



Don't Count Me Out!

THE IMPACT OF MENTORING ON THE PERSISTENCE OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES
STUDENTS AT PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

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Summary of Presentation

- ▶ Background & Purpose
- ▶ Scope & Approach
- ▶ Work Plan
- ▶ Risks/Constraints
- ▶ Quality Assurance Plan
- ▶ Results/Benefits
- ▶ Reflection
- ▶ Areas for Future Study
- ▶ Questions
- ▶ References

Background

Liberal Arts University

- ▶ 4-year private liberal arts institution
- ▶ Founded in 1856 by Baptist families of the region
- ▶ Recognized as one of the most diverse campuses within the Appalachian College Association
- ▶ Total Student Population: Approximately 1154
 - ▶ 48% Male; 52% Female
 - ▶ 33% Students of Color (20% African-American)

Purpose



Many African-American male students are classified as first-generation; low socioeconomic status; and/or simply un[der]prepared for college.



Negative experiences impact the students ability to connect with the institution.



Consequently, students transfer, drop out, or fail out their first-year of college.



Develop a mentoring program framework to provide support for African-American male students matriculating at the university.

Based on the institution's low retention and graduation rates the needs of our male students of color are not being met.

Scope

The scope of work for this mentoring program included:

- ▶ Planning implementation and data analysis
- ▶ The expectation that the success [graduation rate] of African-American males will increase over the next 4 years.
- ▶ Collaborate with the Center for Student Success to provide perspective and support.

Approach

The approach included developing a mentoring program framework with an emphasis in the following areas:

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.

Work Plan

Assist

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

Expose

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

Support and challenge

Support and challenge male students of color participants to achieve academic excellence through leadership, engagement, and personal/professional developmental opportunities.

Risks and Constraints

Risk	Impact
Key Stakeholders leave Liberal Arts University	High
Program funding request is not approved	High
Students show no improvement in academic success	Medium
Enrollment declines at Liberal Arts University	Low
Lack of strategic direction after first year of implementation	Medium

Constraints:

- ▶ Collaboration with campus key partners
- ▶ Overall institutional investment
- ▶ Adequate funds to support full implementation

Quality Assurance Plan

For the purposes of this project, the most effective model to ensure quality is the Plan-Do-Study-Act.



Continued

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Study
(Part 1)

Study (Part 1): Conduct research on trends, issues, and needs at Liberal Arts University.

Act
(Part 1)

Act (Part 1): Identify and survey students to capture their experience and insight.

Plan

Plan: Develop curriculum and identify key partners

Do

Implement the program in phases.

- Propose idea to University administrators
- Identify funding sources/apply for grants
- Inform students and families of the program
- Train key partners & implement the program

Study & Act
(Part 2+)

Track and assess program effectiveness and adjust, as needed.

Results & Benefits



- ▶ Acknowledge and address the trends, issues, and needs that impact African-American male persistence.
- ▶ Two sections of the First Year Seminar designed for African-American males.
- ▶ Developing a full blown mentoring program called *RESILIENCE* (**R**esilient **E**merging **S**cholars **I**ncreasing **L**eadership and **I**nnovation **E**xpanding **N**etworks with a **C**ommitment to **E**xcellence).
- ▶ African-American students have expressed interested in helping to continue overall program development.
- ▶ Overall increased engagement and investment from African-American male students.

Reflection

- ▶ Greatest Accomplishment (FYS, Budget)
- ▶ Greatest Challenge (adaptive challenges)
- ▶ Collaborating with the Center for Student Success
- ▶ Impact of program, to date

Areas of Future Study

- ▶ Asses the program's effectiveness
- ▶ Identify the impact from the African-American male perspective.
- ▶ Work with university to determine how it can be expanded.
- ▶ Explore/identify other funding opportunities.



A photograph of two young men standing outside a building with large glass doors. The man on the left is wearing a striped polo shirt and has a backpack. The man on the right is wearing a white t-shirt with 'Champion' written on it, holding a book, and waving. The image has a blue overlay and a blue vertical bar in the top right corner.

Questions?

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.