FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

A CREATIVE PROJECT

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BY

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this creative project was to create an extended orientation program, summer workshop series, and mentor program for first-generation college students and their parents. The goal of the program was to better prepare the students and their families before the semester begins and to continue to support the student’s transition during their first year by providing them the resources needed to be successful. The extended orientation and workshop series was designed to help students and their families address the common challenges many first-generation students face by providing opportunities to interact with faculty and introducing them to valuable campus resources such as the Financial Aid Office, Academic Advising, and the Career Center. The mentorship program will begin during the first semester and extend through the remainder of the academic year. The mentorship program will allow the students to
connect with new first-generation students and also the opportunity to connect with
current first-generation students who have been successful. The mentorship program is
designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become
invested in the campus culture and their success as a student.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The transition from high school to college is challenging for any student. For first-generation students, this transition can be extremely difficult. Research has shown that first-generation students struggle during their transitional year and need extra support academically and socially to be successful. Most first-generation students start college with less knowledge about the college-going process, less academic preparedness, and less support (Mehta, Newbold, & O’Rourke, 2011). “First-generation students represent a crucial population in institutions of higher education and are often considered at-risk in academic persistence and retention discussions. These students present both a challenge and opportunity to postsecondary education” (Hand & Payne, 2008, p. 4). Universities have recognized the need to provide first-generation students with the appropriate support and have begun creating various programs that are designed to assist students during their first year of college.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this creative project was to create an extended orientation program, summer workshop series, and mentor program for first-generation college students and their parents. The goal of the program was to better prepare the students and their families before the semester begins and to continue to support the student’s transition during their first year by providing them the resources needed to be successful.
The extended orientation and workshop series was designed to help students and their families address the common challenges many first-generation students face by providing opportunities to interact with faculty and introducing them to valuable campus resources such as the Financial Aid Office, Academic Advising, and the Career Center. The mentorship program will begin during the first semester and extend through the remainder of the academic year. The mentorship program will allow the students to connect with new first-generation students and also the opportunity to connect with current first-generation students who have been successful. The mentorship program was designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become invested in the campus culture and their success as a student.

**Significance of Study**

The project is significant because the research shows that first-generation college students struggle during their transitional year and need extra support to be academically and socially to be successful. The objective of this project is to help first-generation students succeed during their first-year of college. By providing a summer bridge program for these students, and their parents who tend to be uninformed about issues related to higher education, they will be aware of campus resources to enable a successful transition. The year-long mentorship program will provide the students the social support they need to connect them to an unfamiliar campus environment.

**Scope and Limitations**

The summer bridge program and mentor program is created to support the first-generation students attending University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Because the program would not be a requirement for all first-generation students, the number of participants
could be low which could inhibit the success of the program. Another limitation of the 
program is the funding. Many first-generation students are from low income families and 
might not have the means to participate in the program. To avoid limiting access to 
students, it would be important for the program to be extremely low cost or free for 
students. This means the university would have to incur all or a large percentage of the 
cost of the promotion and recruitment materials, the workshop series, and paying the 
student mentors hourly wage.

Definition

First-generation college student: A student whose parent/guardian did not 
graduate from college (Mehta, Newbold, & O’Rourke, 2011).

Organization of Paper

The paper is organized into four chapters. The first chapter explains the statement 
of purpose, the significance of the study, the scope of limitations, and the organization of 
the paper. The second chapter is a review of existing literature related to first-generation 
student demographics, first-generation student academic behaviors, first-generation 
student transition, and support programs. Chapter three presents the methodology used to 
create the summer bridge program and mentor program. Chapter four provides the final 
project that includes the descriptions of the workshops and resources used during the 
summer bridge program. Chapter four also includes the material used to hire the student 
mentors, the structure of the mentor program, and an outline of the events the mentors 
and students will attend during the academic year.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Summary of Project

The transition from high school to college is challenging for any student. For first-generation students, this transition can be extremely difficult. Research has shown that first-generation students struggle during their transitional year and need extra support academically and socially to be successful. Universities have recognized the need to provide first-generation students with the appropriate support and have begun creating various programs that are designed to assist students during their first year of college.

First-Generation Student Demographics

“Students today are different from their counterparts of three and four decades ago. Women have outnumbered men for more than 15 years, and the participating rates for members of historically underrepresented groups have made impressive gains” (Pike & Kuh, 2005, p. 276). As the demographics of the United States continue to change, colleges and universities are enrolling a growing student population. Institutions have been challenged to serve the increasingly diverse student population and are being held accountable for the success of these students. This population includes a substantial amount of first-generation students. In 1995, 34% of students enrolling in four-year institutions and 53% of students enrolling in two-year colleges were first-generation students (Choy, 2001). Most first-generation students start college with less knowledge
about the *college-going* process, less academic preparedness, and less support (Mehta, Newbold, & O’Rourke, 2011). “First-generation students represent a crucial population in institutions of higher education and are often considered ‘at-risk’ in academic persistence and retention discussions. These students present both a challenge and opportunity to postsecondary education” (Hand & Payne, 2008, p. 4).

