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### DocStu: Creating an E-Mentoring Program to Support Current and Prospective Doctoral Students

Chelsea Cromartie

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# **Consultancy Project Executive Summary**

Organization: Gardner-Webb University School of Education

Project Title: DocStu: Creating an E-Mentoring Program to Support  
Current and Prospective Doctoral Students

Candidate: Chelsea Cromartie

Consultancy Coach: Dr. Jeff Hamilton

Defense Date: July 3, 2020

Authorized by: Dr. Geleana D. Alston/Associate Professor

## Amendment History

<u>Version</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
Version 1	May 29, 2020	Initial version.
Version 2	June 26, 2020	Formatting and minor editing changes.

## Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Chelsea Cromartie under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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Dr. Jeff Hamilton, Faculty Advisor  
Gardner-Webb University

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Date

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Dr. Geleana D. Alston, Site Advisor  
Associate Professor

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Date

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank God, the creator of all things, for blessing me with the opportunity of life and the ability to learn. To my ancestors, thank you for your sacrifices, blood, sweat and tears. Without you, there would be no me. I want to thank myself for seeing this process through to the end, even with all of the life changes and obstacles I have had to encounter in the past three years. I want to thank my parents for their everlasting love and support. To my Grandmother, I would not be here if it were not for your prayers. I want to thank my sister, Dr. Jazmin Cromartie, for going on this journey with me and being such an inspiration. I want to thank my amazing partner and best friend, Terence Walker, for supporting me when things got really hard, and always encouraging me to be great.

To my friends and family, I appreciate you all for understanding the sacrifices I had to make being on this mission, believing in me and cheering me on. Born King, thank you my brother for your support. Dr. Darryl Hylton, I appreciate your encouragement, friendship and helping to get me through the tough times of the program. Sterling Barber, thank you for being my favorite uncle and teaching me how to speak things into existence, plan, and put in the work to make my dreams reality. To the DEOL faculty and staff, I appreciate you all for giving me the opportunity to enter this illustrious program, challenging me and being amazing instructors and leaders. I want to thank all of my DEOL classmates for being amazing role models even when they did not realize it.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the mentors I've had in my lifetime who showed me first-hand, what transformational leadership looked like. To hall of famer, Michael "Pop Bottle" Thomas, Mrs. Hazel Jackson, Coach Art Blevins, Coach Pamela Benton,

Gary Lash, Wanda Hayes, Dr. Johnnie Smith, Coach Tracee Wells, and Dr. Geleana

Alston, your mentorship and leadership helped change my life.

## **Abstract**

DocStu: Creating an E-Mentoring Program to Support Current and Prospective Doctoral Students. Cromartie, Chelsea, 2020: Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University.

Research describes mentoring as a best-practice for supporting overall student success for graduate and doctoral students. Unfortunately, faculty are not able to serve in a mentoring role for all of their students. The purpose of this project is to utilize university alumni who have successfully completed a doctoral program, to serve as mentors to prospective and current doctoral students. E-mentoring programs in particular, provide flexibility and have multiple, lasting benefits for everyone involved. Intended to start summer 2020, DocStu will include 20-24 people in the first cohort. DocStu was created as a way to provide holistic support to current and prospective doctoral students throughout all stages of their matriculation. Going through a doctoral program is a journey that seems never ending but having a supportive environment while pursuing a post-graduate degree is key to student success. DocStu aims to be a resource, village and safe space as students navigate this experience while simultaneously trying to balance life and work.

*Keywords:* mentor, e-mentoring, graduate mentoring, doctoral mentoring, student success

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## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Project Purpose**

The partnering organization, an Historically Black College and University (HBCU) within the southern region of the United States, their graduate school and specifically, it's Adult Education Department (ADED) has a unique opportunity to provide more holistic support to its current graduate students who are interested in pursuing doctoral education. This two-fold opportunity also presents a way to involve program alumni who have gone on to graduate from doctoral programs. The challenge, like most higher education institutions, is rooted in the fact that students enter doctoral programs with the assumption that their faculty will be their advisor as well as their mentor. Faculty do not carry this assumption because as practitioners in the field, they have multiple responsibilities. Publishing their own work, teaching, grading, attending division and departmental meetings, as well as advising, do not allow the time necessary to dedicate to each student in a mentor-mentee relationship. DocStu serves as an alternative way to solve this problem, which does not limit itself to the campus of the HBCU. DocStu has a mission of fostering successful matriculation and support for current and prospective doctoral students through online learning communities, mentoring and professional development opportunities. DocStu's vision is that every student has the support necessary to successfully push through and complete their doctoral program.

### **1.2 Associated Documents**

- See Appendix A (DocStu Program Proposal)
- See Appendix B (Proposal PowerPoint)
- See Appendix C (Professional Literature Review)

### **1.3 Project Plan Maintenance**

The project plan was updated as a collaborative effort between the site supervisor and myself. Updates related to the project plan were approved by consultancy coach, Dr. Jeff Hamilton. Communication occurred in person, via email, Zoom or over the telephone.

## **2 Project Scope**

### **2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives**

#### **2.1.1 Objectives**

This project was about creating an e-mentoring program for prospective and current doctoral students using Adult and Higher Education (ADED) graduate program alumni and professional scholars who have successfully completed a doctoral program to act as mentors.

The HBCU that undertook this particular project did so because it filled a need that students supported, wanted, and asked for. Also, mentoring is a form of best practices in terms of supporting and retaining graduate and doctoral students. The HBCU, and their ADED program in general, historically and currently, serve many students who are interested in pursuing doctoral studies, currently enrolled in a doctoral program, or successfully graduate from a doctoral program. To date, the ADED program at the HBCU have graduated four students who have either successfully completed or currently enrolled in the DEOL program at Gardner-Webb University. With limited faculty and time, DocStu solves the problem of providing holistic mentoring to prospective and current doctoral students and supporting ADED alumni. Providing support post-graduation for students and opportunities to network are things that DocStu provide that the ADED program at the HBCU support.

DocStu fit the goal of the ADED program as a way to support and prepare students. Networking opportunities and mentoring that DocStu provides are a way to further bridge the gap between current students and alumni. DocStu supports the overall retention effort outlined within the college's strategic plan. It also supports the college's mantra, which emphasizes taking your knowledge and putting it into action, and is a call to alumni to do meaningful work and reach back to help others.

#### **2.1.2 Success Criteria**

Success of the partnering organization is measured by analyzing the data from the first-year implementation of the mentoring program. This occurs in phase IX of the project, in collaboration with the consultant and site supervisor.

