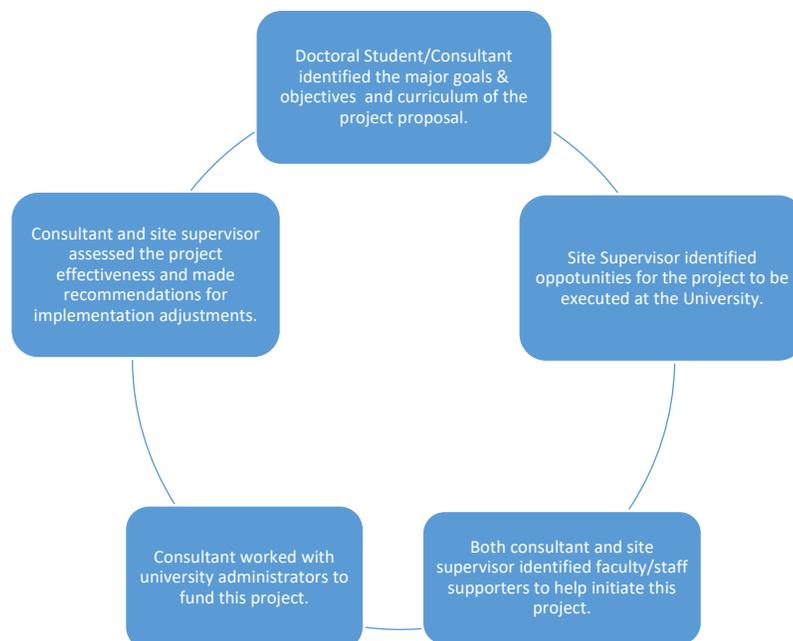
Throughout the duration of this program development and implementation, the consultant worked closely with the various key partners to ensure that all phases of this project were completed effectively and efficiently. Additionally, the consultants worked closely with the site supervisor to identify potential challenges and worked to develop strategies to prevent these challenges from coming to fruition.

4.4 Organization

4.4.1 Project Team

For the purposes of this project, there was no formal organizational structure; however, there were some key individuals whom the consultant heavily relied on to execute the project. The site supervisor as well and some faculty/staff partners were always updated on the project's progression and were often asked for feedback to enhance its various stages.

4.4.2 Mapping Between Liberal Arts University and Student



5 Communications Plan

Who - stakeholder	What info do they need	Why do they need it	When will they get it	How will they get it
Site Supervisor	Frequent updates on program progression	To understand what they are sponsoring	Throughout the duration of the entire consultancy project.	Via email with attached/updated milestones.
University Administrators	Purpose of the mentoring program	To understand the programs purpose and importance	After the major components of the project (budget, quality assurance, benefits, etc.) have been developed and approved by site supervisor.	Via email in addition to a face-to-face meeting.
	Benefits and Risks associated with program implementation	To gain a better understanding of the benefits and risks associated with program implementation.	When first draft of planning process is completed.	Via email upon the completion of the benefits and risks assessment.
	Anticipated Budget	To provide an overview of the financial costs associated with program implementation	Simultaneously with the submission of the benefits and risks assessment.	Via email in addition to a face-to-face meeting to discuss any concerns or adjustments, as needed.
	Quality Assurance Measures	To ensure that there is a return on investment from the program.	Continuous	Via email and/or in person, as needed.
Student Participants (and their families)	Purpose of the mentoring program	To determine if they would like to opt into the program	If the program is approved, students (and their families) will receive information during the summer orientation experience.	In person throughout the duration of the summer orientation.

6 Work Plan

6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

1. Assist the university in increasing the retention and persistence percentage rate of African-American male students.
 - a. To achieve this goal, the doctoral student collaborated with various university constituents and discussed effective and efficient solutions for strategic program development and implementation.

2. Expose Liberal Arts University and surrounding community to the needs, trends, and experiences affecting male students of color through the collaborative development of solutions.
 - a. To achieve this goal, the doctoral student worked with student participants and other constituents in the program to coordinate a mini-research symposium conference addressing the various needs, issues, and experiences affecting male students of color.

3. Support and challenge male students of color participants to achieve academic excellence through leadership, engagement, and personal/professional developmental opportunities.
 - a. To achieve this goal, the doctoral student designed a framework for the mentoring program.