A first-generation college student is a student whose parent/guardian did not graduate from college (Mehta, Newbold, & O’Rourke, 2011). These students account for 50% of today’s student population. First-generation students differ from their peers in terms of their academic and social integration into college (McConnell, 2000). First-generation students also differ from their peers because they did not grow up around adults that completed college. As a result, they are less exposed to the appropriate support and other factors needed to help them navigate through college (Mehta, Newbold, & O’Rourke, 2011). “Compared to their peers, first-generation college students tend to be at a distinct disadvantage with respect to basic knowledge about postsecondary education, level of family income and support, educational degree expectations and plans, and academic preparation in high school” (Pascarella et al., 2004, p. 250).

Terenzini & Springer (1996) found that first-generation students and non-first-generations students differed on 14 out of 37 pre-college characteristics. The most common differences were in family income and race/ethnicity. Other differences included gender, age, and degree aspirations. More first-generation students were likely to be women, older, and have lower degree aspirations.

First-generation college students who have enrolled in a competitive four-year university are demographically different from students whose parents have had
some college experience or whose parents have actually earned at least a bachelor’s degree. More specifically, they are more likely to be ethnic minority students, to come from a lower socioeconomic background, and to speak a language other than English at home. (Van & Bui, 2002, p. 4)

Other studies have been conducted to explore other differences between the demographics of first-generation students and their peers. These studies have found that first-generation college students are more likely to be minorities, more likely to be from lower income families, and have lower academic achievement compared with their peers whose parents attended college (Gibbons & Borders, 2005; McConnel, 2000).

**First-Generation Student Academic Behavior**

In a national study conducted in 1997, first-generation students indicated limited knowledge of postsecondary admissions and financial aid processes and were less likely to complete the steps to enroll in a four-year institution than their second-generation peers. They also were less likely to take the SAT or ACT, and were less likely to apply to a four-year institution. (McConnell, 2000, p. 78)

First-generation students are less prepared academically and psychologically for college. “Psychologically, first-generation students are more apt to judge their own abilities and potential as inferior to other” (McMurray & Sorrells, 2009, p. 211). These students normally have lower GPAs and SAT scores and have a lower sense of self-efficacy and lower self-esteem than their peers (Inman & Mayes, 1999). Choy (2001) found that first-generation students were likely to have lower reading, math, and critical thinking skills. Choy also found that first-generation students were more likely to attend a high school
that had less rigorous curricula compared to traditional students and that first-generation students are more likely to work more hours, have fewer credits hours, and live off campus. In large part, first-generation student’s lower persistence and graduation rates, and their lower scores on standardized assessment measures, are the result of differences in the pre-college characteristics of first-generation students (Pike & Kuh, 2005).

First-generation students are 71% more likely to drop out of college than non-first-generation students, even after controlling for race, gender, high school grade point average, and family income (Ishitani, 2006).

First-generation students are more likely to start at a two-year college than a four-year institution for a variety of reasons including not being able to afford the cost of tuition at a four-year university, their academic preparation was not competitive enough for admission at a four-year university, or a four-year university does not provide the flexibility needed to meet their other responsibilities such as work (Van & Bui, 2002). However, research has shown that first-generation students are more likely to earn a bachelor’s degree if they begin at a four-year university rather than a two-year college.

The National Center for Education found that during the 1989-1990 academic year less than 10% of first-generation students who started a two-year college earned a bachelor’s degree by 1994 compared to 40% of first-generation students who started at a four-year institution and earned their bachelor’s degree by 1994 (Choy, 2001). Even if a first-generation student begins at a four-year institution, they are more likely to leave the institution by the end of their first year and less likely to stay enrolled or attain a bachelor’s degree (Pascarella et al., 2004). Research regarding the academic achievement of first-generation students has found that these students perform at lower
rates during their first year of college compared to their peers (McConnell, 2000). First-generation college students were more at risk to leave college and less likely to finish their degree programs in a timely manner (Ishitani, 2006). McMurray and Sorrells (2009) provided strategies for college administrators that can benefit first-generation students and help their transition into the college classroom. These strategies include being conscious of the demography, providing redemptive opportunities, and creating a sense of community.

**First-Generation Student Transition**

The transition from high school to college can create challenges and a great deal of changes for the student and surrounding family members (Hicks, 2003). It is important to identify students who are coming from a family that does not have a college degree because these students are different in many ways than students whose parents have a degree. All college administrators need to be aware of the differences between first-generation and second-generation students. Typically, students who have more family involvement will have researched and be more knowledgeable about how to be successful while in college. Van and Bui (2002) conducted a study to examine first-generation students’ reasons for pursuing higher education. The study found that the first-generation students were not attending college because of other family members or because they wanted to move out of their parents’ house compared to their peers. The first-generation students placed high importance on gaining respect/status, bringing honor to their family, and helping their family financially after they graduated.