#### **2.1.3 Risks**

There are not many risks that the partnering organization will incur as a result of their students and alumni participating in the DocStu program or their faculty providing support. One major risk is unethical behavior from participants. However, a mitigation plan has been put in place to avoid this risk and a contingency plan has been established in the event the risk occurs. The DocStu program is designed to help mitigate the risk of low persistence and retention

rates at the institution which is considered to have a higher likelihood of occurring due to Covid-19.

## **2.2 Outline of Student's Objectives**

### **2.2.1 Objectives**

- To create a mentoring program for current and prospective doctoral students (overall)
- Work with University site supervisor to connect with current ADED students and alumni who were interested in participating in the mentoring program and obtain feedback regarding interest.
- Purchase website domain
- Create DocStu website
- Create survey for those who join DocStu as a Mentor or Mentee
- Create Membership package
- Create social media profiles for DocStu

### **2.2.2 Success Criteria**

- Success of the project was measured by successfully planning, organizing, and implementing where necessary.
- Success was measured by the number of objectives successfully completed.
- Success was measured by interest level and buy-in from organization and participants.
- Success was measured by identifying adequate number of participants for first cohort set to begin Summer 2020.

### **2.2.3 Risks**

This project had four high-risk factors. Lack of support from departmental faculty was the first, which was mitigated by communicating with faculty, and outlining the benefits to get their buy-in. The second high-risk factor was faculty leaving the institution. Although this was beyond the control of the program director, mitigation included having multiple faculty on board, keeping lines of communication open, and working to maintain positive relationship and rapport. The fourth high risk item, a decrease in the number of participants due to Covid-19, was mitigated by promoting and highlighting the mentoring program as well as including "Covid-19" updates and resources section on the DocStu website. The final high-risk item, a change in participants' plans to continue pursuing the doctoral program due to personal or Covid-19 related reasons, was mitigated by sharing Covid-19 safety measures, encouraging participants to maintain mentoring relationship during the pandemic, and highlighting the benefits.

### **2.3 Definitive Scope Statement**

The project was responsible for filling the need of mentorship at the graduate level, bridging the gap between current and prospective doctoral students, alumni, and professional doctorate-holding scholars, while fostering successful matriculation and necessary support through online learning communities, mentoring, and professional development opportunities.

### 3 Deliverables

#### 3.1 To Partnering Organization

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Estimated due date</b>
Deliver formal presentation to ADED faculty and Graduate School administrators.	Summer 2020
Submit sponsorship proposal to ADED faculty.	Summer 2020
Implement the mentoring program.	Summer /Fall 2020
Share first year assessment report with ADED faculty and Graduate School administrators.	Summer 2021

#### 3.2 From Student

N/A

## 4 Project Approach

### 4.1 Project Lifecycle Processes

I worked in collaboration with the university site supervisor to create the foundational framework for the project and identified ways to incorporate the project into the university. From there, I worked in collaboration with the web designer and university site supervisor to create the website for the e-mentoring program. The website includes organizational mission, vision, and goals as well as a learning community for participants. Data from participants are captured via surveys throughout multiple phases of the project. I participated in a panel discussion coordinated by the site supervisor, to test the idea of the mentoring program, and obtained data and feedback from potential participants. Data collected supported the assumption that an e-mentoring program would pique the interest of potential participants and is something they feel is necessary for success throughout their matriculation. This project has a total of IX phases and aims to receive funding and monetary support for the university and/or other outside entities, before, during, or after implementation.

### 4.2 Project Management Processes

Project	Constituents	Objectives	Deliverables
<b>Phase I</b>	Consultant & University Site Supervisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified best practices for doctoral and e-mentoring programs.</li> <li>2. Identified faculty member to serve as key supporter and University Site Supervisor.</li> <li>3. Clarified main objectives, mission, vision and goals of mentoring program.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implemented best practices for mentoring program.</li> <li>2. Identified a supportive faculty member to serve as University Site Supervisor for the project.</li> <li>3. Developed foundational framework for mentoring program.</li> </ol>
<b>Phase II</b>	Consultant and Website Designer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Created outline for website.</li> <li>2. Designed and organized the first draft of website.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reviewed outline with website designer</li> <li>2. Created the first draft of the website.</li> </ol>

<b>Phase III</b>	Consultant, University Site Supervisor and Website Designer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reviewed and edited the first draft of the website.</li> <li>2. Reviewed participant questionnaire.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completed first draft of website.</li> <li>2. Edited and updated questionnaire on website</li> </ol>
<b>Phase IV</b>	Consultant, University Site Supervisor, Students, University Alumni	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participated in ADED Alumni Engagement panel discussion.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtained feedback and recorded observations.</li> </ol>
<b>Phase V</b>	Consultant, University Site Supervisor and Website Designer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyzed data from panel discussion.</li> <li>2. Reviewed data from panel discussion and determined if any additional changes needed to be made to the website, program activities or questionnaire.</li> <li>3. Provided website designer with list of updates to add to website</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Based on analyzed data, made list of additional edits to questionnaire and website.</li> <li>2. Updated program activities and questionnaire.</li> <li>3. Completed second draft of website, program activities and questionnaire.</li> </ol>
<b>Phase VI</b>	Consultant & University Site Supervisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified 20-24 student and alumni participants for mentoring program</li> <li>2. Create invitation email to send to participants</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified sufficient number of student and alumni participants for mentoring program</li> <li>2. Sent email invitation to participants</li> </ol>

<b>Phase VII</b>	Consultant, Students & Participants	1.Participants complete virtual orientation  2.Analyze orientation feedback and finalize match-ups	1.Participants successfully complete virtual orientation and provide feedback 2.Use orientation feedback to gather additional data and finalize match-ups
<b>Phase VIII</b>	Consultant, Students, Participants	1.Implement first year of the mentoring program	1.First year of mentoring program implemented
<b>Phase IX</b>	Consultant and University Site Supervisor.	1. Review and analyze the data from first DocStu cohort.	1. Reviewed and analyzed the DocStu mentoring program.

### 4.3 Project Support Processes

I worked to make sure things were done effectively and efficiently and communicated with the university site supervisor regarding any changes or updates to the program. I worked in collaboration with the university site supervisor and website designer to develop and update organization website. Support will continue by maintaining communication through email, virtual and face to face meetings. After first-year implementation, the mentoring program will be analyzed by the university site supervisor and myself. Data will be shared with university partners and sponsorship solicited.