6.2 Resources

- See Appendix: Activities & Timeline for mentoring program

7 Milestones

Milestone Number	Title	Forecast date
1	Develop introduction, background, and project purpose	25-Nov-16
2	Develop SMART goals/objectives Develop list of deliverables/expected outcomes	06-May-17
3	Develop scope of the project	06-May-17
4	Summary of business benefits	19-Jul-17
5	Develop risk assessment and mitigation plan	06-Dec-17
6	Develop summary of key assumptions and constraints	1-May-18
7	Develop communications plan	1-Aug-18
8	Develop financial budget	1-Aug-18
9	Develop quality assurance plan	30-Nov-18
10	Overall performance and reflections	21-Apr-19
11	Executive summary	21-Apr-19

8 Metrics and Results

While using a mixed method approach to collect data for this project, the qualitative data (interviews) were used to determine the need(s) from a student perspective to provide the doctoral student with appropriate direction as the mentoring program was developing. The doctoral student interviewed four students (one student from each classification; i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) who identified as both African-American and male for the purposes of this project. Note: To protect the identity of the students, pseudonyms were used for identification. Additionally, students were not required to answer all questions. At any time, students could opt out of responding to a question. Below are the interview questions with the responses from African-American students attending Liberal Arts University.

1. How has your overall experience as a male student of color been on campus?

Kirk (Freshman): *Definitely different. I feel that I walk places and get looks like people haven't seen Black people before. There have been different opportunities and different events but they are geared toward the White students on campus versus Black males. It's also underrepresentation in student-led organizations.*

Cash (Sophomore): *Descent, it hasn't been good but it's not that bad. It's different what I'm used to. It's a different environment than where I'm from. People act different. It's a lot of different cultures. People from different countries. This is the first time I've been to a school that's not overly hype about sports. It doesn't feel like sports are a big part of the school.*

Marcus (Junior): *My overall experience, I feel as an African-American student, I had to learn to adapt being at a PWI. I would say it forced me to come out of a shell of just being around my Black culture; therefore, when I first got here, I felt like I didn't fit in and I didn't want to be here. Over the years of coming out of my shell, I've learned that everybody's not out to get you or disrespect you. But my experience started at a 4/5 out of 10 and I can say I'm not quite at a 10 yet but I feel like I'm at 10 with knowing and interacting with students on this campus.*

Travis (Senior): *I mean, at Liberal Arts University you just adapt. Me being Black and this is a PWI, when I first came here, I felt uncomfortable because there isn't many Black students here so I was around a bunch of White folks and until I made friends. I was real uncomfortable. But once you start to talk and going to events and interact with other folk of color you get to see it's not as bad. Some of them are pretty cool but you still run into a few that will give you a cold shoulder even though you're not looking to be best friends you just want someone to say hey to and keep it pushing but they still give you cold shoulder. As the years go by you start hanging around more people that you're with in your class. This being a PWI you with a bunch of White folk in class so you have to talk and communicate because of class and group projects and once you get into a 4-year relationship now your "buddy buddy." You also know more people at events.*

When I first got here I didn't like here but since I've been here for a while I'm starting to like it. When I started off it was like a 3 and now it's a 9 because of all the friends I've grown to have.

2. Is it important for you to have role models/mentors on campus who look like you? Why or why not?

Kirk: *If you're a mentor/role model you have a leadership position on campus. So, if you look like me, there's already a stereotype of you on campus. So, if you're in a leadership position and you look like me it goes against the stereotype. If you can do it, it's obvious that I can do the same thing based upon appearance.*

Cash: *Yes. Because I feel like they can relate more to the things I relate to on a White campus because they are in a work place with White workers. They've been through the same things I been through in college as a Black male.*

Marcus: *I feel yes because you already here being a minority and me coming in being a minority you already build that relationship because a minority only wants the best interest for the other minority. You can relate to the things I go thru and seen, etc. but overall it really doesn't matter, Black or White, as long as you have the best interest for the person mentoring.*

Travis: *Yes, big yes. Because I feel like you haven't been thru what I've been thru if you don't resemble my skin tone. I feel like White folks already have an upper hand advantage on us. And everybody been thru stuff, but I feel like it doesn't match up with what us Black folks been thru and still going thru. Once I have a mentor that is my skin tone, I will open up more. For example, if I experience racism I can't talk to a White person about that. Nine times out of 10 another Black person has been thru what I've been thru. It's more being able to relate; I have to trust them.*

