

Empowering Peer Connections: A Student-Led Mentorship Model for Disability Services

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Who Are We?



Marina

- BA Communications:
Advertising & Public Relations
- Fun Fact: I spent my first year of
life in an orphanage in St.
Petersburg Russia



Amanda

- 5 years exp. in education
- 2 years exp. in DS
- Currently pursuing MBA:
I/O Psychology



STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES



Where do we work?

- **37** Autism Spectrum Disorder
- **138** ADHD
- **106** Learning Disorder
- **165** Chronic Health
- **272** Mental Health

362 Total Students

740 Diagnoses

Tell your neighbor!

What's one thing your hometown is known for?



Agenda

- Why Peer Mentorship Matters
- Introduction to the Mentor Program
- Role of the Student Intern
- Integration Process
- Beneficial Strategies
- Workshops & Campus Integration
- Assessment
- Program Impact
- Action Planning
- Closing Reflection & Q&A

Why Peer Mentorship Matters



**BUILDS BELONGING &
CONNECTION**



**ENCOURAGES SELF
ADVOCACY**



**IMPROVES RETENTION
AND INVOLVEMENT**

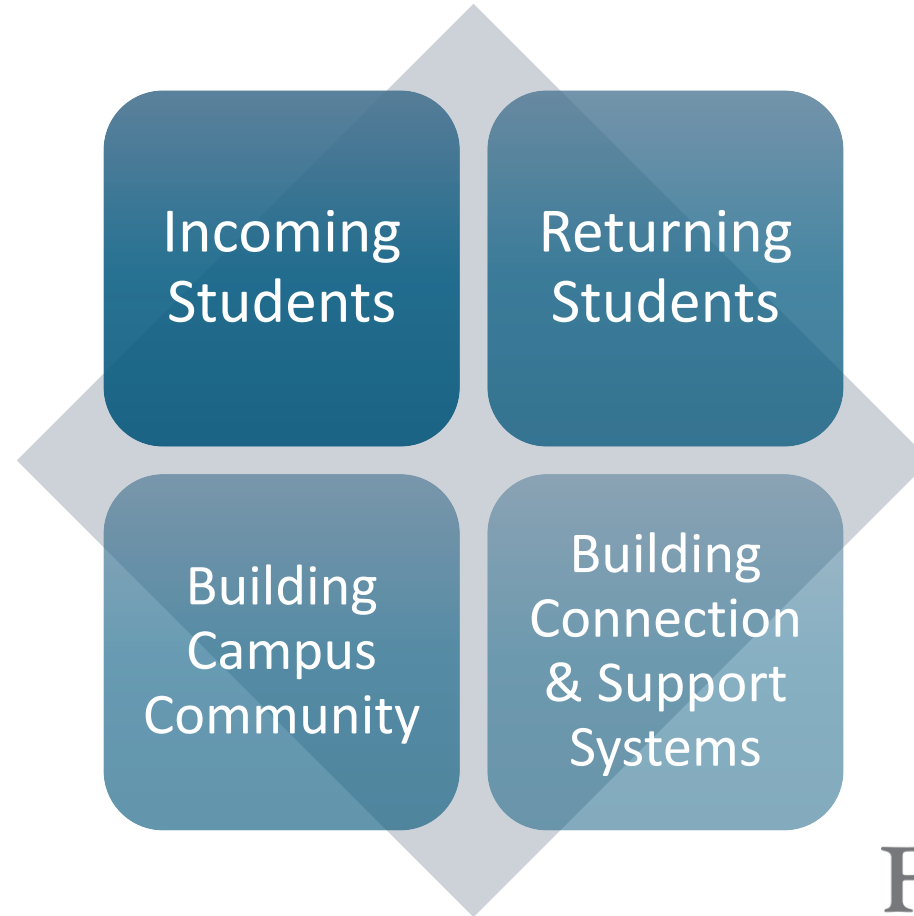
About the SDS Mentor Program

Designed for students registered with Disability Services

Focuses on transition + support

Peer-to-peer connection

Target Audience & Student Needs



Student-Led Model Overview

Program driven by student intern

Collaboration with SDS staff

Emphasis on lived experience

Role of the Student Intern

- Design of the program goals and program structure
- Contacting students and engaging with them
- Overseeing & creating Canvas modules
- Organizing Events and Collabs with Campus partners
- Creating incentive systems to keep student engagement
- Evaluating program goals