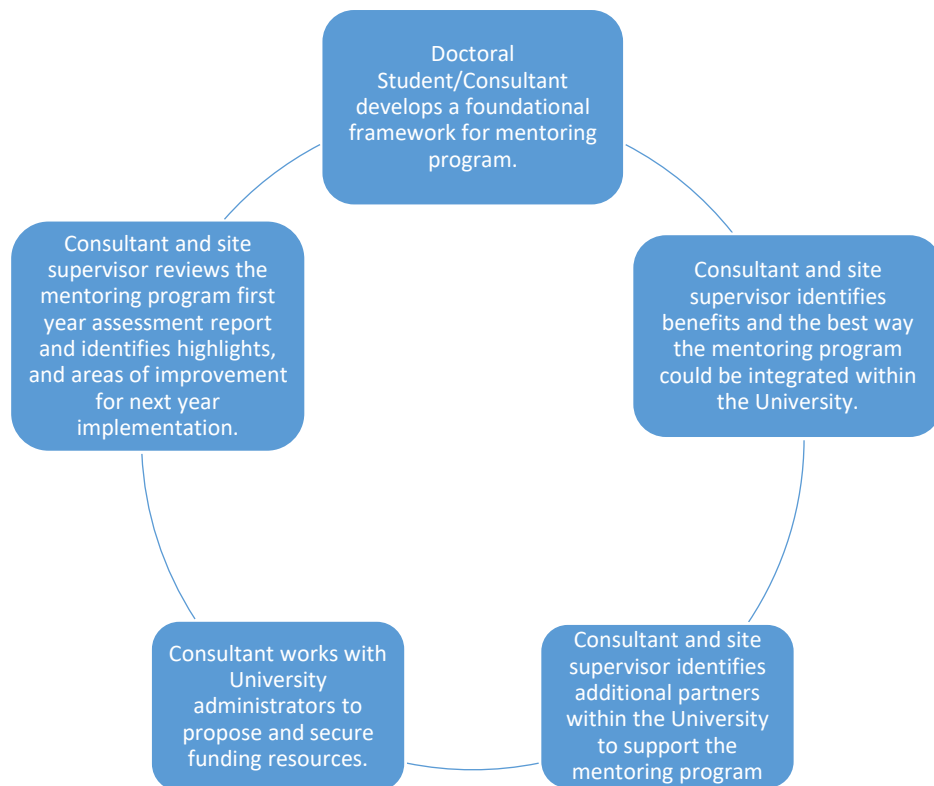
### 4.4 Organization

#### 4.4.1 Project Team

There was no formal organizational structure relied on to execute this project. I did not have a team that I worked with and completed work individually. Communication was very important for the success and development in this project, and I did rely heavily on my consultancy site supervisor to assist with finding qualified participants and helping to make sure project tasks and milestones were completed satisfactorily. If any changes needed to be made within the project, follow-up occurred between myself and the site supervisor. Meetings were either by telephone, Zoom, or in person.

#### 4.4.2 Mapping Between HBCU and Student





## 5 Communications Plan

<b>Mentoring Program Communications Plan</b>				
<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>What information is needed</b>	<b>Why is information needed</b>	<b>When will they get information</b>	<b>How will they get information</b>
<i>University Site Supervisor</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program objectives, Mission Vision &amp; Goals</li> <li>2. Draft of website and participant questionnaire</li> <li>3. Program Invitation</li> <li>4. Virtual orientation outline</li> <li>5. Sponsorship proposal</li> <li>6. Data from first year Program implementation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To gain understanding of project and assist with building foundational framework for mentoring program</li> <li>2. For review</li> <li>3. For review and to send to students or participants</li> <li>4. For review</li> <li>5. For review</li> <li>6. For review and to add recommendations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phase 1</li> <li>2. Phase 3</li> <li>3. Phase 6</li> <li>4. Phase 6</li> <li>5. Before program implementation</li> <li>6. Phase 9</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In person meeting</li> <li>2. Email and virtual meeting</li> <li>3. Email</li> <li>4. Email</li> <li>5. Email</li> <li>6. Email and virtual or in person meeting</li> </ol>
<i>Website Designer</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outline of website</li> <li>2. Recommendations for website updates and changes</li> <li>3. Participant questionnaire link</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To create website</li> <li>2. For editing</li> <li>3. To add to website</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phase 2</li> <li>2. Phase 3 and as needed for life of program</li> <li>3. Phase 5</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email and in person meeting.</li> <li>2. Email</li> <li>3. Email</li> </ol>
<i>Potential Sponsors</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sponsorship proposal</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To learn why funding is needed and why they should support the program.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Before, during and after program implementation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email and during virtual/in person meeting.</li> </ol>
<i>Program Participants</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Program invitation &amp; link to interest questionnaire</li> <li>2. Virtual Orientation link</li> <li>3. Orientation package</li> <li>4. Link to post-orientation survey</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To complete phase one of membership process.</li> <li>2. To attend orientation.</li> <li>3. So participants can have the calendar of events, contracts,</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phase 6</li> <li>2. Phase 7</li> <li>3. Phase 7</li> <li>4. Phase 7</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email and/or Website</li> <li>2. Email</li> <li>3. Email</li> <li>4. Email</li> </ol>

		<p>program deliverables and outcomes necessary for the program.</p> <p>4. To provide feedback and additional data so Program Director can finalize match-ups.</p>		
<i>University Faculty/ Admins</i>	<p>1. Proposal</p> <p>2. Program first year assessment</p>	<p>1. To learn why funding is needed and why they should support the program</p> <p>2. To see data of first year implementation of program</p>	<p>1. Phase 7</p> <p>2. Phase 9</p>	<p>1. Email and virtual/in person meeting.</p> <p>2. Email and virtual/in person meeting.</p>

## 6 Work Plan

### 6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

- To create a mentoring program for current and prospective doctoral students
  - Searched best practices for creating a e-mentoring program. Use input to create a plan of action. Get feedback from site supervisor on if this would be a good project, plan of action and steps to move forward.
- Work with University site supervisor to connect with current ADED students and alumni who were interested in participating in the mentoring program and obtain feedback regarding interest.
  - Participated as panelist during the Virtual ADED Alumni Engagement discussion as was also able to record observations.
  - Through Zoom meeting, and based on panel discussion attendees, potential participants (mentors and mentees) were identified. Created a consent form to include in email invitation to potential participants.
  - Created interest survey for potential mentors and mentees. Questions were reviewed by site supervisor.
- Purchase website domain
  - Domain was purchased from GoDaddy.com for \$24.99 monthly fee.
- Create website
  - Worked with website designer on content and aesthetics.
  - Submitted write up to website designer
  - Worked with site supervisor to review website for content. Took feedback and shared with website designer to make necessary changes and updates.
- Create survey for those who join DocStu as a Mentor or Mentee
  - Created questions for survey and had site supervisor review and provide feedback
  - Updated survey questions per site supervisor's feedback
  - Created surveys using Survey Monkey
  - Met with Website designer to embed survey link into website
- Create Membership package
  - Create draft write up for membership package.
  - Have site supervisor review draft for content
  - Met with website designer to update membership section on website, based on site supervisor's feedback.
- Create social media profiles for DocStu
  - Created DocStu Facebook account and private group
  - Created DocStu Instagram account
  - Created DocStu Twitter account
  - Met with webpage designer to embed social media links into the website
- Identify mentor:mentee readiness survey

