



Faculty Mentorship Program

Background

Transitioning from high school to post secondary education is challenging for most students. Student who have a disability have the additional hurdle of negotiating accommodations. Many of the students with disabilities are "tired of being different". They want to leave their disability behind, erroneously thinking "if you ignore it, it will go away", resulting in a disproportionately high ratio of students on academic probation after their first semester. Because these probationary students were less strong students to begin with, a large number of them are dismissed after one year.

Students with disabilities can and do succeed. Approximately thirty students with disabilities graduated in December 2007 or May 2008. Unfortunately a similar number were academically dismissed the same year. In the learning disabilities field, innumerable and varied strategies have been developed as a way to help these students succeed academically. Many of them "work". A close look at them reveals a common thread: one-on-one attention from a caring teacher. This program proposes that same mentoring relationship with a faculty member in the student's major field of interest.

The University is a committed to equity, access, and diversity. Students with disabilities represent a facet of diversity that has too often been ignored. With encouragement and support, students with disabilities can participate and contribute to both the University and the global society. Some of these students think in diverse and creative ways that are sometimes regarded as failure. If the University is a marketplace for diverse ideas, this should be valued and encouraged. Faculty mentoring will maximize these opportunities for success for the current students and be a strong recruitment factor.

Program Objectives:

- Personalize and enhance the University experience for students
- Assist students with disabilities understand and meet academic challenges and expectations
- Assist students connect their academic major with career goals
- Faculty will gain a better understanding of students and their individual talents
- Faculty will expand their knowledge of pedagogical theories and develop innovative teaching strategies
- Faculty will learn how Universal Design in Instruction can make their teaching easier and more inclusive.



Mentor Expectations:

- Attend a working lunch to learn more about program
- Attend 2-3 workshops on best practices and current issues in teaching students with disabilities
- Meet with your mentee on a regular basis

Interested in being a mentor?
Questions? Want more info?
Contact us.

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