

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Mentors Matter: The Impact of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Mentorship Relationship

Abstract approved:

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Mentoring can have a great impact on students during their higher education career. This influential role of mentors can be found valuable for a wide variety of populations, and has specifically monumental influences for underrepresented students. The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) aims to facilitate the mentor-mentee relationship for historically disenfranchised and underrepresented students who are interested in exploring a career in higher education and student affairs.

In this study, returning participants of the NUFP program were interviewed and the positive effects of their mentorship experience were identified. Research in this study focused on the question; what are the positive effects for historically disenfranchised and underrepresented undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing a career in higher education and student affairs by working with a professional mentor? Additionally, the epistemological approach of testimonios situated the researcher as part of the NUFP community. This approach elicited personal knowledge and emotions that a typical evaluation cannot reach.

This study found that having a professional mentor as a historically underrepresented and disenfranchised student improves experiences during one's undergraduate education journey. A clear understanding of the ways in which these students were impacted has been

identified. The current research on mentor relationships can be transcribed across many disciplines and levels of university studies. The significance of these findings is that in the future, academic programs may be confident when encouraging their diverse student populations to seek out a professional mentor, with whom they can form a working relationship.

Keywords: student affairs, mentor, mentorship, NUFP
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Mentors Matter: The Impact of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows

Mentorship Relationship

by

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I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, University Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

Jenesis Rose Samai, Author

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Mentors Matter: The Impact of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Mentorship Relationship

Chapter One: Introduction

Mentorship relationships can have a great impact on students during their higher education career (Allen & Eby, 2010; Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Freeman, 1999; Jacobi, 1991; Nora & Crisp, 2007; Sullivan, 2001; Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001; Patitu & Terrell, 1997). The act of engaging in a mentorship relationship can be understood as a working relationship between a mentor and a mentee, in which a mentor targets their efforts on helping their mentees develop a new body of knowledge through a variety of interactions and insights (Nora & Crisp, 2007; Redmond, 1990). A mentee and mentor will likely share a common interest in which the emphasis of their relationship is centered (Allen & Eby, 2010; Harvard Business School Press, 2004). A mentor typically possesses a level of experience that allows them to help guide a less-experienced individual (Jacobi, 1991; Whitfield & Edwards, 2011). Mentees are typically seeking to learn from the mentorship relationship, and look to their mentors as a role model that can help guide, train, and support them. In this thesis, I will identify the positive influence professional mentors can have working with historically disenfranchised and underrepresented students who are interested in pursuing a career in the higher education student affairs field.

The Value of Mentorship

A meta-analysis of mentoring college students by Crisp and Cruz (2009) identified some of the benefits of having a mentor, including: psychological/emotional

support, goal setting and career paths, academic subject knowledge support, and role modeling.

In a study by Taub and McEwen (2006) current graduate students reported that encouragement and influence for their pursuit of higher education in the student affairs field came from a specific person or persons. Respondents' influential sponsors most frequently were mentors; either previous employers, or advisors of student organizations (Taub & McEwen, 2006). This influential role of mentor can be found valuable for a wide variety of populations, and has specifically monumental influences for underrepresented students. (Allen & Eby, 2010; Chan, 2008; Freeman, 1999; Stayhorn & Terrell, 2007; Rendon, 1994).

The Role of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program

The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) aims to facilitate the mentor/mentee relationship for historically disenfranchised and underrepresented students who are interested in exploring a career in higher education and student affairs (Patitu & Terrell, 1997). The professional organization for the student affairs field, NASPA, identifies nine learning outcomes for NUFP scholars: writing, research, and presentation skills; ethical decision making skills; cultural competency skills; professional networking skills; ability to identify and develop personal, academic, and career goals; awareness and understanding of engaged citizenship and service; an understanding about multiple relationships to power and privilege; an understanding of the history, mission, and purpose of student affairs and the various institutional types and structures within higher education; and an understanding of NASPA's organization and structure. While mentor-mentee relationships are advised to base their relationship

around the achievement of these learning outcomes, it is still up to the partnership to decide and define their joint experiences. NUFP participants may also achieve these learning outcomes through conferences, institutes, online learning modules, and newsletters sponsored by NASPA.