Student Perspective



**COMMUNICATION IS
EVERYTHING!**

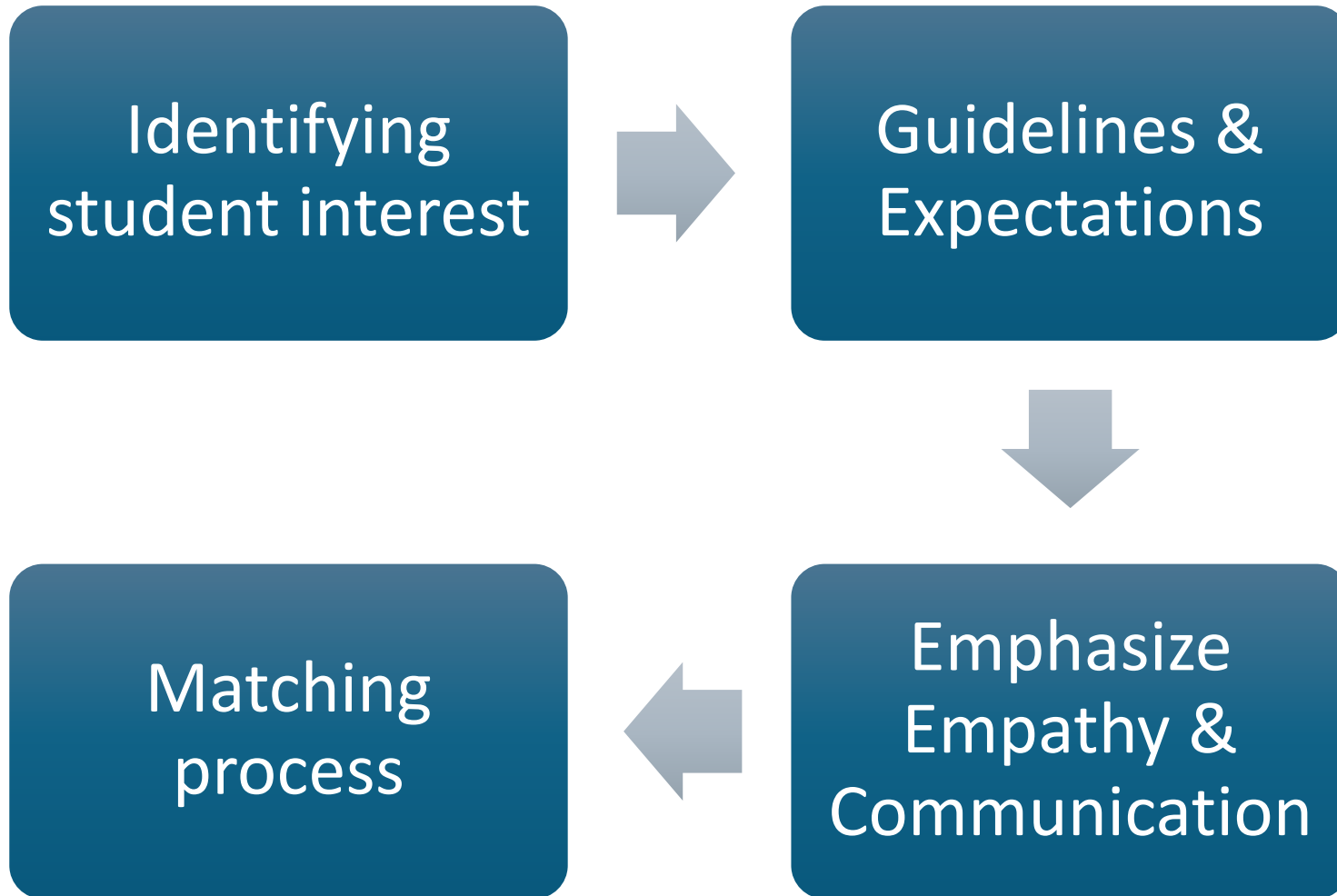


**LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT**



**WORK-COLLEGE
BALANCE & PLANNING**

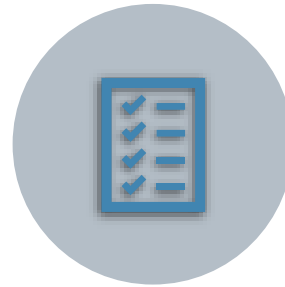
Mentor Recruitment & Selection Process



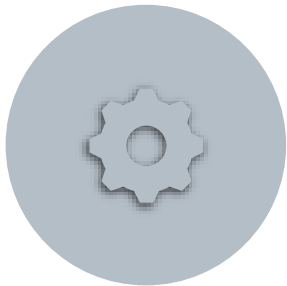
Program Design Process



Collaboration with
Campus resources



Student Satisfaction
Surveys each semester



Monthly Goal &
Involvement Sheets



Improvements based on
student feedback /
Resources available

Mentor & Mentee Strategies



**EXPECTATIONS &
BOUNDARIES**



INCLUSIVE MINDSET



**COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES**

Check-Ins



CANVAS



INVOLVEMENT SHEETS



GROUPME

Turn & Talk

1. Goal Setting

- Discuss 1 goal for the month (personal, academic, social)

2. Support

- What support or resources will you need to complete the goal?