- Found mentor:mentee readiness survey for orientation scheduled for Summer 2020
- Contacted creator of survey asking for permission to use survey for DocStu program

## 6.2 Resources

Task	Fall 2019	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall 2020	Spring 2020	Summer 2020
Created a mentoring program for current and prospective doctoral students						
Worked with Dr. Alston to connect with current ADED students and alumni who were interested in participating in the mentoring program and obtain feedback regarding interest.						
Purchased website domain						
Created website						
Created survey for those who join DocStu as a Mentor or Mentee						
Create Membership package						
Created social media profiles for DocStu						
Identified readiness survey						

## 7 Milestones

<b>Milestone Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Forecast date</b>
1	Identify a supportive faculty member to serve as University Site Supervisor for the project.	Fall 2018
2	Develop foundational framework for mentoring program.	Fall 2018 Spring 2019
3	Complete first draft of website.	Spring 2019
4	Obtain feedback and record observations from participating in the ADED Alumni Engagement panel discussion.	Spring 2020
5	Complete second draft of website, program activities and questionnaire.	Spring 2020
6	Identify sufficient number of student and alumni participants for mentoring program.	Spring 2020
	Obtain LLC for mentoring program.	Summer 2020
7	Send email invitation to participants.	Summer 2020
	Solicit and obtain program sponsorship.	Summer, Fall 2020
8	Host virtual orientation for participants.	Summer 2020
9	Use orientation feedback to gather additional data and finalize match-ups.	Summer 2020
10	Implement first year of mentoring program.	Fall 2020 Spring 2021
11	Review and analyze the DocStu mentoring program.	Summer 2021

## 8 Metrics and Results

The student surveys will be completed by prospective mentors and mentees in Summer 2020. However, there was observation that took place during the panel discussion involving current ADED students interested in pursuing a doctoral degree, ADED alumni who are current doctoral students, and ADED alumni that have successfully completed a doctoral program. What I was able to synthesize is listed below:

1. Those who successfully completed their doctoral degrees benefited from some form of mentorship throughout their matriculation.
2. Everyone agreed that mentorship was an important and valuable experience.
3. Some current ADED and doctoral students yearned mentorship to help them throughout their matriculation.
4. Current and graduated doctoral students discussed issues that they had in common and felt as though a safe group or mentee:mentor relationship would be a beneficial way to discuss these issues, solutions and provide support to those trying to see it through.
5. Common issues discussed were as follows:
  - a. Work and Life Balance
  - b. Imposter syndrome
  - c. HBCU vs PWI
  - d. How to find the right program
  - e. Ed.D vs. PhD
  - f. The dissertation process
  - g. Self-care
  - h. The post-doctorate experience
  - i. Beating procrastination
  - j. Research
  - k. Careers

In conclusion, this data informed what I was doing with the project.

## 9 Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

### 9.1 Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Plan (what to do to avoid the risk occurring)	Contingency Plan (what to do if the risk occurs)	Impact (what the impact will be to the project if the risk occurs)	Likelihood of occurrence (e.g., %, or high, medium, low)
Not having an adequate mentor:mentee ratio	<p>Keep first cohort (mentees &amp; mentors combined) to 18-24 participants total for first year. Make sure each mentor has no more than two mentees.</p> <p>Only allow open enrollment for mentorship program in the Fall and Spring for first year.</p>	<p>Increase the number of participants and/or decrease the number of mentees a mentor can have to two.</p>	<p>Potentially negative impact</p>	<p>Low Risk</p>
<p>Poor time management and or communication issues from participants</p>	<p>Incorporate time management skills into training and continuous professional development.</p> <p>Outline “time management and communication” expectations for program in participant agreement contract.</p>	<p>Step 1. Have mentor or mentee reach out to each other via telephone and email.</p> <p>Step 2. Have program director or coordinator communicate to participant via telephone and email</p> <p>Step 3. Send email warning of program dismissal</p> <p>Step 4. Send email of program dismissal</p> <p>Identify new participants</p>	<p>Potentially negative impact but will not cause the program to end completely</p>	<p>Low Risk</p>



Time conflicts	<p>Have all participants include their availability during orientation and update their availability throughout the year.</p> <p>Outline in contract that participants are required to send invites and include mentor meetings in a digital calendar such as “Google or Outlook”</p>	<p>1.Encourage mentee and mentor to revise their meeting schedule to be more accommodating.</p> <p>2.Encourage mentee and mentor to explore alternative meeting options</p> <p>3.Have conversation with participants about if continuing the program is ideal.</p>	Potentially negative impact	Low Risk
Participants not completing self-guided training modules	<p>Include self-guided training modules as a program requirement during summer training. Also include this is program contact that all participants will sign.</p> <p>Keep modules “self-guided.”</p>	<p>Send email reminders to participants to complete training modules</p> <p>Per contract, participants will not be allowed to move forward in the program unless training is completed.</p>	<p>Potentially negative impact.</p> <p>Positive impact could be getting the those who are not a “good fit” for the program, “off the bus.”</p>	Low Risk
Poor matching	Utilizing best practices, make sure adequate mentor:mentee matching tools are in place for participants.	<p>Pull from wait list if there is one.</p> <p>Identify better match for participant based on information they provided in application process and orientation.</p>	Potentially negative impact to program and reputation.	Low risk

		Recruit additional participants		
Loss of interest in program	<p>Survey level of interest during application process and at the end of orientation.</p> <p>Invite those who have high interest level, to participate in program.</p>	<p>Highlight and reiterate benefits of program</p> <p>Share data driven resources encouraging and highlighting mentorship.</p> <p>Obtain feedback from participants through survey and or discussion.</p>	Potentially negative impact, especially if no feedback is received.	Low Risk
Unethical behavior from participants	<p>Outline ethical behavior expectations in written contract agreement, during orientation and have mentors review with mentees during first meeting.</p> <p>Documents will also be sent to participants via email.</p>	<p>Step 1. Reiterate to mentors and mentees the 9 Guiding Ethical Principals of Mentoring as outlined in the written contract.</p> <p>Step 2. Have participant submit written complaint via email to program director.</p> <p>Step 3. Listen and evaluate the situation case by case</p> <p>Step 4. Take necessary action</p> <p>May need to reevaluate the vetting process depending on the magnitude of the situation that occurred.</p>	Depending on the situation and if not handled correctly, it could have a unsatisfactory impact on the program, reputation and individuals.	Medium Risk
Lack of support from	Meet with faculty prior to	Hold meeting with faculty members. Share highlights	Since faculty assist with connecting	High Risk