Hypothesis

This study expects to find that having a professional mentor as a historically underrepresented and disenfranchised student improves experiences during one's undergraduate education journey. Historically underrepresented and minoritized students may not have the same cultural capital as other students (Sullivan, 2001). Cultural capital in regard to their knowledge of student affairs can be positively influenced through the mentorship relationship that is facilitated by NUFP. Through the student's working relationship with his or her mentor these students can have an improved undergraduate experience with positive effects on career development and future plans (Wright & Wright, 1987).

Research Approach

In order to identify the positive effects of having a professional mentor as a historically disenfranchised and underrepresented student that is interested in pursuing a career in the higher education student affairs field, this research will evaluate experiences through interviews about the mentorship relationships of current NUFP participants who have been in the program for at least one year. Positive aspects of the mentor-mentee relationship will be the focus of conversation within the interviews. Interviews will include reflection on the participant's original goals and desires for their participation in the program, as well as their actualized gains from the program. Themes will be

identified for each interview question separately after being read and processed by the author, a process commonly used in the analysis of qualitative research (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003; LeCompte, 2000). The basis by which themes will be identified is the similarity of responses among participants' answers. These themes will then be compared against the four-domain conceptual framework that has been identified by Nora and Crisp (2007) and further researched through a meta-analysis by Crisp and Cruz (2009), using a community college population Crisp (2009) and an undergraduate student population from a Hispanic Serving Institution Crisp (2008).

The epistemological approach of testimonios will situate the student researcher as part of the NUFPP community, which shapes my desire to complete this research (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, & Carmona, 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). This approach will elicit personal knowledge and emotions that a typical evaluation cannot reach. Reyes and Curry Rodriguez (2012) identify the origins, terms, and resources surrounding testimonios. Testimonio in Latin America has been transformed and integrated into qualitative research in an influential way. The Latin American, testimonio, is comparable to the North American memoir, and is used to achieve in depth understandings. The authors define testimonios as a type of writing that entails a first person oral or written account, drawing on experimental, self-conscious, narrative practice to articulate an urgent voicing of something to which one bears witness (Reyes and Curry Rodriguez, 2012).

The Value of This Study

There is a lack of empirically sound research on the benefits of mentorship for the mentee (Rhodes, 2002). Through the current research approach, the interviewer will elicit

an in depth understanding of the effects of the mentorship relationship for a participant of the NUFPP program. As the interviewer is also a participant of the program, the use of the participant-as-researcher approach will also build stronger rapport than a typical interview would. The current research on mentor relationships can be transcribed across many disciplines and levels of university studies to promote a more personable and relatable experience for students. The significance of these findings will be that in the future, academic programs may be confident when encouraging their diverse student populations to seek out a professional mentor in which they can form a working relationship with.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Patitu and Terrell (1997) evaluated the campus-based experience, Summer Leadership Institute, and Summer Internship that is facilitated by the NASPA Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program. The NASPA Minority Undergraduate Fellows Program (MUFP) is now referred to as the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP). Participants in the study completed two questionnaires: the MUFP Fellow Evaluation, and the MUFP Mentor Evaluation (Patitu & Terrell, 1997). The questions that specifically evaluated the campus-based experience (mentor-fellow relationship) are most relevant to the present research. Topics that were covered in their questionnaire were: the goals and objectives of the program, student affairs and higher education knowledge, program engagement and activities, and the mentor's influence on their current and future academic, social, and emotional well-being (Patitu & Terrell, 1997). The study concluded that a factor leading to MUFP being perceived as a very successful program was the relationship with a mentor, and mentoring and networking experiences both on campus and through other professional opportunities (Patitu & Terrell, 1997). Questions that were asked by Patitu and Terrell (1997) in regard to the campus-based experience (mentor-fellow relationship) were used as guides for the current studies interview questions.