3. From a mentoring standpoint, what are some things/experiences you wish you would've had here on campus?

Kirk: *I couldn't tell you when the last time I seen a Black teacher on campus. None of my teachers have been Black. I also think it's important to teach us how to be a college student and how to maintain sports and social life. Plus, I feel we should learn more about leadership opportunities within Liberal Arts University and beyond that helping with things that go beyond college. Helping me prepare for the real work like getting jobs, having a family, how to be a man on your own.*

Cash: *Things/events I can relate to. Different choices in the cafe that Black people are use to eating. When they do events in the cafe and the different kind of music they play. How to get thru the daily "life stuff." How to get through*

situations with your White counterparts without getting angry. How to handle different situations in college. Time management. Different steps to take to plan out day (i.e., when to do homework). Overall, figuring out how to get ahead.

Marcus: *I wouldn't want anyone to hold my hand during my FYE but I wish someone would've been here to help me adjust to college as in let me know the time I consume doing my work. I wish someone would've helped me managing my time for academics, sports, managing my free time. Procrastination is a big factor. That's my personal experience, I wish someone would've helped me adjust to the college lifestyle. Anything else I would say I wish I had a mentor to keep it real with me the whole way thru because you can get in this thing and a lot of things you see is fabricated so I wish I had a mentor to keep me up on everything and give me the true life of college. What works and what doesn't work but that's the only experience I wish I would've had.*

Travis: *Study sessions, more touching on athletes to focus on grades instead of on the field because if you don't make it on the field, if you can't do it in class, you won't be able to do it on the field. They always want you to have the bare minimum just so you can play. I've been a part of that because they tell me to get to a 2.0. They don't help me make dean's list. Once I get to a certain GPA, everything cuts off. That's how you fall down and have to do it all over again. From a mentor, focus on the academic part of school versus everything else gonna be there. Once you get to a certain point everything else will come after. I wish it would focus on grades because that's what messed a lot of people up, including myself. We were focused on stuff for school and not ourselves.*

4. What value do you think a mentoring program would have on male students of color at Liberal Arts University?

Kirk: *It would be an outlet for Black students to be able to talk to. It can be a means to bring other Black males into the school besides sports and a means to keep Black males here. They come and leave because it's nothing for them to do and no one for them to talk to.*

Cash: *They would have someone to talk to and relate to on campus. The majority of Black males are athletes. They will have someone to talk to outside of athletics. It will help you manage time and get your stuff together.*

Marcus: *Value? I feel like, it will wake a lot of students up to the actual life of students at college. It's a minority—someone that you can relate to. They can teach you. I feel it would be a great value because they can relate to you and that's somebody that doesn't have to be connected to you but they still chose to help. It can keep students from going home to graduating.*

Travis: *It will benefit the Black male students more because they'll have someone teach you the ins and outs of the college lifestyle. They'll give you the upper hand so you don't fall off you can stay one step ahead of the game. They'll give you the game of the school what to do what not to do how to do it easier. It's always good to have someone who's been thru it to mentor you because its like they give you first hand look at everything they know what you been thru what you about to go thru. The process will be easier for you once you come in. We won't leave the school. I've been here for a minute and the people I came here with are all gone expect a handful of people because no one was here for them. If there was someone here for them they may have stayed. There was no one here to teach them the process of things and to have a better connection with the school. It would be better for Black male students if we had Black male mentors.*

5. How do you think having mentors/staff of color on campus will impact/influence your personal experience as a student at Liberal Arts University?

Kirk: *Isn't Black Student Association on campus? But that hasn't changed my experience, the difference is BSA is an organization vs. faculty/staff. Faculty/staff are definitely people you can talk to in time of need. People that you can relate to outside of school and academics.*

Cash: *You would have someone to go to between class if your stressed if you need help to get organized. We need someone to talk who is going to understand what you're saying understand situations understand reactions what you need help with and how to help you with the situation.*

Marcus: *It would liven up more, the culture at Liberal Arts University, it will make you want to do more. We would be more involved with events hosted by African-Americans on campus. I feel like a lot of anger and things built up will take away because they will have someone to talk to. I wish there was someone that used to be here that I could talk to when I was in a bind.*