First-generation students have a more difficult transition to college than their peers. Not only do first-generation students confront all the anxieties,
dislocations, and difficulties of any college student, their experiences often involve substantial cultural as well as social and academic transitions. (Pascarella et al., 2004, p. 250)

Studies have found that first-generation students are less involved, have less social support, and do show a preference for active coping strategies (Mehta et al., 2011). Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, and Terenzini (2004) conducted a study to determine the differences between the experiences of first-generation and other college students. The study found that first-generation students were more likely to enroll at an institution that was less academically selective. Also, significantly less first-generation students live on campus and were working more hours than students whose parents graduated from college.

Research has found that other variables such as integration into college can have a significant impact on academic success. Students who have an unclear purpose for attending a university, problems adjusting academically and socially, or feelings of isolation are some of the reasons first-generation students struggle to adjust to higher education. It is very important that first-generation students are able to successfully adjust and become involved on campus. Students who participate in extracurricular college activities or have involvement with positive social networks have stronger critical thinking skills, a greater sense of control over their own academic success, and a stronger educational degree plan (Prospero & Vohra-Gupta, 2007). Although first-generation students are less likely to be involved in extracurricular activities and non-course related interactions, the first-generation students who were involved had significantly stronger positive benefits than their peers (Pascarella et al., 2004). Some of these benefits
included internal locus of attribution for academic success and critical thinking. Although some first-generation students would like the opportunity to become more involved and invested on their college campus it may not possible because of other demands on their time and energy. First-generation students are less involved in on-campus activities and more likely to live off campus (Mehta et al., 2011). This results in lower levels of campus participation.

Another factor that may hinder first-generation students from being successful and involved on campus is the type of support they receive from their family.

For years, college and university administrators have accepted the notion that in order to succeed academically, students must break away from parental influences and develop their social and academic independence. But in the past decade, a growing body of research shows that students particularly members of minority groups and first-generation college students perform better when their parents are involved in their education. (Demski, 2011, p. 2)

Many first-generation students perceive their parents to be less supportive of their decision to attend college and feel that they are not encouraging (McConnell, 2000). Parents of first-generation students may not understand the experiences their children are having and the amount of time and commitment their children must invest to be a successful student. Wang and Castaneda-Sound (2008) conducted a study to better understand the needs of first-generation college students by examining the impact of generational status on the self-esteem, academic self-efficacy, and perceived social support of undergraduate students. The study found that first-generation students scored
considerably lower in academic self-efficacy and the perceived support from family and friends was positively associated with the students’ well-being.

**Support Programs**

Remediation and support programs for college students began to grow during the early 1900s’s when access to higher education for women and African Americans expanded (Kezar, 2000). The support programs were used to help these new populations of students attend college. Incoming students who are first in their family to attend college are often at-risk.

They have transitional needs not generally met by traditional support services and find themselves in academic limbo. These students will often either fail out or drop out when they cannot discover a meaningful connection between themselves and the university community. (Folger et al., 2004, p. 2)

Colleges and universities across the country are working to create and implement programs to serve students and increase their chances of obtaining a degree (Horwedel, 2008).

First Year Experience (FYE) programs have been implemented in universities and colleges to address the emergent needs of matriculating students. It is well documented that many students are not prepared for the rigors of postsecondary education and FYE programs are designed to supplement the necessary academic and life skills. These academic and life skills range from knowing the location of the library to seeking out appropriate personnel when personal issues arise.

Evaluating programs developed to address such a wide range of knowledge and
skills is an obvious challenge, especially when each FYE is customized for each corresponding university or college. (Schrader & Brown, 2008, p. 311)

Summer bridge programs are designed to provide assistance to individuals entering college in the fall (Kezar, 2000). The focus of each program varies depending on the specific program mission and goals. The main object of the program is to retain the new populations within higher education and to provide them an equal footing with other students.

First-generation students are frequently targeted groups for support programs designed to help the students prepare for postsecondary work (Choy, 2001). Summer bridge programs can include academic support, career counseling, community service experiences, or study skills. Support programs for first-generation students often include parental involvement, mentors, and variety of workshops to help prepare students for their transition from high school to college.

The Freshmen Empowerment Program was a group process designed to support first-generation students (Folger et al., 2004). The students participating in the Freshmen Empowerment Program met weekly for 90 minutes to discuss academics, college resources, and adjustment issues. The students also participated in group activities involving community building and social activities. The first-generation students participating in the group process had significantly higher first semester, second semester, and cumulative GAPs than the first-generation students who did not participate.