Patitu and Terrell (1997) completed their research 15 years ago and a replication study should be completed for the current program goals. Additionally, the approach of written surveys does not allow for participants to freely share in-depth details about their experiences with their mentors. The current study will allow for participants to express the positive effects of having a mentor through the NUFP program in their own individual ways through conversational interviews.

Taub and McEwen (2006) researched the reasons graduate students in student affairs master's programs decided to enter the field. A large majority of 80.3% of respondents said that a specific person or persons heavily influenced them. Respondents' influential sponsors most frequently were mentors, either previous employers or advisors of student organizations (Taub & McEwen, 2006).

According to a recent publication by the National Center for Education Statistics, there has been increasing in diverse populations of students ("Digest of Education Statistics, 2013," 2013). This increase has created a need for equally diverse levels of student affairs professionals. To have adequately prepared student affairs professionals, graduate programs need to have sufficient training provided for their students to be prepared to help enhance the experiences of diverse student populations.

In a review of cultural capital and educational attainment, Sullivan (2001) asserts that cultural capital consists of familiarity with the dominant culture in a society. This can be said to be true of the educational society within a higher educational institution, where the act of participating in higher education is the dominant culture of society (Meyer, 1977). The article also finds that the ability to understand and use 'educated' language can be influenced by one's level of cultural capital within a society (Yosso, 2006). Through the NUFPP program, mentees will begin their education of the student affairs language, habits, and culture through their mentorship relationship with an established professional in the field (Dam, 2014; Cuyjet, Longwell-Grice, & Molina, 2009).

Nora and Crisp (2007) identified four major domains of the benefits of having a mentor, including: psychological/emotional support, goal setting and career paths,

academic subject knowledge support, and role modeling, through a meta-analysis of mentoring college students.

The construct of psychological/emotional support can be understood as a sense of listening, providing moral support, identifying problems and providing encouragement while establishing a supportive relationship between the student and the mentor (Nora & Crisp, 2007). The second domain, goal setting and career paths, is the underlying notion that mentors will assess student's strengths and weaknesses and abilities and assist with setting academic or career goals and help in decision making (Nora & Crisp, 2007). The third construct, academic subject knowledge support, exemplifies the acquisition of necessary skills and knowledge through education, evaluation, and challenging the mentee academically with a focus on their relational goal (Nora & Crisp, 2007). The subject knowledge support that will occur in the NASPA NUFPP mentorship relationships are the sharing of student affairs knowledge. The final domain, role model, identifies the ability for the mentee to learn from their mentor's present and past actions and achievements or failures (Nora & Crisp, 2007). This domain stresses the importance of sharing life experiences and feelings by the mentor to personalize the mentor/mentee relationship (Nora & Crisp, 2007). These four domains will be used in the analysis of participants' responses in the current research study.

Chapter 3: Method

Participants

Participants were 4 undergraduate students at Oregon State University (OSU). Participation was voluntary and without compensation. Purposive sampling targeted participants based on their status as a member of the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) for at least one year. A strong rapport had previously been built, as the participants knew the interviewer through her involvement in the NUFP program.

Procedure

All individuals who met the criteria for the population of NUFP students, who have had a professional mentor within the program for at least one year, were initially approached via e-mail by the NUFP coordinator (See Appendix A). Interested individuals responded to the e-mail and contacted the student researcher to arrange a single one-hour interview to discuss their mentorship experiences within the program. Interviews were conducted in a conference room within a student affairs department at OSU. At the one-on-one interview, participants were presented with the Informed Consent form (See Appendix B). The Informed Consent process lasted no longer than 10 minutes, as participants read the materials and had verbal explanations presented. Within the Informed Consent process, participants indicated their consent to have their responses recorded. Any questions participants had regarding the study were addressed before the interview began. Participants were presented with a copy of the Informed Consent form for their records.

Participants were then presented with nine questions by the student researcher (See Appendix C). In response to each question, participants responded to the extent to

which they wished to divulge. The researcher did not ask for any additional information, except when needed to clarify an understanding of particular terms that were used in the participants' explanations.