Travis: *You'll want to do more. You'll want to be more involved in activities that the school is hosting just because it's someone of your race having the event so you know you won't feel like an outsider because coming to a PWI, if it's not your race throwing a party, you won't feel you can connect to it. To me, it's about feeling like I'm welcomed and a part of something. If I don't feel a part or welcomed, I won't attend but if I had a Black mentor hosting or having an event, I'm all for it because I feel welcomed there. I want to be there. It may not even pertain for me, it may be an event for women but I can be there because it's a Black person throwing an event so I will go because it can tie into something I've gone/will go thru.*

6. If a program like this were to be implemented, what are your expectations?

Kirk: *If I need help with something, I expect to leave with a resolution that will help change the situation. If I have homework, I want help. I would also like events on campus I can relate to. Oh, and things/initiatives I can put my time into to better the community and myself at the same time.*

Cash: *Someone who is a leader on campus who can help me develop my leadership skills. Possibly help me to become a mentor. Have a relationship someone I can look up to and go to once opus when things aren't going your way. Someone to talk to about your experiences at the school. Different aspects of the college life since they have already been thru college. Set times to meet, talking face to face getting together to get to know each other.*

Marcus: *The mentors of the program? To be honest, I mean leaders, just someone that a minority or student of color wouldn't be scared to approach or talk to. I would expect to change the campus, but the benefits can provide support for students other than just Black students. I would expect backlash to come just because it's a minority group and people look at that as a threat.*

Travis: *To be honest, I wouldn't expect nothing but good things to happen because this is what everybody, well I don't want to say this what "everybody" wants, but just things that are here for us would make coming here that much better because we have someone here for us. I would also say trustworthy, active around campus—I want to see them at events, in the cafe talking to us, at athletic events so I can feel like they are a part of the school and be there regardless. I just don't expect a lot because I never had much but I just expect someone to be there. You don't got to answer your phone at 4am but once you get my call you'll get back to me when you can. I just know it's going to cause a backlash but once you get a group of minorities together, people gonna take it as a threat like we're trying to overrule campus. I'm not trying to turn it into a HBCU but create a place to feel at home because we have somewhere to go. That's what it's about, you want to feel at home away from your original home. Having that group it will change views of people coming to Liberal Arts Univeristy.*

Analysis

The information gathered through the interview with the students was very insightful. It not only provided reinforcement to the institutional data but provided a foundation to develop a framework to address the needs. As mentioned in sections 2 and 3, the goals and objectives of the mentoring program are centered around collaboration (with the university), exposure (of the trends, issues, and needs), and support (of the African-American male student).

First, with the new administration leading the institution, they recognized the urgency to find high impactful ways to increase the persistence and graduation rate among all

students but specifically the African-American males. As a result, the administrators declared a “war on graduation.” With this declaration, the doctoral student was able to collaborate and strategize with administrators ways to address this issue.

Simultaneously, the doctoral student worked to gather information to present to various campus constituents to bring awareness of the low African-American male graduation rates. It is the intention of the doctoral student, as the mentor program develops over the years, to continue presenting on the needs, issues, and experiences that affect male students of color. Additionally, it is the intention of the doctoral student to incorporate student presentations on their personal experiences.

Last, the abovementioned survey responses served as a strong foundational platform that guided the developmental framework for the mentoring program (see Appendix). One effective way to begin addressing the needs to truly challenge and support the African-American male is to listen to their concerns. By doing so, the focus of the curriculum remains student centered which should yield an increase in the persistence and graduation rates.

9 Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

9.1 Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Plan (what to do to avoid or lessen the risk occurring)	Contingency Plan (what to do if the risk occurs)	Impact (what the impact will be to the project if the risk occurs)	Likelihood of occurrence (e.g., %, or high/medium/low)
Key Stakeholders leave Liberal Arts University	The University should be committed (in writing) about the commitment to the progression of the program to ensure the program's continuance even in times of transition.	This begins with having check-in meetings with the consulting team and University stakeholders. This is a proactive measure to prevent the deferment of program progression.	High	Unlikely
Program funding request is not approved	The organizers of the program initiative should work with the office of institutional research to find outsourced funding sources to alleviate solely relying on institutional funding.	In the event there is a loss of funding, the program organizers will scale the program down in multiple ways to show the versatility of the program. For example, with each dollar amount (5k, 10k, 18k, etc.) the program organizers will identify how much of the program can be completed. As a result, it is anticipated that there will be	High	Very Likely