departmental faculty	<p>the beginning of the semester.</p> <p>Keep faculty in the loop by sending them email communications.</p> <p>Make sure faculty understand the benefits of the program and get their buy-in.</p> <p>Make sure faculty know that they are not being asked to mentor but only provide support by promoting the program to qualified students, and alumni as well as recommending participants to the program director and or coordinator.</p>	<p>of the program, success stories etc.</p> <p>Get GSAC involved to help promote to students and have GSAC President attend faculty meeting to also speak on behalf of the program.</p> <p>Inquire feedback from faculty on how to garner their support.</p> <p>Reiterate program benefits, and expectations from faculty.</p> <p>Reiterate how program ties into the college, departmental and academic affairs' strategic plan.</p>	<p>students and alumni to the program, not having their support can have a potentially negative impact.</p>	
Faculty leaving institution	<p>This is beyond the control of program director</p> <p>Have multiple faculty on board.</p> <p>Keep lines of communication open and work to maintain positive relationship and rapport with faculty.</p>	<p>Work with additional faculty within the department.</p> <p>Continue to build rapport with faculty and maintain positive relationships.</p> <p>Get faculty recommendations from students</p> <p>Ask to attend faculty meeting to</p>		High Risk

		<p>meet with additional faculty members</p> <p>If faculty who left institution still has good relationship and rapport with Doc Stu director, encourage them to still support the program.</p>		
<p>Decrease in the number of participants due to Covid-19</p>	<p>Continue to promote program via social media, digital outlets and maintain recruiting efforts.</p> <p>Highlight the fact that DocStu is a e-mentoring program and calls for minimal person-to-person contact.</p> <p>Include special "Covid-19" update on website.</p>	<p>Have program mentees and mentors participate in a media campaign highlighting mentoring and the benefits of DocStu.</p> <p>Utilize social media to recruit participants</p> <p>Reiterate Covid-19 safety measures and support resources as well as the fact that DocStu is a e-mentoring program and calls for minimal person-to-person contact.</p>	<p>Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge negative impact on individual lives, families, finances and the system of higher education.</p>	<p>High Risk</p>
<p>Change in plans to continue pursuing doctoral program due to personal or Covid-19 related reasons.</p>	<p>On website, social media pages, and during Zoom sessions, include Covid-19 safety measures, support resources as well as the fact that DocStu is a e-mentoring</p>	<p>Have mentors submit student names to director or coordinator for follow-up.</p> <p>Listen to participant and provide support.</p>	<p>Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge negative impact on individual lives, families, finances and the system of higher education.</p>	<p>High Risk</p>

	<p>program and calls for minimal person-to-person contact.</p> <p>Encourage participants to still maintain mentoring relationship during the pandemic and highlight the benefits.</p>			
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## 9.2 Constraints

This project operated under two constraints. The first was that DocStu was designed to be an e-mentoring program. The second constraint was Covid-19 posed a high risk of deterring individuals to continue or pursue graduate and doctoral education.

## 9.3 Assumptions

The researcher's assumptions based on the project are as follows:

1. Mentees will feel empowered to complete doctoral studies.
2. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation.
3. Mentees will feel supported being part of a mentoring community.
4. Mentors will experience a sense of fulfillment, by reaching back and helping others.
5. Current and prospective doctoral students will be the wide range of benefits, being part of a mentoring program.
6. Faculty will support a mentoring program that supports prospective an current doctoral students while involving professional scholars and alumni.
7. There is value in intergeneration mentoring.
8. There is value in e-mentoring.

## 10 Financial Plan

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funder</b>
Website domain	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Canva Plus subscription	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Zoom Pro	\$19.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Web advertising & Marketing	\$100 (monthly)	Project consultant
Monthly give-a-ways	\$1200 (annually)	Project consultant, Program participants and program sponsors
Yearly Scholarship	\$6,000 (annually)	Program sponsors
LLC	\$125	Project consultant
P.O. Box	\$29.99 (monthly)	Project consultant

## 11 Quality Assurance Plan

Inputs →	Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes (Short Term) →	Outcomes (Long Term) →
Bringing space for virtual engagement via e-mentoring website	Bi-weekly Zoom sessions Peer check -ins Two mentees assigned to each mentor Writing groups Yearly conference (in person or virtual) Quarterly newsletter Showcase of mentors and mentees Assistance with doctoral program application process	#mentor:mentee sessions % of participation for weekly meetings # Mentor & mentee spotlight articles in newsletter Mentor:Mentee assessment	↑ Relationship and engagement between the mentees and mentors participating ↑ Intergenerational collaboration ↑ Partnerships between different institutions	Continue to empower underrepresented minorities who are pursuing doctoral education and having mentoring as a support. The doctoral students feel empowered to persist through their program
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<b>Assumptions:</b> Mentees will feel empowered to complete doctoral studies. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation.	There is value in intergenerational mentoring. There is value in e-mentoring. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation. Mentees will feel supported.	Current and prospective doctoral students will be the wide range of benefits, being part of a mentoring program. Faculty will support mentoring program.	<b>External Factors:</b> There is still an underrepresentation of mentors who are people of color but there still will remain a demand to increase the representation of underrepresented minorities who obtain doctoral degrees.	

## **Appendix A**

### **DocStu Program Proposal**

Consultant: Chelsea D. Cromartie, Doctoral Candidate  
University Site Supervisor: Dr. Geleana Drew Alston

#### **Problem Statement**

The graduate school and specifically, its Adult Education Department (ADED) has a unique opportunity to provide more holistic support to its current graduate students that are interested in pursuing doctoral education. This two-fold opportunity also presents a way to involve program alumni who have gone on to graduate from doctoral programs. The challenge, like most higher education institutions is rooted in the fact that students enter doctoral programs with the assumption that their faculty will be their advisor as well as their mentor. Faculty do not carry this assumption because as practitioners' in the field, they have multiple responsibilities. Publishing their own work, teaching, grading, attending division and departmental meetings, as well as advising, do not allow the time necessary to dedicate to each student in a mentor-mentee relationship. DocStu serves as an alternative way to solve this problem, which does not limit itself to the campus of the HBCU.

#### **Solution**

Research describes mentoring as a best-practice for supporting overall student success for graduate and doctoral students. Unfortunately, faculty are not able to serve in a mentoring role for all of their students. The purpose of DocStu is to utilize university alumni who have successfully completed a doctoral program, to serve as mentors to prospective and current doctoral students. E-mentoring programs in particular, provide flexibility and have multiple, lasting benefits for everyone involved. Intended to start summer/fall 2020, DocStu will include 20-24 participants in the first cohort. DocStu was created as a way to provide holistic support to current and prospective doctoral students throughout all stages of their matriculation. Going through a doctoral program is a journey that seems never ending but having a supportive environment while pursuing a post-graduate degree is key to student success. DocStu aims to be a resource, village and safe space as students navigate this experience while simultaneously trying to balance life and work.