No deception took place during the study. Participants' specific demographic information was not asked to ensure a sense of comfort in personal disclosure. When the participants completed answering their final question, they were thanked for their participation in the study and reminded that if they had additional questions, the research team was available.

Audio recordings of all interviews were transcribed to a word processing application on a password-protected computer to ensure confidentiality. Once all interviews were complete and transcribed, the student researcher then identified common themes among participants' responses by using qualitative coding methods.

Materials

Upon entering the study, participants completed an intake process including informed consent. Participants responded to the same nine interview questions:

1. Please tell me about the first time you met your mentor?
2. How did your mentorship relationship begin?
3. What were some of your expectations, goals, or desires you had when you first started your mentorship?
4. What has been your favorite experience with your mentor?
5. What have you learned from your mentor?
6. How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?

7. Would you recommend your mentorship experience to others?
8. How do you think the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program has influenced your relationship with your mentor?
9. In what ways have you interacted with your Mentor?

Chapter 4: Research Findings

In the present study, we aimed to answer the question; What are the positive effects for historically disenfranchised and underrepresented undergraduate students who are interested in pursuing a career in higher education and student affairs of working with a professional mentor? It was predicted that having a professional mentor as a historically underrepresented and disenfranchised student improves experiences during one's undergraduate education journey.

Many themes emerged from the interview responses of participants outlining the ways these participants view their experiences within their NUFPP mentorship relationship. Themes were identified for each interview question separately after being read and processed by the author multiple times, a process commonly used in the analysis of qualitative research (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003; LeCompte, 2000). The basis by which common themes have been identified is the similarity of responses among participants' answers. In this chapter, the most common themes are expressed with examples. A full list of all themes appear in Table 1.

Please tell me about the first time you met your mentor?

All participants expressed that when they first met their mentor, they experienced a great deal of open and friendly interactions. One participant shared, "She's (my mentor) just like a wonderful person, very warm, nice. So, I felt like I had known her forever, just talking with her."

It was mentioned frequently that the mentor and the mentee had a previous relationship, and that the mentee felt that they were similar to their mentor in personality type. Each participant also took time to speak of their mentor's job title and status.

How did your mentorship relationship begin?

The main theme that was identified by all participants was that they had a previous relationship and felt a quick connection. One participant felt a strong connection because of shared identities, "...it's nice to have someone that you can relate to and talk to about a lot of issues pertaining to social justice because that's what we talk about most of the time when we meet in our one-on-ones." One-on-one meetings and e-mail conversations were the two main means of communication used between mentors and mentees.

Consistently participants indicated that their mentorship relationships were made possible due to previously outlined recommendations of how to start and continue a mentorship relationship by the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program. It was with the backbone of NUFP that participants felt confident and encouraged to stem a mentorship relationship with such distinguished individuals.

What were some of your expectations, goals, or desires you had when you first started your mentorship?

The highlighted expectation, goal, or desire participants expressed was to learn about their mentors experiences and passions. One participants noted, "I wanted someone who was really settled in their field and student affairs in general who had really been places and seen a lot of fun stuff and could really advise me on a variety of things."

Additionally, participants wanted to learn about student affairs and explore the field by making connections. Another participant shared, "I think more than anything, honestly was to learn how to network..." Participants also indicated that they had a

discussion with their mentors about each other's commitment to their relationship, and their expectations of time and work.

What has been your favorite experience with your mentor?

All participants indicated that they were able to be vulnerable in sharing personal details of their lives, while also receiving the same amount of vulnerability from their mentors. Mentees also expressed their appreciation for being able to share their future plans and share in new experiences such as conferences or retreats in which traveling with their mentor in new spaces occurred.

What have you learned from your mentor?