Some universities have worked with at-risk students before they are enrolled. The Transition Class is a twelve week course that is an alternative model to the traditional sequence of development reading, English and math courses offered to perspective first-
generation students (Koehler & Burke, 1996). The purpose of the Transition Class was to give first-generation students the opportunity to learn more about college expectations and demands in a supportive environment.

Peer mentor programs have also been used as an opportunity to help first-generation students transition. Peer relationships can be influential in facilitating successful transitions and can assist in the adjustment process (Pascarella et al., 2004). Inkelas, Daver, Vogt, & Leonard (2007) conducted a study to examine the role of first-generation living-learning programs and their role in the academic and social tradition to college. The study showed the living-learning program supported a positive transition because of the strong relationships built between students participating in the program.

Summary

Research has shown that first-generation students are likely to enter college with a relatively limited understanding of higher education compared to other students. Programs associated with educational success of students are important to take into account when considering the functions of four-year institutions, especially in a time of increased accountability pressures such as persistence and completion rates (Wang, 2009). Student Affairs professionals play a key role in helping first-generation students become adjusted to higher education and have started to create programs to help their difficult transition. A summer bridge program for first-generations students and a year-long mentorship program are suggested, as this will provide students and their parents/guardians the resources needed to allow a successful transition.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this creative project was to create an extended orientation program, summer workshop series, and mentor program for first-generation college students and their parents. The goal of the program was to better prepare the students and their families before the semester begins and to continue to support the student’s transition during their first year by providing them the resources needed to be successful. The extended orientation and workshop series was designed to help students and their families address the common challenges many first-generation students face by providing opportunities to interact with faculty and introducing them to valuable campus resources such as the Financial Aid Office, Academic Advising, and the Career Center. The mentorship program will begin during the first semester and extend through the remainder of the academic year. The mentorship program will allow the students to connect with new first-generation students and also the opportunity to connect with current first-generation students who have been successful. The mentorship program was designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become invested in the campus culture and their success as a student.
Methodology

The first step of the project was to conduct a literature review. The purpose of the literature review was to collect and review information about first-generation students related to their demographics, academic behaviors, transition, and the types of support programs being used to help their adjustment during the student’s freshman year. The information gathered in the literature review was used to build the topic areas for the workshop series for the extended orientation and summer workshop series and to gain ideas and areas of interest for the mentor program. The next step of the project was to research and review current first-generation student programs offered by other universities. First-generation student programs from the University of Central Florida, Colorado State University, Boise State University, and San Jose State University were used as a guide. These universities were chosen because each university offered several types of workshops for their students. It was helpful to review a variety of workshop options in order to create the most effective First-Generation Student Support Program. The Directors of each program were contacted and interviewed to learn more about how their first-generation student program was implemented on their campus, who participates in program, the strengths of program, and areas for improvement. The information from the literature review, current programs, and interviews were compiled to create the extended orientation, summer workshops series, and mentor program for University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

Design of Program

The extended orientation, summer workshop series, and mentor program was created to better prepare first-generation students and their families before the semester
begins. The extended orientation consists of several sessions designed to help address the common challenges many first-generation students face and is tailored to provide valuable information about campus resources to the students and their families.

**Extended Orientation Program**

The goal of the extended orientation was to provide a structured experience that will help the students navigate through the challenges of the first semester and ease the transition to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The extended orientation will take place a month before the semester begins and will last for a day. During the extended orientation the students will attend seven sessions.

The first session will last a half hour and will include a welcome, an overview of the day, and then the students will be paired into groups according to the mentor they will be working with during the academic year. The mentors will help the students in each group get to know each other and then serve as an advisor and tour guide for the remainder of the day.

The second session will be a half hour presentation from the Advising Center and will be an advising workshop to provide the students with further detailed information that they learned at their original orientation. The advisors from the Advising Center will cover topic areas such as the academic calendar, required credit hours, and how to navigate the course catalog, and read their DARS report.

The third session will last an hour and is a panel discussion and presentation with faculty who commonly work with first-generation students during their first semester. The presentation will include the faculty’s perspective while working with first-generation students and address the common mistakes most students make while
becoming accustomed to the college curriculum and college classroom. The presentation will include explaining a syllabus, an introduction to blackboard and how it is incorporated into the classroom, and an explanation of faculty office hours and the faculty, student relationship. The panel will take place after the presentation and will provide the students the opportunity to ask questions of the faculty. After the third session the students will eat lunch with the mentors and faculty.

The fourth session will be an hour and a half long and will cover time management and stress management. These two areas will be addressed in the extended orientation because the literature review revealed that first-generation students often struggle managing their courses, homework, job, and family expectations and often feel overwhelmed or more stressed than traditional students.

The fifth session will be led by the Counseling Center and will address how to successfully communicate with the student’s friends and family who have not attended college. The counseling center will help the students communicate their personal and academic experiences, the changes taking place as the students adjust to college, the challenges the students are encountering, and how to clarify the students and the parents expectations.