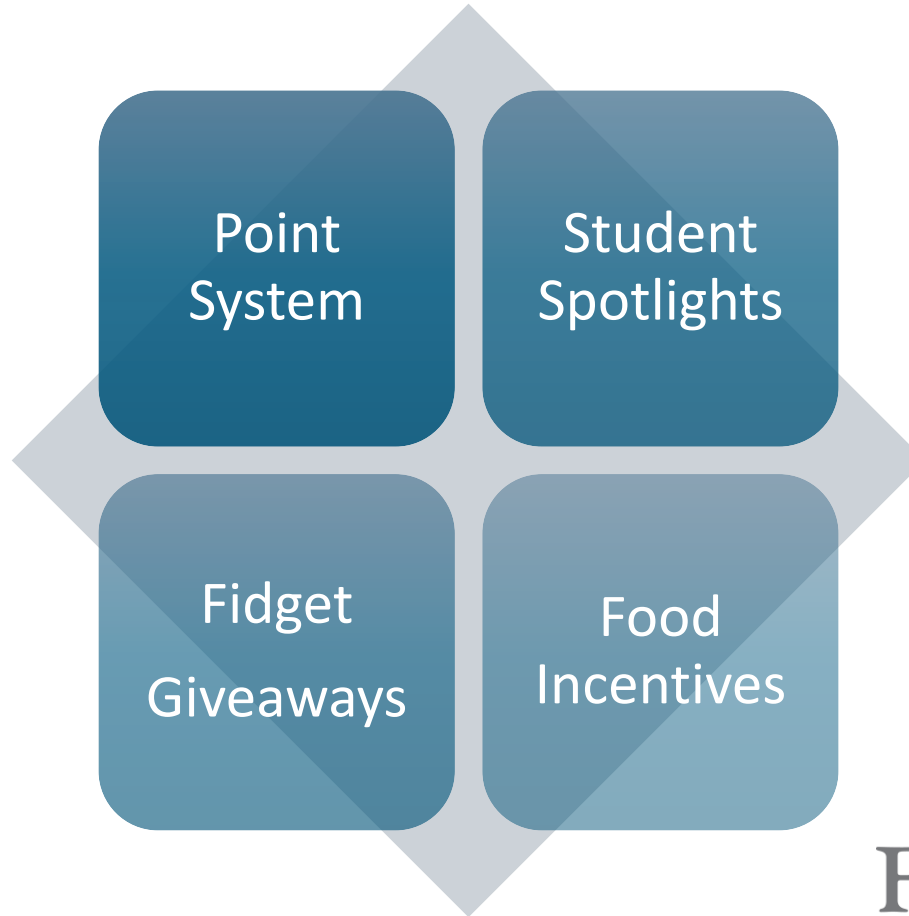
3. Reflect

- Reflect on the created goal and discuss progress

4. Get Involved

- Is there anything you did outside of the program to help you get involved with campus?

Engagement Strategies



Workshops

Student Success

Career Readiness

Wellness

Campus Integration

Ways they have supported our program:

- Information to students they otherwise would not have known
- Impacts of student wellness, career readiness, and knowing about the available resources the campus has to offer

Assessment & Feedback



INVOLVEMENT SHEETS



DISCUSSIONS



**SURVEYS MID & END
OF SEMESTER**

Freshman feels
overwhelmed



Meet with their
mentor



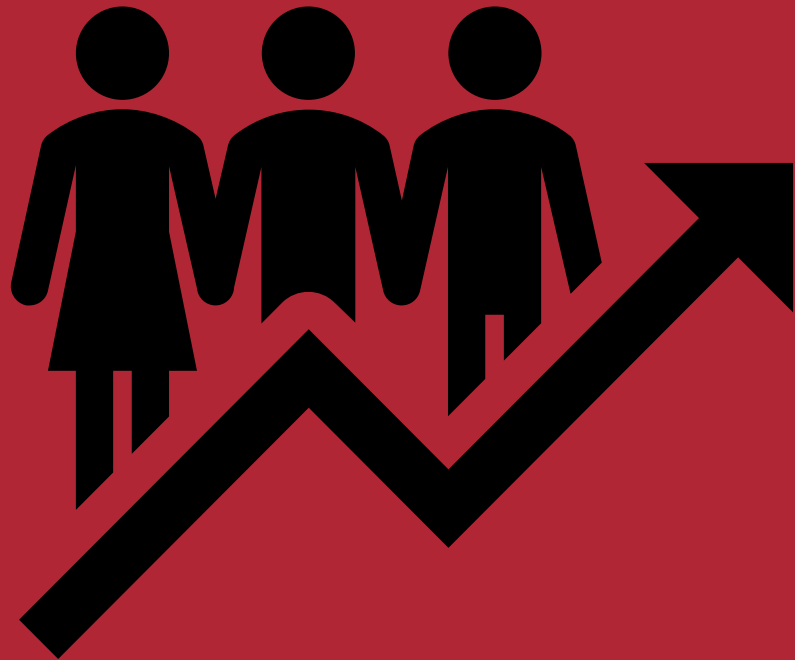
Student feels
supported and
part of the
community



Attend campus
events with mentor

Program Impact

Empowering Student Leadership



- Giving Upperclassmen a leadership role
- Improving student's self esteem
- Increases student's overall campus experience

Scenario Activity

A mentee shares that they don't feel very involved in the program and aren't sure they are benefitting from it.

- How can the program check in on mentee engagement earlier?
- What structures or resources might need improvement?
- How can feedback from mentees be used to strengthen the program overall?

Group Share-Out



Action Planning

- What is ONE step you can take to strengthen your program or student leadership in your role?
- Write it down and when you will do it!

Q&A + Reflection

Thank you!



Session Evaluation

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Thank you for attending!

Your feedback helps shape future programming.