When sharing things that mentees have learned from their mentors, it was specifically mentioned that graduate school, future jobs, and goal setting were focused on. Participants learned from their mentors what student affairs is and how professional organizations and networking can influence a career in this field. However, the interview responses indicated that the biggest lesson that every participant learned from their mentor has been about the potential options within student affairs that they could pursue. Specifically, the exploration of future plans and learning how flexibility can be a valuable skill to have in the field of student affairs was the most commonly mentioned lesson. A participant described their experience with this topic by saying, "He (my mentor) recognizes that this is an exploration program and that whatever choice I make at the end of the day is the right choice for me." Through supportive conversations, mentees learned how to explore their options and make good choices for themselves in multiple areas of their lives.

How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?

All participants described their relationship with their mentor as a friendship, and indicated positive feelings towards their mentor. Ways that participants indicated these feelings were by using words and phrases such as, “I’ve enjoyed my time with her, she’s great,” “I know he’s always there for me,” “The first thing that came to mind is a partnership, or equality.” They all also indicated that they expect their mentorship friendship to continue long into their future and felt that they have made a connection for life. Participants further indicated that these bonds were created through open and vulnerable moments of sharing from both the mentors and themselves.

Would you recommend your mentorship experience to others?

Each participant explained that they would recommend their mentorship experience to others who were looking for a relationship as unique as theirs. After describing their unique way of interacting with their mentor, participants indicated that their relationships are perfect because of the way that the two involved were able to connect. It was specifically mentioned that future NUFP participants should take initiative to seek out a mentorship relationship with someone you really connect with.

How do you think the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program has influenced your relationship with your mentor?

When reflecting on the influence of the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program on their relationship with their mentors, participants answers were centered around two main themes: preparation for their future in student affairs, and structuring their relationship around the NUFP learning outcomes. One participant shared, “...It’s (the NUFP program) like accountability because it’s a program that we’re in.” Accountability

to participate was shared by both the mentor and the mentee as they both willingly agreed to this relationship.

Communication about each of the mentorships' unique expectations and flexibility built in to the program description made it possible for participants to experience a personalized relationship. Participants also shared that they appreciated getting to work with their fellow NUFPs and others mentors.

In what ways have you interacted with your Mentor?

Professional interactions at conferences, retreats, NUFP facilitated meetings, or in work roles were the most commonly described ways of interacting with one's mentor. Participants also mentioned that they interacted in casual settings as well such as social events, one-on-one meetings, and as friends by talking about things other than career or academic goals.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Discussion

This thesis identified the positive influence professional mentors can have when working with historically disenfranchised and underrepresented students who are interested in pursuing a career in the higher education student affairs field. It was predicted that NUFP mentee responses would express monumental influences from their professional mentors as underrepresented students (Allen & Eby, 2010; Chan, 2008; Freeman, 1999; Stayhorn & Terrell, 2007; Rendon, 1994). Interviews were conducted with students at Oregon State University who were returning participants of the NASPA NUFP program; participants shared personal accounts of experiences that support the common belief that students who participate in a mentorship relationship are greatly impacted, as stated by Crisp and Cruz in 2009, Sullivan in 2001, and Patitu and Terrell in 1997. The responses from participants were likely very honest and open due to the fact that the interviewer had established rapport as a participant of the program, herself. This allowed participants to use comfortable language to express their experiences in a way that was personalized and true. Deeper responses were likely shared due to the epistemological nature of testimonios (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, & Carmona, 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012).

The predicted monumental influences from working with a professional mentor, as a NUFP participant can be seen in the following quotes from mentees: “It’s (NUFP mentorship-relationship) based on what people need.” “Because of NUFP I found out my passion and what I want to do as a career.” “You get to meet awesome people and you gain a mentor who will probably be your best friend forever. And someone you can just chat to about anything, ‘cause the people that are the mentors, they’re awesome. They’re

here for a reason, they're a mentor for reasons, because they genuinely care." "It took a lot of people believing in me and a lot of people seeing something inspiring or some type of leadership in me and investing in me academically, spiritually, socially, you know, professionally. And, I felt that that's kind of the cycle of this mentor relationship that I have to do the same for other folks."