The sixth session will be a presentation from multiple academic and student affairs support services on campus. Each office will have five to ten minutes to give a brief overview of their services and an opportunity to provide additional materials to the students. The offices that will be invited to participate in this session are the Academic Advising Office, Career Center, Disability Services, Tutoring Center, Financial Aid,
Cashier’s Office, Registrar’s Office, Student Health and Counseling Center, University Activities, the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, and First Year Experience office.

The last session will be presented by the mentors and will include an energizing presentation about University Wisconsin-Parkside that will have information about campus facts and campus traditions. After the presentation the students will have the opportunity to end the day at a leadership and organizational recruitment fair. The goal of this session was to allow the students to meet current student leaders and make a connection with returning students before the year begins. The students who are interested in participating will be contacted by the organization before the semester begins with a personal invite to their first meeting.

**Summer Workshop Series**

The summer workshop series is for both first-generation students and their families. The workshop series is designed to offer several sessions that will provide new or additional information to help the students succeed at University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The same five workshops will be offered each month during June, July, and August. The students and families will be able to attend all or any of the workshops they feel will best fit their needs. The first workshop option is a family panel. This is an opportunity for the families and students to attend a discussion panel featuring current first-generation students and their families to hear their experiences and to learn more about the current support services available on campus.

The second workshop option is a financial aid session. The students and families can attend this session and work directly with the Financial Aid Office to fill out a
FASFA form and gain additional information about financial aid resources available on campus.

The third workshop option is a session led by the Counseling Center and will include a presentation about supporting first-generation students. The Counseling Center will discuss the proper ways to support, encourage, and motivate students during their first semester. The discussion will also include an opportunity for the students to have a structured intentional conversation with their family about academic and personal goals during the students first semester.

The fourth workshop option will be led by Housing and Residence Life. The session will offer the families and students an opportunity to learn more about living on campus and the opportunities it provides to first year students. During this session the families and students will be given a change to discuss the changes that will occur while the students adjust to living on campus.

The fifth workshop is a student affairs support services panel. The panel will discuss common issues first year students’ face and also focus on challenges first-generation students endure and who is available on campus to help with the challenges.

**Mentor Program**

The mentor program is intended to allow the students to connect with new first-generation students and also the opportunity to connect with existing first-generation students who have been successful. The mentorship program is designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become invested in the campus and their success as a student. The student mentors will first be introduced to their mentor during the extended orientation. The role of the mentor after the extended
orientation will be to serve as a resource for their mentees throughout the year. The mentors will be expected to hold five office hours a week in the First-Generation Student Resource Center office, so their mentee will be able to meet with their mentor whenever needed. The mentors will also be expected to bring their mentees to two university sponsored events a month. The event could be a sporting event, leadership series program, University Activities program, or student affairs support program. This will help the first-generation students become connected to campus. The mentors will also be required to host a weekly two hour study table that first-generation students will be invited to participate in.

**Summary**

The extended orientation program is intended to continue to educate first-generation students before the semester begins by introducing them to campus resources and preparing them for future challenges. The summer workshop series is designed for families and students and is meant to provide support and valuable information to help ease the transition from high school to college. The mentor program will provide students with a peer support system and help them become more familiar and connected to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside campus.
CHAPTER FOUR

FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

Project Summary

The transition from high school to college is challenging for any student. For first-generation students, this transition can be extremely difficult. Research has shown that first-generation students struggle during their transitional year and need extra academic and social support to be successful. Universities have recognized the need to provide first-generation students with the appropriate support and have begun creating various programs that are designed to assist students during their first year of college. The first-generation student support program will better prepare students and their families before the semester begins by providing students the resources needed to be successful. The program includes an extended orientation for the students a month before the semester begins, a workshop series for the student and family during the summer, and a mentor program for the student once the semester begins.

First-Generation Student Support Program Office

The mission of the First-Generation Student Support Program Office is to promote the success and personal growth of first-generation students through educational and social programming. The First-Generation Student Support Program Office is ran by one Director and has five first-generation student mentors.
Extended Orientation

The goal of the extended orientation was to provide a structured experience that will help the students navigate through the challenges of the first semester and ease the transition to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. During the extended orientation the students will attend seven sessions. An example of the extended orientation agenda and resources from the day can be found in Appendix A. The agenda includes the program titles, the program descriptions, and the program presenters. The extended orientation assessment can be found in Appendix A. The extended orientation assessment will be taken by the students at end of orientation. The results will be reviewed to determine if the students met the learning object(s) for each session.