Knowledge is meant to be shared not hoarded. Having a mentor is key to success in any avenue in life, but especially during the pursuit of a graduate or doctoral degree. We will match students with one of our DocStu certified mentors, who are doctors that have successfully completed a PhD, EdD or MD program and are working in a variety of different fields. These professional scholars have a passion for helping others who wish to pursue a doctorate degree and understand the importance of reaching back as others did the same for them.



### **Definitive Scope Statement**

DocStu aims to fill the need of mentorship at the graduate level, bridging the gap between current, and prospective doctoral students, alumni and professional doctorate holding scholars while fostering successful matriculation and necessary support through online learning communities through mentoring and professional development opportunities.

**Mission:** DocStu has a mission of fostering successful matriculation and support for current and prospective doctoral students through online learning communities, mentoring and professional development opportunities.

**Vision:** DocStu's vision is that every student has the support necessary to successfully push through and complete their doctoral program.

**Goal:** We will help support one cohort consisting of 20-24 participants during our inaugural year of Fall 2020 - Spring 2021.

### **Metrics and Results**

The student surveys will be completed by prospective mentors and mentees Summer 2020. However, there was observation that took place during the panel discussion involving current ADED students interested in pursuing a doctoral degree, ADED alumni who are current doctoral students and ADED alumni that have successfully completed a doctoral program. What I was able to synthesize is listed below:

1. Those who successfully completed their doctoral degrees benefited from some form of mentorship throughout their matriculation
2. Everyone agreed that mentorship was an important and valuable experience
3. Some current ADED and doctoral students yearned mentorship to help them throughout their matriculation
4. Current and graduated doctoral students discussed issues that they had in common and felt as though a safe group or mentee:mentor relationship would be a beneficial way to discuss these issues, solutions and provide support to those trying to see it through.
5. Common issues discussed were as follows:
  - Work and Life Balance
  - Imposter syndrome
  - HBCU vs. PWI
  - How to find the right program
  - Ed.D vs. Ph.D
  - The dissertation process
  - Self-care
  - The post-doctorate experience

- Beating procrastination
- Research
- Careers

### **Membership Benefits**

- Open to current graduate and doctoral students.
- Training via new member orientation.
- Access to a supportive community.
- Access to mentorship opportunities.
- Private Facebook group.
- Bi-weekly Zoom sessions.
- Access to career and professional development resources.
- Access to exclusive networks of doctoral students and mentors.
- Yearly conference (in person or virtual).
- Assistance with the doctoral program application process.
- Access to monthly “meet up” (in person or virtual).
- Access to writing groups.
- Access to quarterly newsletter.
- Eligible for periodic giveaways and incentives

### **Potential and Current Partnerships**

- ADED & Leadership department
- The Graduate School
- Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)
- Alumni Association

### **Funding & Budget Needs**

ITEM	COST	FUNDER
Website Domain	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Canva Plus Subscription	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Zoom Pro	\$19.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Web advertising & Marketing	\$100.00 (monthly)	Sponsorship needed
Monthly give-a-ways	\$1,200.00 (annually)	Sponsorship needed
Yearly scholarship	\$6,000.00 (annually)	Sponsorship needed
LLC	\$125 (one-time fee)	Project consultant
P.O. Box	\$29.99 (monthly)	Project consultant

## 1 Quality Assurance Plan

INPUTS →	ACTIVITIES →	OUTPUTS →	OUTCOMES → (SHORT TERM)	OUTCOMES → (LONG TERM)
Bringing space for virtual engagement via e-mentoring website	Bi weekly Zoom sessions  Peer check -ins  Two mentees assigned to each mentor  Writing groups  Yearly conference (in person or virtual)  Quarterly newsletter  Showcase of mentors and mentees  Assistance with doctoral program application process	# mentor:mentee sessions  % of participation for weekly meetings  # Mentor & mentee spotlight articles in newsletter  Mentor:Mentee assessment	↑ Relationship and engagement between the mentees and mentors participating  ↑ Intergenerational collaboration  ↑ Partnerships between different institutions	Continue to empower underrepresented minorities who are pursuing doctoral education and having mentoring as a support.  The doctoral students feel empowered to persist through their program
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
<b>Assumptions:</b> Mentees will feel empowered to complete doctoral studies. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation.	There is value in intergenerational mentoring. There is value in e-mentoring. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation. Mentees will feel supported.	Current and prospective doctoral students will be the wide range of benefits, being part of a mentoring program. Faculty will support mentoring program.	<b>External Factors:</b> There is still an underrepresentation of mentors who are people of color but there still will remain a demand to increase the representation of underrepresented minorities who obtain doctoral degrees.	

## **Evaluation**

Evaluation will occur in the form of analyzing the data from the first-year implementation of the mentoring program. This occurs in phase IX of the project, in collaboration with the consultant and site supervisor. First-year implementation report will be created and shared with partners. This report will also include surveys and feedback from first-year program participants.

## **Conclusion**

Literature is lacking in terms of the effectiveness of peer mentoring, e-mentoring, and utilizing social media platforms as a tool to cultivate mentoring relationships and build up community, especially as it relates to graduate and doctoral students. The articles evaluated in the attached literature review answered the inquiry question, "is e-mentoring effective." E-mentoring will need to be systematized, diversified and humanized. Using "best practices" such as, utilizing social media, blogs, teleconferencing and technology to disseminate information, helps make this source more effective. There is a need for further research and explore this methods effectiveness further. The literature surrounding faculty mentoring is strong and highlights many of the challenges and "implications" that stem from that mentor-mentee relationship or partnership. There is room for improvement in terms of satisfaction received from students in a faculty mentoring partnership. Graduate and doctoral faculty should be sure to incorporate "best practices." Mentorship can be formal or informal and yields and success. Students may find the traditional method, not suitable to their liking or needs. Many students create groups and networks within their cohort or doctoral and graduate community, seeking mentoring out of just faculty. They also form partnerships with peers, recent graduates, and scholars in the field as a way to build camaraderie, find support, and obtain professional development. Research shows that those who have good mentoring relationships, do better throughout their matriculation, are more aligned in their career post-graduation and reach back to help others.

