

THE EXAMINATION OF PARTICIPATION IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PEER  
MENTORING PROGRAM ON SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF  
FIRST-TIME STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research study was to add to the body of knowledge on peer mentoring programs and aid college administrators in creating a successful learning environment. This investigation was guided by two conceptual frameworks: Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and Student Involvement Theory (Astin, 1999). The study seeks to gain an understanding of what the experiences and perceptions of community college students are concerning peer mentoring programs as they seek to enhance retention of students.

This dual case study examined two Midwestern community colleges identified as having successful retention rates serving diverse populations. It explored responses from both peer mentoring program administrators and student participants regarding students' social and academic success. Data analysis was conducted from the responses, observational data and document data. From the data, themes emerged indicating there are particular characteristics of peer mentoring programs that administrators will want to include to implement a meaningful program that will both increase learning and student engagement in college.

The implications of this inquiry will directly influence school leaders trying to create meaningful interventions to increase retention and completion rates in college. The findings in this study demonstrated successful mentoring programs include training to build community, provide opportunities to reflect upon both personal and academic growth, and set expectations of accountability and leadership.