Nora and Crisp (2007) proposed a four-domain framework of mentorship through a meta-analysis of mentoring college students. The four benefits of having a mentor, included: psychological/emotional support, goal setting and career paths, academic subject knowledge support, and role modeling. The current research study further provides evidence to support such benefits.

Psychological/emotional support was exemplified in many themes that emerged in the present study. Specifically, psychological/emotional support can be seen through: open, friendly interactions, quick connection, commitment to relationship, vulnerable moments of sharing, talking about future plans, sharing in new experiences, being flexible, how to be genuine, vulnerable, real, and humble, positive-like friendship, long-term and future relationship, open and vulnerable sharing, and good and strong connection. One participant shared, "I can be vulnerable with her (mentor) and it's something I don't think I could've gotten with any other mentor." Another said, "I also really needed someone that could be a close friend with and be a support with. That I could really bond with really easily." The similarity-attraction paradigm proposed by Byrne (1971) illustrates the belief that when an individual perceives another as being more similar to him or her, they will also like them more. The bonds that has been formed by a solid connection and similar identities between participants and their

mentors cultivate a similar-attraction relationship therefore making it easier for close connections between mentors and mentees to be built in the NUFP program. Another participant said, “I feel like I can talk to him (mentor) about anything. I talk to him about my relationship problems, I talk to him kind of about me in general, it doesn’t always have to be talking about student affairs...” A final example of the psychological support participants have felt was expressed when a participant shared, “Having the vulnerability and the open and honest communication I hope most mentor-mentee pairings have and that they are really able to talk about deep things and work on themselves and have those conversations.”

From the themes that emerged, participants indicated that goal setting and career paths occurred through: learning about student affairs and exploring the field, talking about future plans, sharing in new experiences, being flexible, professional organizations and networking, and preparation for future in student affairs. Goal setting and career paths can be seen in the following quotes, “She was just always really awesome and I knew that she had my best interest at heart and she gave me really great information that was valuable and really got me on the straight and narrow in deciding whether or not I wanted to actively and seriously pursue student affairs.” “I learned flexibility from her (mentor). I learned how to be, I guess, secure in my decisions and my career goals. And to be able to have tangible goals and to actively work to keep those goals, step by step.” Additionally, this domain was supported when a participant shared, “He (mentor) is helping me make connections and teaching me about graduate school applications and graduate school programs and NASPA and involvement and knowledge communities.”

Academic subject knowledge support is to be replicated in the current study as the ability for the mentor to share with the mentee information about student affairs, as that is the subject of which knowledge support and sharing is focused around. A participant expressed, “There’s so many people who do awesome work in student affairs but they also transcend that boundary of academic and student affairs which was very appealing to me.” This participant later shared, “I knew that I had a lot of work to do in terms of making those professional networks. So, when I applied to the program I knew that I needed that support and with being a woman of color from a low socioeconomic status I wouldn’t have those opportunities if it wasn’t presented to me in the way that NUFPP was.” Academic subject knowledge support can be further supported through the themes of: learning about student affairs and explore the field, talking about future plans, what is student affairs, options in graduate school, jobs and goals, professional organizations and networking, preparation for future in student affairs, professional interactions, and work roles.

Another benefit of having a mentor as identified by Nora and Crisp (2007) is role modeling. Role modeling was indicated by participants in the themes: similar to self, mentors expectations of time and work similar to personal desires, sharing in new experiences, how to be genuine, vulnerable, real, and humble, one-on-one meetings, and social events. One participant shared, “...a lot of students look up to her (mentor) as a role model and mentor, sometimes mom.” Seeing one’s mentor as a role model can set up a close relationship and give much weight to the influence of their opinions and advice. Another participant said, “When I made that decision (to go with their mentor) I think that was probably one of the biggest, best decisions I could’ve made in my academic

career right now in preparation for my future. And I think that with her (mentor) like talking about experiences and stuff like that, it gave me a different insight into different fields in student affairs. And, I realized what I didn't want to do, and things I did want to do.”