		institutional “buy-in.”		
Students show no improvement in academic success	Although you cannot make a student successful, the organizers of the initiative need to make sure there are structures in place to provide students with opportunities to become successful.	Developers should collaborate with support offices (i.e. Math Center, Writing Center, Student Support Services, etc.) to identify resources that will assist in students’ academic success.	Medium	Likely
Enrollment declines at Liberal Arts University	Organizers should work with the office of admissions to review and/or revise the admissions process for students of color brainstorming ideas on how to increase then sustain enrollment.		Low	Unlikely
Lack of strategic direction after first year of implementation	As the program is continuously developing, the organizers should develop additional yearly milestones as a way to stay on track with subsequent years of program implementation.		Medium	Unlikely

9.2 Constraints

1. Although this initiative is primarily a retention issue, considering the population, there are direct lines to diversity; however, there are minor challenges in developing a collaborative relationship with the Director of Diversity.
2. Based on the University's current "track record," the institution may not be as invested in the program as the researcher assumes.
3. Although the institutional research (displayed throughout this project) shows the significance and relevance of this program, there are not adequate funds (as of now) to support its full implementation.

9.3 Assumptions

1. As a result of this program, the researcher assumes the persistence rate of male students of color will increase.
2. As a result of retaining this demographic of students, the researcher assumes the institution will have an increase of money for institutional operational and/or capital budget.
3. The researcher assumes that the institution fully supports the initiative.
4. The researcher assumes that funding resources needed to effectively implement this program may be an issue by the institution.
5. The researcher assumes that male students of color will have a better overall experience at the university.

10 Financial Plan

The current budget is based on a 2-year plan. After the completion of the first 2 years, doctoral student Darryl Hylton will review and assess the needs of the program and make necessary adjustments to the program's budget for the following 2 years.

Description	Budget Amount (Based on 20 students)		Budget Total
	Year One	Year Two	2-Year Total
Professional Staff Annual Stipend (2 people)	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$40,000.00
Salary Totals	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$40,000.00
Program Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
Outside Services	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
Postage	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$200.00
Training Supplies	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
Printing & Publication	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
Travel	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$17,000.00
Meals	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00
Emergency Fund Students	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
Program Subtotals	\$19,600.00	\$19,600.00	\$39,200.00
Totals	\$39,600.00	\$39,600.00	\$79,200.00

11 Quality Assurance Plan

As a means of determining the program's overall effectiveness and efficiency, a quality assurance plan was developed as an accountability measure. This project is focused on delivering a quality service for Liberal Arts University—mentoring. For the purposes of this project, the most effective model to use to ensure quality assurance is the Plan-Do-Study-Act model.

Study—Part 1

First, to effectively assess the need, the doctoral student conducted research on the trends and issues at Liberal Arts University. As previously mentioned, the significant challenge facing Liberal Arts University retention is the retention and persistence of African-American male students of color. Findings in institution research (similar to national research data) suggest that while students of color have growth in postsecondary enrollment, there is still a deficit trend in degree completion (Fry, 2010). With that information, the doctoral student determined it would be beneficial to outline a foundational retention program framework for male students of color attending Liberal Arts University addressing the following research questions:

1. What is the impact/value a mentoring program would have on male students of color at Liberal Arts University?
2. How does having mentors and/or faculty/staff of color impact the academic experiences of male students of color at Liberal Arts University?
3. How does having mentors and/or faculty/staff of color impact the personal experiences of male students of color at Liberal Arts University?

Act—Part 1

To assess the specific needs as they relate to the abovementioned research questions, the doctoral student determined it was in the best interest of the program development to survey students who identified as both African-American and male to not only capture their current experience but to gain their insight on what they believe the benefits are from having this program implemented on campus. Additional research questions asked to support the project are as follows:

1. How has your overall experience as a male student of color been on campus?
2. From a mentoring standpoint, what are some things/experiences you wish you would've had here on campus?
3. Is it important for you to have role models/mentors on campus who look like you? Why or why not?
4. If a program like this were to be implemented, what are your expectations?

Plan

After gathering and synthesizing all relevant information, the doctoral student determined the following next steps as a priority.

Program/Curriculum Development:

- Develop curriculum for the mentoring program
- Identify intentional enrichment activities to enhance participating students' experiences
- Collaborate with Liberal Arts University departments to ensure reservation of time and space as needed (i.e., housing, meals, classrooms, etc.)