Summer Workshop Series

The summer workshop series is for both first-generation students and their families. The workshop series was designed to offer several sessions that will provide new or additional information to help the students succeed at University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The same five workshops will be offered each month during June, July, and August. The descriptions of each workshops series and information can be found in Appendix B. Appendix B contains a welcome letter to explain the purpose of the First-Generation Support Program and the purpose of the summer workshop series. The summer workshop series information sheet contains dates and descriptions of each session and information about registration. A Student Mentor flyer is also included in Appendix B to introduce the students to their student mentor. The summer workshop series assessment will be taken by the students and their family members before and after
each session. The results will then be compared to determine if the students and families met the learning object(s) for each session.

**Mentor Program**

The mentor program is intended to allow the students to connect with new first-generation students and also the opportunity to connect with existing first-generation students who have been successful. The mentorship program was designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become invested in the campus and their success as a student. The mentor application materials and mentor information used by mentors can be found in Appendix C.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

EXTENDED ORIENTATION MATERIALS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Program Description</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 9:15</td>
<td>Welcome and Overview</td>
<td>This session will include a welcome and an overview of the day. The students will then be paired with their student mentor and complete an icebreaker. The purpose of this session is for the students to be introduced to the Director of the program and their student mentor.</td>
<td>Director of the First-Generation Student Support Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 - 10:45</td>
<td>Advising Basics</td>
<td>This session is designed to provide students with additional information from their original orientation. The Advising Center will discuss the academic calendar, required credit hours, the course catalog, and provide information about their the students DARS report.</td>
<td>Advising Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 - 11:45</td>
<td>Faculty Presentation and Panel</td>
<td>This session is intended to connect the students and faculty who commonly work with first-generation students. The faculty will present information about becoming accustomed to college curriculum and college classroom. The presentation will include explaining a syllabus, an introduction to Blackboard and how it is incorporated into the classroom, and an explanation of the faculty and student relationship.</td>
<td>3 Faculty Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45 - 12:45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>The students will eat lunch with student mentors and faculty.</td>
<td>Mentors and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 - 2:15</td>
<td>Time Management and Stress</td>
<td>This session will be presented by the Career Center and will address time management and stress management. The purpose of this workshop is to help the students manage their courses, homework, job, and family expectations.</td>
<td>Career Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 - 3:45</td>
<td>Challenges and Communication</td>
<td>The fifth session will be led by the Counseling Center and will address how to successfully communicate with the student's friends and family who have not attended college. The counseling center will help the students communicate their personal and academic experiences, the changes taking place as the students adjust to college, the challenges the students are encountering, and how to clarify the students and the parents expectations.</td>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 - 4:45</td>
<td>UW-Parkside Resources</td>
<td>This session will be a presentation from multiple academic and student affairs support services on campus to provide detail information to the students and their families.</td>
<td>Student Life Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:45 - 5:15</td>
<td>Mentor Perspective</td>
<td>The last session will be presented by the mentors and will include an engaging presentation about University Wisconsin-Parkside that will have information about campus facts and campus traditions.</td>
<td>Student Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:15 - 6:00</td>
<td>Leadership Recruitment Fair</td>
<td>The goal of the leadership recruitment fair is to allow the students to meet current student leaders and make a connection with returning students before the year begins. The students who are interested in participating will be contacted by the organization before the semester begins with a personal invite to their first meeting.</td>
<td>Campus Organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Extended Orientation Assessment**

The Welcome session gave me the opportunity to interact with the First-Generation Support Program Director, Student Mentors, and other participants.  
*Yes  No*

The Advising Basics session helped me better understand the role of the academic advisor and their function at the university.  
*Yes  No*

The Advising Basics session helped me better understand the academic calendar, required credit hours, and how to read the course catalog.  
*Yes  No*

The Faculty Presentation and Panel made me better understand the relationship between faculty and students.  
*Yes  No*

Because of the Faculty and Presentation Panel I, will be more comfortable approaching my future faculty members.  
*Yes  No*

The Faculty Presentation and Panel helped me better understand the purpose of a syllabus.  
*Yes  No*

The Faculty and Presentation and Panel helped me better understand the use of Blackboard.  
*Yes  No*

The Time Management Workshop has taught me new techniques to manage my time and has helped prepared me to better manage during the academic semester.  
*Yes  No*

The Stress Management Workshop has taught me new techniques to manage my stress and I plan to implement the new techniques.  
*Yes  No*
The Challenges and Communication session will help me better communicate with my family and friends about my college challenges, expectations, and experiences.

Yes  No

The UW-Parkside Resource Presentation has helped me to be more aware of academic support services available on campus.

Yes  No

I plan to use an academic support service I learned about from the UW-Parkside Resource Presentation.

Yes  No

The UW-Parkside Resource Presentation has helped me to be more aware of student support services available on campus.

Yes  No

I plan to use a student support service I learned about from the UW-Parkside Resource Presentation.

Yes  No

The Mentor Perspective Presentation has taught me more about the campus history and traditions.