Overall, this study concludes that the four-domain conceptual theory presented by Nora and Crisp (2007) are also present in the experiences of the NUFP students of this study. Participants of the current research study have provided much evidence to support the four individual domains. Therefore, this study reinforces the continual use of Nora and Crisp's four-domain conceptual theory of mentorship for students (Nora & Crisp, 2007).

Future studies on the impact of the NASPA NUFP mentorship relationship should include a quantitative approach as well as qualitative. The current research study serves as a preliminary in-depth understanding of a few students' opinions regarding their mentorship relationship experiences. A larger sample size of NUFP students can therefore further validate the current studies findings. In future studies, the research team may want to have an interviewer that does not have previous relationships with interviewees conduct the interviews. This may then lower the influence of interviewer demand characteristics on participants' responses.

The current study on mentor relationships can be transcribed across many disciplines and levels of university studies to promote a more personable and relatable experience for students. The significance of these findings are that in the future academic programs may be confident when encouraging their diverse student populations to seek out a professional mentor with whom they can form a working relationship. This study

concludes that having underrepresented students with an interest in student affairs participate in mentorship relationships with professional mentors produces monumental impact. Therefore, this study further recommends that institutions with an interest in the future of underrepresented students' places in student affairs encourage their current student affairs practitioners to serve as mentors to mentees that can participate in the NASPA NUFP program.

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Table 1

Themes From Interview Responses

Questions	Themes
Please tell me about the first time you met your mentor?	Open, friendly interactions Similar to self Previous relationship Title and status
How did your mentorship relationship begin?	Previous relationship Quick connection NUFP facilitated New relationships
What were some of your expectations, goals, or desires you had when you first started your mentorship?	Mentors' experiences and passions Learning about student affairs and explore the field Commitment to relationship Mentors expectations of time and work similar to personal desires
What has been your favorite experience with your mentor?	Vulnerable moments of sharing Talking about future plans Sharing in new experiences
What have you learned from your mentor?	What is student affairs Options in graduate school, jobs and goals Being flexible Professional organizations and networking How to be genuine, vulnerable, real, and humble
How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?	Positive-like friendship Long-term and future relationship Open and vulnerable sharing
Would you recommend your mentorship experience to others?	Yes Find good and strong connection
How do you think the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program has influenced your relationship with your mentor?	Preparation for future in student affairs Structured relationship around NUFP learning outcomes Communication and flexibility in requirements Ability to work with fellow NUFPs and

mentors

In what ways have you interacted with your Mentor?

Professional interactions (conferences, retreats, NUFJ facilitated group meetings)
Work roles (work or internships)
One-on-one meetings
Social events

Appendix A

Recruiting Tool: E-mail

Title: Mentors Matter: The Impact of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Mentorship Relationship

Principal Investigator: Dr. Larry Roper

Dear Students,

My name is Jenesis Samai and I am an undergraduate Psychology student in the University Honors College. This academic year, I plan to conduct a research study on the positive aspects of the mentorship experiences of NUFP scholars at Oregon State University. The results of this study will be used to write my Honors College Thesis in partial completion of an Honors Associates Bachelors of Science (B.S.) degree in Psychology within the University Honors College at Oregon State University.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research study. The study would ask that you participant in an individual one-on-one audio taped interview in which you will share and reflect on your NUFP mentorship experiences. All interviews will take place during the Fall 2013 term.

If you are interested in sharing your experience, please email me at samai@onid.orst.edu or contact me via text or phone at 541-254-1168. I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Jenesis Samai
University Honors College Student
Oregon State University

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Mentors Matter: The Impact of The NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Mentorship Relationship
Principal Investigator: Dr. Larry Roper
Student Researcher: Jenesis Samai
Co-Investigator(s):
Sponsor: Unfunded
Version Date: August 20, 2013

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This form contains information you will need to help you decide whether to be in this research study or not. Please read the form carefully and ask the study team member(s) questions about anything that is not clear.

