

The Mentoring of Latino/a Students



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Outline

- Review of research
- UConn enrollment statistics
- Origins of METAS & structure
- The numbers
- Sample activities
- Findings
- Lessons learned and future directions
- Discussion

Latinos in HED

- In the educational pipeline Latinos do not perform as well as most other students (Pew Center, 2002 & 2005).
- Only 12.4% of Latinos compared to 28% of the U.S. population hold Bachelor's degrees or more (U.S. Census Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2006).
- 6-year graduation rates for Latinos is 41%, compared to 56% for Whites (Solorzano et al, 2005).

Mentoring and HED

- Mentoring positively influences students' career choices, perseverance, and achievement (Brown, David, & McClendon, 1999; Ferrari, 2004; Packard, 2003).
- McLean (2004) found that peer mentoring advances interpersonal skills.
- Good & Halpin (2000) found measurable academic and interpersonal growth on African American peer mentors.
- Research among Latinos has found that having a mentor was related to a more positive outlook of the university environment (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005) and higher rates of degree attainment (Nora, 2003).

UConn Undergrad Stats - Storrs

- Total Enrollment
 - 16,036
- Retention Rates
 - 1 yr
 - 93%
 - 6 yr
 - 74%
- Latino enrollment
 - 775, 4.8%
- Latino retention Rates
 - 1 year
 - 91%
 - 6 year
 - 66%

Enrollment data retrieved from the Fall 2007 UConn Fact Book. Retention data retrieved from the "Financial Aid & Retention & Graduation Taskforce Report" (January, 2008).

**What's happening on your
campus?**

Origins of METAS

(Mentoring, Educating, & Training for Academic Success)

- Preliminary research (national & institutional)
- Assemble a planning team/advisory board
- Identify an anchor/host
- Determine the scope, mission & goals
- Delivery options & design
- Evaluation procedures

Program Structure

Mentor Requirements

- 1 year commitment
- Leadership development
 - Training sessions
 - 3-credit course (Latinos & Leadership)
 - Conferences
 - Meetings & workshops
- Social and cultural events
- Trips
- Evaluation

Mentee Requirements

- 1 year commitment
- Meet with mentor as scheduled or needed
- Evaluation
- Educational workshops

Mentee Optional

- Social & cultural events
- Trips

The Numbers

- 2005-2006 cohort
 - 49 students
 - 15 mentors
 - 34 mentees
- 2006-2007 cohort
 - 68 students
 - 19 mentors
 - 49 mentees
- 2007-08 cohort
 - 93 students
 - 34 mentors
 - 59 mentees



2005-2006



2006-2007



2007-2008

The Numbers - cont.

- Nationalities represented:
 - 15 in 2005, 15 in 2006, & 16 in 2007
- Majority of majors are in science, engineering, business & undecided
- 1st year retention
 - 2005-2006 mentees
 - 97%
 - 2006-2007 mentees
 - 98%

Leadership Activities



Recognition Banquet



Conferences

Educational Activities



1-0n-1 Meetings

Guest Lectures & Student
Workshops/Presentations

Cultural Activities



House on Mango Street
Theater Trip

Día de los Muertos



Social Activities



Welcome Event & BBQ



Homecoming "Lip sync"

Data Collection

- 34 mentors, 24 females & 10 males
- Undergrad, Latino, sophomore-seniors
- Data
 - Journal entries (class)
 - Focus groups (volunteer)
 - Individual interviews (volunteer)
 - Class discussions (class)

Sample questions asked...

- Why did you join METAS?
- What does the Program mean to you?
- What have you learned, if anything?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses?
- What would you change about the program?

What we found...

Academic Growth

- Learning about Latinos
 - *“Although we are Latinos, we are all different... [This class] has taught me a lot, by opening my eyes to a world that exist outside of my own and making me aware of the broader issues that Latinos face [in the US].”*
- Leadership concepts/theories
 - *“I’m learning to be a good leader. For instance, I always thought that you had to have certain innate characteristics... like be well off and White... but now I know that I just have to work at it.” (Relational Leadership Model).*

Academic Growth

- Problem solving & critical thinking
 - *“It [METAS] enhanced my ability to solve problems... I’m not so quick to reach a solution. I’ve realized to step back and look at the problem critically and look at the pros and cons... because things aren’t always easy and clear.”*
- Technological skills
 - *“I definitely learn a lot from my mentees. Like my first year of being a mentor. I didn’t know what Facebook was... and all my mentees were on... so through them I learned how to use it... and how to pretty much search it and find other people in my class, numbers, emails...”*
- Grades/GPA
 - *3.03 Fall 2006, 3.17 Fall 2007*

Interpersonal Skills

- Increased responsibility
 - *“I think being a mentor has helped me be more responsible. Having an obligation to my mentees makes me want to help them and make sure that I am there for them when they need me.”*
- Time management
 - *“Before midterms we had a meeting scheduled every week. And then after that it started getting harder and harder for us to do certain things together... cause he started getting involved in a lot more things... so I think the hardest thing is time management. Uh [you learn time management] through experience really. You have to make priority for what you want to do.”*

Interpersonal Skills

- Inter-ethnic relationships
 - *“It’s great to work with students from a different background. At my high school we were mostly Puerto Rican. I’ve learned a lot about other groups and their customs...”*
- Communication/speaking skills
 - *“While I hated the idea of having to design workshops, I think it’s a great strength of the program... I’m working on my speaking skills.”*

Interpersonal Skills

- Networking/social interactions
 - *“I really enjoy the connections with university administrators and teachers. This can help me with the future... Because I know that if I need a reference I can go and ask for one.”*
 - *“I wanted to help out... with all the different activities we have on campus and also with networking. I think its very important... I have I lined up two of our mentees for job interviews. I think like that type of opportunity to really help out incoming freshman is important to me.”*

Community Building

- Giving back to the community
 - *“I wanted to provide a helping hand... I know what it’s like to enter a new environment not knowing many people or how things work. METAS provided me an opportunity to give back to my community by assisting those in need.”*
- Feeling like a family
 - *“I’ve made so many friends that I wouldn’t have met if I wasn’t part of it... We are like a family.”*
 - *“It feels like a family, the METAS family.”*

Future of METAS

- Increase leadership training/development for mentors
- Increase community service component
- Introduce FYE course for mentees and mentee accountability
- Program expansion to other campuses



Open discussion...

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