NEW MAJORITY STUDENT SUCCESS: FOSTERING CONNECTION, RENEWAL, AND LEADERSHIP THROUGH PEER MENTORING

THE FUTURES INITIATIVE PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

The Futures Initiative Peer Mentoring program is a multi-layered program that reconnects liberal arts teaching and learning with the mission of public higher education and the needs of what has been called the “new majority” of undergraduate college students, while also supporting graduate students’ development as both teachers and learners.

“Free Resources that have kept me Sane Post-Elections”
Reenie McCarthy, Baruch College

“The World of Technology: Email Etiquette”
Lesly Fernandez, John Jay College

“Steps to Putting Your Education First”
Cherishe Cumma, New York City College of Technology

“Pelo Malo y Pelo Bueno”
Lauren Capellan, Lehman College

“Lesson learned: How can we place mentors’ contributions at the center of the structure of this program?”

Lesson learned: Based on Cathy Davidson’s “Collective Syllabus Design” activity in which you can design any kind of syllabus or in this program structure you desire, the mentors were given full access in planning the structure of the program. The goal was for the mentors to pursue individually and collectively their concepts of what a successful peer mentoring program would be with design and pedagogical experiments that explore new possibilities for creativity. The collaborative activities that they created are still the foundations to this program.

“Challenge: How do we keep consistent engagement throughout the year?”

Lesson learned: The mentors agreed to contribute monthly online blog posts to their CUNY-wide audience. Themes for blog post topics are collectively decided and focus on college life including how to navigate through departments and strategies to master learning in the classroom.

“Challenge: How can we hold the mentors accountable to the activities that were agreed upon?”

Lesson learned: To give the mentors a sense of pride and responsibility for their work, we established additional tasks for mentors who were absent for any of the monthly meet ups. These include additional blog posts and attending the Futures Initiative’s related events. Recently, four liaison-mentors were selected to provide leadership amongst the mentors. Liaisons are responsible for sending out reminders to upcoming meet ups, providing updates in regards to missing blog posts, and checking in on mentors with whom we have lost communication.

ADVOCATING FOR THE STUDENT

The Futures Initiative advocates greater equity and innovation in higher education at every level of the university. Located at the Graduate Center and reaching throughout the CUNY community, FI empowers the next generation of intellectual leaders with bold, public, and engaged teaching and learning. FI has an emphasis on non-hierarchical learning structures that emphasize peer learning, peer mentorship, and student agency. Our work is focused on student-centered pedagogy, technology, leadership, research, and advocacy.

Undergraduate Student Editors:
Nanina Bhowmik
David Brandt
Cherish Cumma
Cassandra Castelnuevo
Yelena Dzhanova

Mentors’ Blog Posts

“Free Resources that have kept me Sane Post-Elections”
Reenie McCarthy, Baruch College

“The World of Technology: Email Etiquette”
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PRESENTATIONS

The City University of New York (CUNY)
- Design: Email Etiquette
- Collaboration
- Community College Learning and Teaching
- Mentorship
- Mentoring Programs
- Peer Learning
- Peer Mentorship
- Student Agency
- Teaching Practices
- Technology: Email Etiquette
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the Teagle Foundation, The City University of New York and The Graduate Center.