2. WHY IS THIS RESEARCH STUDY BEING DONE?

The purpose of this research study is to explore the value of having a professional mentor in your field of study as a NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) Undergraduate Fellows Program scholar.

This study is being done as part of the fulfillment of an Honors College thesis at Oregon State University.

Up to 5 people may be invited to take part in this study.

3. WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you are in the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) at Oregon State University who has built a working relationship with a professional mentor.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY?

The study activities include an interview in which you will be asked to discuss your experiences of working with a professional mentor as a part of your NUFP experience at Oregon State University. Your interview will be recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

Study duration: The single interview will take about one hour.

Recordings:

_____ I agree to be audio recorded.

Initials

_____ I do not agree to be audio recorded.

Initials

Storage and Future use of data or samples: All data collected will be stored without identifiers in a password protected computer system. The data will be retained unidentifiably for at least three years. Information regarding the specifics of all data will be retained separately.

Because it is not possible for us to know what studies may be a part of our future work, we ask that you give permission now for us to use your personal information without being contacted about each future study. Future use of your information will be limited to studies about the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program. If you agree now to future use of your personal information, but decide in the future that you would like to have your personal information removed from the research database, please contact Dr. Larry Roper at Larry.Roper@oregonstate.edu.

_____ You may store my interview data for use in future studies.

Initials

_____ You may not store my interview data for use in future studies.

Initials

Future contact: We may contact you in the future for another similar study. You may ask us to stop contacting you at any time.

Study Results: All findings from the current study will be analyzed for the purpose of completing an Honors College thesis at Oregon State University. No personal identifiers will be used in the presentation of this study's findings. The thesis will be saved in the Scholar's Archive within the Oregon State University library. If the findings are significant, further sharing of this study may be shared at national conferences.

5. WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND POSSIBLE DISCOMFORTS OF THIS STUDY?

The foreseeable risks for this study are very low. One possible risk is for psychological discomfort in the process of personal disclosure. If there is a topic that is touched upon within the interview, participants may at any time indicate that they wish to skip a question without penalty.

6. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You will likely not benefit from being in this study. One potential for benefit may come from the reflection of your interactions with your mentor. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because the experiences for historically

disenfranchised and underrepresented students who are interested in pursuing a career in higher education and student affairs.

7. WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. Federal regulatory agencies and the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you.

If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public.

The audio recordings that are made during your interview will not be published in any way, or be made public. They will only be accessible by the Primary Investigator and student researcher. The Primary Investigator and student researcher may view data collected from the audio recording transcription.

To help ensure confidentiality, we will not keep any personally identifiable information with the interview audio recordings. All information and documents from this study will be kept in a safe and confidential place. The data collected will be entered into a secure file system on a password-protected computer.

8. WHAT OTHER CHOICES DO I HAVE IF I DO NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

Optional questions: This interview will include optional questions. If you feel at any time that there are questions that you wish to skip, you may indicate this at anytime without any penalty. If you decide to skip parts of this study, your decision will have no effect on the quality of treatment.

9. WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: Dr. Larry Roper at Larry.Roper@oregonstate.edu.

If you have questions about your rights or welfare as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office, at (541) 737-8008 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu

10. WHAT DOES MY SIGNATURE ON THIS CONSENT FORM MEAN?

Your signature indicates that this study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed): _____

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

(Signature of Person Obtaining Consent)

(Date)

Appendix C

Test Instruments: Interview Questions

Title: Mentors Matter: The Impact of the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Mentorship Relationship

Principal Investigator: Dr. Larry Roper

1. Please tell me about the first time you met your mentor?
2. How did your mentorship relationship begin?
3. What were some of your expectations, goals, or desires you had when you first started your mentorship?
4. What has been your favorite experience with your mentor?
5. What have you learned from your mentor?
6. How would you describe your relationship with your mentor?
7. Would you recommend your mentorship experience to others?
8. How do you think the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program has influenced your relationship with your mentor?
9. In what ways have you interacted with your mentor?

