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Progress Amongst Peers: Implementation of a Peer Mentoring Program in an Agricultural College

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The Idea

Mentorship can enhance students' academic and social integration and in turn improve institutional retention rates. A peer-mentorship program was implemented based on the Four Domains of Mentoring Framework which includes:

- psychological and emotional support
- goal and career support
- academic subject knowledge support
- role-modeling

"I got to get out of my comfort zone and help others at the same time and it made me realize how far I've come and now I get to turn around and help the freshman with their journey"
-Program Mentor

How it Works

- Students were invited via institutional email to attend a mentorship launch event held the day before the fall semester began
- Six upper-level agriculture students were selected as mentors
- A group-mentoring model was used and mentees were grouped by shared enrollment in foundational courses
- Mentors contacted mentees biweekly and met with them monthly



Results to Date

Mentored students reported significantly higher rates of:

- Organizational involvement
- Ability to identify a role model
- Connection with a trustworthy more-experienced student

Mentored student did not report higher rates of:

- Academic subject knowledge support
- Support for goal-setting and career exploration

"I really appreciate the work that has been put into creating such a supportive program for students like me, it's been such a positive experience being part of a pack."
-Program Mentee

Next Steps

- Mentorship structures will be embedded within major-specific professional organizations such as the Future Agriculture Educators Club and the Pre-Veterinary Club
- A summer bridge program will be implemented to support first-year students' transition to college and connect them with successful upper-level students who may serve as mentors