Yes  No

The Leadership Recruitment Fair was helpful in making me feel more connected to UW-Parkside.

Yes  No
Dear NAME,

I am excited to welcome you to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside community! The transition from high school to college is challenging for any student. Research has shown that first-generation students struggle during their transitional year and need extra support academically and socially to be successful. As a first-generation college student you are beginning a thrilling journey. However, this journey may seem overwhelming to you or those close to you. The First-Generation Student Support Program is an office on campus responsible promoting the success of first-generation college students through educational and social programming.

Included you will find information about the annual summer workshop series designed to provide new and additional information to help first-generation students succeed at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The summer workshop series is free and is offered to both first-generation students and their families. Each workshop session will present valuable information to support your adjustment to the college environment. You are welcome to attend all or any of the workshop sessions you believe will be helpful. You will also find information about the student mentor you will be working with throughout the year.

If you have any questions about the annual summer workshop series, please contact the First-Generation Student Support Program Director. Also, be on the lookout for information about the First-Generation Extended Orientation on Wednesday, August 15, 2012. The First-Generation Extended Orientation provides an exciting experience intended to assist students as they navigate through the challenges of their first semester and will help ease their transition to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

Sincerely,

NAME
First-Generation Student Support Program Director
Workshop Series Sessions

To sign-up to attend all or any of the sessions below, please send your name, contact information, and the session name(s) you are interested in attending to the Director of the First-Generation Student Support Program. All family members are welcome!

First-Generation Family Panel
Monday, June 4, 2012 7:00 PM, Sunday, July 1, 2012 5:00 PM, Thursday, August 2, 2012 3:00 PM
The First-Generation Family Panel is an opportunity for families and students to meet other first-generation families and participate in a discussion with former first-generation students about the experiences and to learn about current support services available on campus.

Financial Aid Assistance
Monday, June 11, 2012 7:00 PM, Sunday, July 8, 2012 5:00 PM, Thursday, August 9, 2012 3:00 PM
The Financial Aid Assistance workshop is designed to take the stress and frustration out of filling out the FASFA form. Students and families can attend this session and work directly with members of the Financial Aid Office to get assistance while filling out financial aid forms. Students and families can also attend a presentation to learn more about financial aid repayment, loan counseling, and other aid resources available on campus.

Family Communication and Support
Wednesday, June 13, 2012 7:00 PM, Sunday, July 15, 2012 5:00 PM, Thursday, August 16, 2012 3:00 PM
The Family Communication and Support session is led by the Counseling Center and will include a presentation about parents supporting their first-generation students. The Counseling Center will discuss the most successful ways to support, encourage, and motivate students during their first semester. The discussion will also include an opportunity for the students to have a structured intentional conversation with their family about academic and personal goals during the students first semester.

On Campus Living
Monday, June 18, 2012 7:00 PM, Sunday, July 22, 2012 5:00 PM, Thursday, August 23, 2012 3:00 PM
The On campus Living session will be led by The Office of Housing and Residence Life. The session will offer the families and students an opportunity to learn more about living on campus and the opportunities it provides to first year students. During this session the families and students will be given a chance to discuss the changes that will occur while the students adjust to living on campus.

Student Support Services Panel
Monday, June 25, 2012 7:00 PM, Sunday, July 26, 2012 5:00 PM, Thursday, August 30, 2012 3:00 PM
The purpose of the Student Support Services Panel session is to provide students and families with helpful advice the student support offices on campus. The panel of student support offices will discuss common issues first year students’ face and focus on challenges first-generation students endure and who is available on campus to help with the challenges.
Hi,
My name is Brennan O’Lena and I will be your First-Generation Student Mentor. My role is to provide you with peer support as you adjust to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. This year you will have the opportunity to attend several exciting programs with me and other students before and after the semester starts. I am looking forward to meeting you at the First-Generation Extended Orientation!
Brennan

Hello!
My name is Lamees Galal! I am excited to be your first-generation student mentor! This year I will help you become adjusted to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside community by serving as part of your support system. As part of your support system I am here to provide you with educational and social opportunities to make you feel more at home on campus. I can’t wait to meet you at the First-Generation Extended Orientation!
Lamees

Hello,
My name is Lamar Davidson and I am your first-generation student mentor. I am happy to have the chance work closely with you as you begin your first semester at UW-Parkside. I have a ton of fun activities planned for us and hope you are ready for an exciting year! I hope to see you at the First-Generation Extended Orientation!
Lamar
Pre and Post Summer Workshop Series Assessment

Parent or Student
Please circle one

First-Generation Family Panel Session
I am aware of the challenges first-generation students encounter during their first academic year.
Yes  No

I am aware of the challenges the families of first-generation students encounter during their first academic year.
Yes  No

I am aware of Student Support Services available on the UW-Parkside Campus to first-generation students.
Yes  No