The DocStu mentoring program fills a need that students and alumni support, want, and have asked for. It is important to reiterate the fact that, mentoring is a form of best practices in terms of supporting and retaining graduate and doctoral students. The institution, and specifically, the ADED program in general (historically and currently) serve many students who are interested in pursuing doctoral studies and have alumni who are either currently enrolled in or have successfully graduated from a doctoral program. To date, the ADED program specifically have graduated multiple students who have either successfully completed or currently enrolled in a doctoral program. These numbers can increase with the help of the DocStu mentoring program. With limited faculty and time, DocStu solves the problem of providing holistic mentoring to prospective and current doctoral students and supporting ADED alumni. Providing support post-graduation for students and opportunities to network are things that DocStu

provide that the ADED program at the institution support. DocStu fits the goal of the ADED program as a way to support and prepare students. Networking opportunities and mentoring that DocStu provides is a way to further bridge the gap between current students and alumni. DocStu supports the overall retention effort outlined within the college's strategic plan. It also supports the college's mantra, which emphasizes taking your knowledge and putting it into action, and is a call to alumni to do meaningful work and reach back to help others. I hope that the committee takes the information included in this proposal into consideration as a final decision is made to provide financial support to the DocStu program for Fall 2020 – Spring 2021. We look forward to partnering with your organization/department and thank you in advance for your consideration.

## DocStu Website Outline

- Subscribe to our newsletter (Stay connected with us)
  - First name
  - Last name
  - Email
- Home
  - Picture slideshow (4 jpeg images)
  - Social Media Tags (top of page)
  - Across the top of the page (Home, About, Mentorship, Blog Info, Membership, Blog)
- About
  - DocStu was created as a way to provide holistic support to current and prospective doctoral students throughout all stages of their matriculation. We understand from our own experience and research tells us there are many benefits to learning communities and having a supportive environment while pursuing a post graduate degree. Going through a doctoral program is a journey, that seems never ending and nobody can truly be successful doing it alone. DocStu aims to be a resource, village, and safe space as you navigate this experience while simultaneously trying to balance life and work.

Know that we are here for you so do not hesitate to take advantage of the many ways we provide support whether it's finding professional development resources on our website, learning more about important topics such as "imposter syndrome, HBCU vs. PWI's, finding the right program, Ed.D vs. PhD, the dissertation process, work-life balance, self-care, beating procrastination, research, life after degree completion, careers and more via our blog, and quarterly newsletter. Build your network, celebrate your successes, vent your frustrations, get feedback and find solutions to your challenges via our exclusive Facebook group community. Build connections, gain an accountability partner, and receive guidance from those who have successfully completed their doctoral journey and aspire to reach back, by joining our mentoring program.

Take some time to reflect and give yourself more credit for how far you've come. We are extremely proud of you and you should be even more proud of yourself for pushing through to this point! Let's us support you. Join our village today! We look forward to having you in our circle.

Sincerely,

Your DocStu Family

- Our Mission
  - Foster successful matriculation and support for current and prospective doctoral students through online learning communities, mentoring, and professional development opportunities.
- Our Vision
  - Every student has the support necessary to successfully push through and complete their doctoral program
- Our Goal
  - We will help support one cohort consisting of 20-24 participants during our inaugural year of Fall 2020 – Spring 2021
- Mentorship
  - Knowledge is meant to be shared not hoarded. Having a mentor is key to success in any avenue in life, but especially during the pursuit of a graduate or post graduate degree. We will match you with one of our DocStu certified mentors, who are doctors that have successfully completed a PhD, EdD or MD program and are working in a variety of different fields. These professional scholars have a passion for helping others who wish to pursue a doctorate degree and understand the importance of reaching back as others did the same for them.
  - Interested in becoming a mentor or mentee?  
Click the button below.
  - Two separate buttons
    - Join as Mentor (Individuals who have completed doctoral program)
    - Join as Mentee (Current masters and doctoral students)
- Blog
  - We are always looking for writers to contribute on a variety of different topics. Send us an email with your name, topic(s) and a example of your written work. Our team will respond to your inquiry between 48 - 72 hrs.
- Membership
  - Membership Benefits:
    - Open to current graduate and doctoral students.
    - Private Facebook group.
    - Bi-weekly Zoom sessions.
    - Access to career and professional development resources.
    - Access to exclusive networks of doctoral students and mentors.
    - Yearly conference (in person or virtual)
    - Assistance with doctoral program application process
    - Monthly “meet up”. (in person or virtual)
    - Writing groups.
    - Quarterly Newsletter.
    - Eligible for periodic giveaways and incentives.

“Please complete the form below to join.”

- Button “Join our Village”
- New Member Orientation via Zoom (TBD)
- Blog set up at the bottom of the page

Page Colors: Black background, white lettering, buttons (blue and white)

Page Design: Centered, One page

Mobile: Compatible, Same a desktop view.



**Appendix B**  
**Proposal PowerPoint**

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DocStu  
mentoring  
program

Presented by: Chelsea Cromartie, MS  
Doctoral Candidate -Gardner Webb University

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## Introduction

- **Chelsea D. Cromartie**
  - ADED Alumni
  - Doctoral Candidate at Gardner Webb University
  - University site supervisor
  - Personal mentoring experience

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## Background

### **Problem statement**

- The challenge
- Student assumptions
- Faculty

### **Solution**

- Opportunity
- Support
- Mentorship

## MENTORING IN THE RESEARCH

- Mentoring, in the literature is frequently listed as commutable with collaboration, guiding, assisting and advising (Mullen, 2007).
- Mentoring, along with development professionally, academically and financially are key components that aid in the effort to increase retention and degree completion (Brill *et al.*, 2014; Holley & Caldwell; Bair and Haworth, 2004).
- Graduate and doctoral mentoring programs, both formal and informal, can have a positive effect on student success, persistence, self-esteem, career identity and post graduate success.
- According to (Heinrich, 2005; Davidhizar, 1988), a pivotal constituent of successful matriculation in a doctoral program, is mentoring.
- When creating a mentoring program, it is key to follow and implement best practices such co-mentoring, tele- mentoring, group learning, virtual mentoring and maintaining diversity.

## MENTORING IN THE RESEARCH

- E-mentoring will need to be systematized, diversified and humanized.
- “*best practices*” such as, utilizing social media, blogs, teleconferencing and technology to disseminate information, helps make this source more effective.
- There is room for improvement in terms of satisfaction received from students in a faculty mentoring partnership.
- Many students create groups and networks within their cohort or doctoral and graduate community, seeking mentoring out of just faculty. They also form partnerships with peers, recent graduates, and scholars in the field as a way to build camaraderie, find support, and obtain professional development.
- Research shows that those who have good mentoring relationships, do better throughout their matriculation, are more aligned in their career post-graduation and reach back to help others.

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## Purpose

### **Definitive scope statement-**

DocStu aims to fill the need of mentorship at the graduate level, bridging the gap between current, and prospective doctoral students, alumni and professional doctorate holding scholars while fostering successful matriculation and necessary support through online learning communities through mentoring and professional development opportunities.