Committee Development:

- Create a team/committee of faculty, staff, and students to engage in ideas around program development
- Create ad-hoc committees, as needed, to work on specific tasks for the program (i.e., meals, enrichment activities, course development, etc.)

Do (Implementation)

After planning, the next phase will be to implement the program. There are multiple phases of implementation. The phases are as follows:

- identify funding resources to supplement cost of program,
- propose program to University administrators,
- apply for grant money,
- collaborate with admissions department to inform students of program,
- train faculty, staff, and students working for the program, and
- implement mentoring program.

Study—Part II (and subsequent “Study” sections)

After the program has been implemented, the second (and subsequent “study” sections) will be the assessment phase of the PDSA model. The approach of assessing this program is as follows:

- track student success progress throughout 2018-2019 academic school year, and
- use mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) to assess program effectiveness and efficiency.

Act—Part II (and subsequent “Act” sections)

After assessing program effectiveness, the doctoral student, along with other institutional constituents, will compare the assessment data to the research data as well as the goals, objectives, and outcomes identified in the preliminary stages of program development. Together, we will analyze whether or not the students participating in the program are meeting the goal and objectives established. Based on the information yielded from the analysis, appropriate recommendations will be made for future planning and implementation of the program (subsequent “Plan” section(s) of PDSA).

References

- Carnevale, A., & Strohl, J. (2013). Separate and unequal: How higher education reinforces the intergenerational reproduction of white racial privilege. *Georgetown Public Policy Institute*.
- Fry, R. (2010). *Minorities and the recession-era college enrollment boom*. Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center.

Appendix

Program Strategy & Outcomes

In order to effectively serve the male students of color in this program, a very explicit and strategic plan has been created. This strategic plan outlines multiple strategies and approaches using a student-centered hands on approach coupled with the integration of Scholssberg's Transition Theory, Astin's Involvement Theory, and Black Identity Development. As mentioned in milestone 4, if this program is effective, the predicted outcomes and major impacts for the university are as follows:

1. Increased enrollment for the institution
2. Increased student persistence
3. Increase of money for institutional operational and/or capital budget

Additionally, the following predicted outcomes and major impacts for student participants based on the major themes are as follows:

1. **Academics:** Apply knowledge, skills, and behaviors of successful college students.
2. **Engagement:** Engage in various experiences that promote leadership development.
3. **Personal/Professional:** Challenge the status quo's perspective of male students of color by increasing self-awareness and self-efficacy.

Activities & Timeline

To accomplish the strategy and outcomes, this program has intentional curriculum with various milestones (based on the thematic goals) designed to meet students where they are while simultaneously preparing them to persist at the university. In addition, periodically, the entire group will come together to discuss various topics, issues, etc. affecting black maleness and its impact on student persistence. All milestones will be achieved by the end of the program.

Thematic Milestones:

Academic	Engagement	Personal/Professional
1. Goal Setting 2. Effective Study Habits 3. Navigating Self-Service 4. Learning Styles 5. Staying on track to graduate	1. How to get involved on campus/Understanding Limits 2. Understanding Campus Resources 3. Exploring/Meeting New People/ Networking 4. Reciprocating Leadership/ Mentoring Underclassmen	1. Leadership Identity 2. Financial Literacy 3. Creating/Maintaining Relationships 4. Career Development/ Preparing for life after graduation

Note: Milestones are subject to change based on development of program.

Whole Group Activities

Some example of whole group activities includes:

1. Leadership workshops/conferences
2. Young Men's Book Club
3. Vision Board Party
4. Various recreation tournaments (basketball, flag football, bowling, etc.)
5. Barbershop Talks (intellectual group conversations)

Responsibilities

The responsible parties needed to help run and maintain the program are as follows:

1. Mentors: There will be four (4) mentors who will work with one grade classification making sure that all milestones are achieved by the end of the year.
 - a. Mentors will meet weekly with students one-on-one.
 - b. Mentors will meet bi-weekly with their grade level cohort to work through the cohort milestones.
 - c. Mentors will collaborate to facilitate the once a month whole group session for all grade level cohorts.
2. Center for Student Success: The Center for Student Success will be a support system for the program by ensuring students remain on track to persist towards graduation.
3. Admissions: The university admissions team will be a great support in communicating to prospective families about the program to continue the program's expansion.