

Be the Blueprint: Peer Mentorship at NWC

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I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

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Abstract

The transition to college may present significant academic, social, and emotional challenges for first-year Northwest College students, potentially contributing to attrition rates and increased experiences of anxiety and depression. In response to existing survey data indicating these concerning trends, this project introduces a peer mentorship program designed to support freshmen through structured connections with sophomore mentors and increased exposure to campus resources. Current student retention data indicates the most severe attrition occurs between the first-year fall and spring semesters. It is hypothesized that a mentor will create a meaningful peer connection and improve awareness and utilization of academic and mental health support services. It is also hypothesized that the program will lead to increased student retention and reduced reports of anxiety and depression. The proposed mentorship program trains sophomore mentors to provide guidance based on lived experience, help mentees navigate academic expectations and campus systems, and share information about available support services. The program aims to strengthen engagement and persistence by fostering meaningful relationships, promote a sense of belonging, and ensure student needs are identified and addressed early in the college experience.