Financial Aid Assistance Session
I am aware of how to access the information needed to fill out the FASFA form.
Yes  No

I am aware of the materials needed to fill out the FASFA form.
Yes  No

I am aware of how to fully complete the FASFA form.
Yes  No

I am aware of the date I will receive my financial aid refund.
Yes  No

I am aware of the loan repayment process.
Yes  No

I am aware of how to electronically access all of my financial aid and loan information using D2L.
Yes  No

Family Communication and Support Session
I am aware of how to successfully communicate with my family or student about academic or personal concerns while attending University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
Yes  No
I am aware of my parent’s academic expectations of me during my first-semester (STUDENTS ONLY).
Yes  No

I am aware of my student’s academic expectations of me during my first-semester (PARENTS ONLY).
Yes  No

I am aware of who is paying for tuition, housing, and books while attending University of Wisconsin Parkside (STUDENTS ONLY).
Yes  No

I am aware of who is paying for tuition, housing, and books while attending University of Wisconsin Parkside (PARENTS ONLY).
Yes  No

**On Campus Living**
I am aware of the housing options available at University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
Yes  No

I am aware of the cost of housing at University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
Yes  No

I am aware of how to sign-up to live on campus at University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
Yes  No

I am aware of the benefits most students experience while living on campus.
Yes  No

**Student Support Services Panel**
I am aware of the Academic Advising Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of the Tutoring Center and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of Counseling Center and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of the Multicultural Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of Disability Services Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No
I am aware of the Career Center and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of the First Year Experience Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of Registrar’s Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of the Cashiers Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No

I am aware of the Financial Aid Office and the services it offers to students.
Yes  No
APPENDIX C

STUDENT MENTOR MATERIALS
First-Generation Student Mentor Application

Included in this packet is an application for the 2012–2013 First-Generation Student Mentor. Also included is an information sheet to provide a brief overview of the position.

There are basic expectations for any First-Generation Student Mentor. They are the first step to insure a positive experience and the First-Generation Student Support Program Office would like you to understand what is expected from their Student Mentors.

✓ Student Mentor must possess a positive attitude.
✓ Student Mentors must be friendly and willing to help others.
✓ Student Mentors must be active contributors to the Student Mentor Team.
✓ Student Mentors must possess a sense Pride for University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
✓ Student Mentors must be in good academic and judicial standing with the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

There are also a few things you should be able to expect from your supervisors.

✓ Student Mentors can expect that their input will be strongly considered when decisions need to be made which impact the First-Generation Student Program participants and First-Generation Student Program.
✓ Student Mentors can expect to receive training, support, and the guidance necessary to make them a successful member of the Student Mentor team.
✓ Student Mentors can be expected to be appreciated for the positive contributions they make to the University-Wisconsin Parkside Community.

The First-Generation Student Support Program Office is looking for creative, enthusiastic, intelligent, and committed students to help first-generation student succeed at University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you!

NAME
First-Generation Student Support Program Director
Program Purpose:

- The student mentor program is intended to connect new first-generation students with successful returning first-generation student. The mentorship program is designed to incorporate several social events and activities to help the students become invested in the campus and their success as a student.

Responsibilities:

- Hold and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.
- Be in good academic and judicial standing with University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
- Be able to work the entire academic year, including the Extended Orientation on August 15, 2012.
- Attended all training sessions.
- Serve five weekly office hours in the First-Generation Student Support Office.
- Bring mentees to two university sponsored events a month.
- Host weekly two hour study table in the First-Generation Student Support Office.

Position and Selection Information:

- Applicants for the 2012-2013 First-Generation Student Mentor position must turn in the application packet to the Director of the First-Generation Student Mentor Office by Monday, April 2, 2012 at noon.
- Applicants must sign up for a 30 minute interview by Monday, April 2, 2012.
- Employment decisions will be made on a rolling basis until all positions are filled.

Remuneration:

- First-Generation Student Mentors will be paid bi-weekly, hourly, $7.50 an hour.
Name: _______________________________________________________________________

Last  First  MI  Preferred/Nickname

UW-Parkside ID: ____________________________________________________________

Email Address: ____________________________________________________________

Current Campus Address: ____________________________________________________

Home Address: _____________________________________________________________

Cell Phone #: ______________________________________________________________

Room Phone #: _____________________________________________________________

Current Academic Standing (circle one): FR  SO  JR  SR  GPA: __________

Major(s)/minor(s): _________________________________________________________

To complete your application, please answer the following questions and attach your response to the application. Please keep each response to less than 200 words.

1. Why are you applying for the First-Generation Student Mentor position?

2. Why is the First-Generation Student Mentor position important?

3. Describe your transition to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside and the campus resources you used to help your transition.

4. What characteristics or past experiences do you possess which would make you a successful First-Generation Student Mentor?
Please include 2 references and contact information:

Reference 1:

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Reference 2:

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________