Mentoring LGBT Students: Addressing more than Sexuality and Gender Identity/Expression

Assessment Symposium
USC Division of Student Affairs
Summer 2012
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The LGBT Mentor Program

- Est. 1993
- First LGBT mentoring programs
- Created by Pat Alford-Keating
- USC Counseling Services
- Participants were students coming out with faculty/staff mentors
LGBT Peer Mentor Program

• 2005: program with the LGBT Resource Center
• 2006: revamped focus beyond coming out and peer student mentors
• 2007: hired first mentor coordinator to oversee the program
• 2008: launched interactive website with student videos
• 2010: received an assessment grant from NASPA Region VI
• Serve as example for other colleges starting their own mentoring programs
Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>05-06</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>07-08</td>
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<td>08-09</td>
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<td>09-10</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>75</td>
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Assessment Grant

- Awarded in 2010
- Mixed methods approach
- Pre and post tests via interviews and survey
- Identifying mentee trends of development
- Four concentration areas:
  - psychological and emotional support
  - support for setting goals and choosing a career path
  - sexual and gender identity development
  - health and wellness through occupational engagement
How?

- Based on research
- Used two mentoring construct domains identified by Nora and Crisp (2007) and validated by Crisp (2009):
  - psychological and emotional support, and
  - support for setting goals and choosing a career path
- Identity development supported by Chickering & Reisser (1993), Cass (1979), and D’Augelli (1994):
  - sexual and gender identity
  - health and wellness through occupational engagement
Assessment Technique

Pre and Post Interviews
- Entrance/Exit interviews
- Identified with student name
- Recorded and interpreted during the summer
- Asked four questions per concentration area by Mentor Coordinator
- Served as supplemental questions
Questions:

Sexual and gender identity development
  • How comfortable do you feel expressing your sexuality and gender identity to people in your life (e.g., friends, family members, classmates, people you are interested in dating, etc.)?

Social, psychological and emotional support
  • How would you describe your social circle and social activities at this point in your life?

Goals and career path
  • Imagine yourself 5 years from now. Who are you? What are you doing?

Health and wellness through occupational engagement
  • How balanced is your life right now? How do your current activities affect your overall physical and emotional health?
Assessment Technique

Pre and Post Survey

- Entrance/Exit Survey
- Mandatory for participation
- Identified with Student ID numbers
- Created on Qualtrics.com
- Asked 5-questions per concentration area
- Responses on 5-point Likert scale (SA-SD)
- Monitored by LGBT Resource Center Director (difficult at end of program)
Example Questions:

Sexual and gender identity development
  • I am comfortable with my sexual and/or gender identity.

Social, psychological and emotional support
  • I am actively involved with the LGBT Community.

Goals and career path
  • I engage in behaviors (e.g. procrastination) that interfere with achieving my goals.

Health and wellness through occupational engagement
  • I schedule time for activities that enrich aspects of my identity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I am comfortable with my sexual and/or gender identity</th>
<th>I am confused about my sexual and/or gender identity</th>
<th>I am worried about how others react to my sexual and/or gender identity</th>
<th>I feel depressed about my sexual and/or gender identity</th>
<th>I need to better integrate my sexual and/or gender identity with who I am</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>10.53%</td>
<td>26.32%</td>
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**Preview of Findings from 2011-2012**

<table>
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<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree not disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>47.37%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
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<td>42.11%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>47.37%</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
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Qualitative Data Pretest/Posttest

- Majority said they were comfortable expressing their sexuality to friend but not family
- Mentees recalled instances when they heard oppressive discourse about the LGBT community from their family members and attributed this as the primary reason for why they would feel like a disappointment to their family for being LGBT.
- At the end of the program, mentees shared how they expanded their circle of supportive friends and expressed desires to tell their families one day.
Student said, “I am too scared to talk to my dad; both of my grandparents, just randomly, told me they would kill themselves if they ever thought I was (gay).”
Comparison Analysis

2010-2011 Posttest for Health and Wellness through Occupational Engagement

- I have arranged my schedule so I am leading a balanced life
- I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health
- The activities I’m involved with help me feel connected to myself and others

2011-2012 Posttest for Health and Wellness through Occupational Engagement

- studying, sleeping, exercising, socializing, relaxing, etc.)
- I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health
I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health

I'm involved with help me feel connected to myself and others

2 Posttest for Health and Wellness through Functional Engagement

(studying, sleeping, exercising, socializing, relaxing, etc.)

I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health
Create Recommendations And Develop Interventions
2011-2012 Recommendations

• Support for Setting Long-Term Goals
• Help to Choose a Career Path
• Integration of Spiritual/Religious Identity Formation
2010-2011 Recommendations

- Mandatory survey for all mentee participants
- Develop a substantial health and wellness programming plan
Strategy Moving Forward

• Find assistance (3rd party)
• Make recommendations achievable for the following year
• Develop executive summary or dashboard with information
• Use to attain outside funding
Questions?