## The DocStu Mentoring Program



**Mission:** Fostering successful matriculation and support for current and prospective doctoral students through online learning communities, mentoring and professional development opportunities.



**Vision:** Every student has the support necessary to successfully push through and complete their doctoral program



**Goal:** Help support one cohort consisting of 20-24 participants during our inaugural year of Fall 2020 - Spring 2021.







Common  
issues  
discussed...

a. Work and Life Balance

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b. Imposter syndrome

c. HBCU vs PWI

---

d. How to find the right program

e. Ed.D vs. PhD

---

f. The dissertation process

g. Self-care

---

h. The post-doctorate experience

i. Beating procrastination

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j. Research

k. Careers

## **DocStu Membership Benefits for Participants**

- Open to current graduate and doctoral students.
- Training via new member orientation.
- Access to a supportive community.
- Access to mentorship opportunities.
- Private Facebook group.
- Bi weekly Zoom sessions.
- Access to career and professional development resources.
- Access to exclusive networks of doctoral students and mentors.
- Yearly conference (in person or virtual).
- Assistance with the doctoral program application process.
- Access to monthly “meet up” (in person or virtual).
- Access to writing groups.
- Access to quarterly newsletter.
- Eligible for periodic giveaways and incentives.



Potential and  
Current  
Partnerships

- ADED & Leadership department
  - The Graduate School
  - Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)
  - Alumni Association
- 

## Funding & Budget Needs

ITEM	COST	FUNDER
Website Domain	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Canva Plus Subscription	\$24.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Zoom Pro	\$19.99 (monthly)	Project consultant
Web advertising & Marketing	\$100.00 (monthly)	Sponsorship needed
Monthly give-a-ways	\$1,200.00 (annually)	Sponsorship needed
Yearly scholarship	\$6,000.00 (annually)	Sponsorship needed
LLC	\$125 (one-time fee)	Project consultant
P.O. Box	\$29.99 (monthly)	Project consultant

**1 Quality Assurance Plan**

INPUTS →	ACTIVITIES →	OUTPUTS →	OUTCOMES (SHORT TERM) →	OUTCOMES (LONG TERM) →
<p>Bringing space for virtual engagement via e-mentoring website</p>	<p>Bi weekly Zoom sessions</p> <p>Peer check -ins</p> <p>Two mentees assigned to each mentor</p> <p>Writing groups</p> <p>Yearly conference (in person or virtual)</p> <p>Quarterly newsletter</p> <p>Showcase of mentors and mentees</p> <p>Assistance with doctoral program application process</p>	<p># mentor:mentee sessions</p> <p>% of participation for weekly meetings</p> <p># Mentor &amp; mentee spotlight articles in newsletter</p> <p>Mentor:Mentee assessment</p>	<p>↑ Relationship and engagement between the mentees and mentors participating</p> <p>↑ Intergenerational collaboration</p> <p>↑ Partnerships between different institutions</p>	<p>Continue to empower underrepresented minorities who are pursuing doctoral education and having mentoring as a support.</p> <p>The doctoral students feel empowered to persist through their program</p>
<p>↑</p> <p><b>Assumptions:</b> Mentees will feel empowered to complete doctoral studies. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation.</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>There is value in intergenerational mentoring. There is value in e-mentoring. Mentoring will help retain students throughout their matriculation. Mentees will feel supported.</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>Current and prospective doctoral students will be the wide range of benefits, being part of a mentoring program. Faculty will support mentoring program.</p>	<p>↑</p> <p><b>External Factors:</b> There is still an underrepresentation of mentors who are people of color but there still will remain a demand to increase the representation of underrepresented minorities who obtain doctoral degrees.</p>	<p>↑</p>

**What questions and  
feedback do you have?**



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## Appendix C

### Professional Literature Review

This professional literature review focuses on evidence-based practices related to mentoring prospective and current doctoral students. The significant challenge to my partnering organization (North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University) is, the absence of a doctoral or graduate mentoring program specifically for current doctoral students or those interested in pursuing a doctoral degree. Inquiry questions for this review are (1.) Does a formal or informal mentoring program yield student success? (2.) What are some of the implications of a mentoring program for current doctoral students and prospective doctoral students currently pursuing a master's degree? (3) What are some best practices for mentoring current doctoral students and graduate students looking to pursue a doctoral degree? Finally, (4) Is e-mentoring effective? I have reviewed 11 articles and sorted them into 6 themes (mentoring, benefits of mentoring, effective practices, faculty mentoring, e-mentoring and peer mentoring). Mentoring, in the literature is frequently listed as commutable with collaboration, guiding, assisting and advising (Mullen, 2007). Some type of consistent support is needed during the matriculation of a graduate or postgraduate degree. The individual decision to begin a doctoral journey is intricate and convoluted (Brill et al., 2014). The overall graduation rate of doctoral programs is not that high, with only half of those who start, reaching completion (Brill et al., 2014; Holley & Caldwell, 2012; Bair & Haworth, 2004; Gardner, 2008). Mentoring, along with development professionally, academically and financially are key components that aid in the effort to increase retention and degree completion (Brill et al., 2014; Holley & Caldwell; Bair & Haworth, 2004).

Graduate and doctoral mentoring programs, both formal and informal, can have a positive effect on student success, persistence, self-esteem, career identity and post graduate success. Further research needs to be done on this particular topic. Not all mentoring is effective, and training and development plays a role. By stimulating dialogue and provoking further study, the doors will open to ameliorate the quality of mentoring and support received by doctoral and graduate level students (Mullen, 2007).

Mullen states, “the model of mentoring doctoral students has not changed sufficiently over the years, rendering the quality of mentorship questionable in today's academia, if not farcical and, hence, circus-like” (Mullen, 2007, p. 301). Mullen goes on to mention, “mentoring from a holistic perspective embraces the professional and the personal, the psychosocial and career facets of a protege's development, and the aforementioned synonymous activities” (Mullen, 2007, p. 302). Suggestions have been made that more holistic studies be done to explore the mentoring of doctoral and graduate students.

### **Mentoring**

According to (Heinrich, 2005; Davidhizar, 1988), mentoring is a pivotal constituent of successful matriculation in a doctoral program. Mentoring is, in essence,



about who is in your network. Finding someone who is doing, has done or is knowledgeable about the very thing you are interested in, is key. It is wise to have someone or a group of individuals within your network who have that mastery level understanding (Heinrich, 2005). Building a student or mentee-centered environment that implements competency skills and stimulates drive, is a principal responsibility of the mentor (Brill et al., 2014). Students pursuing doctoral education aspire to have mentors who utilize a holistic approach, are supportive in research, add value and act as transformational leaders (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

Heinrich (2005) describes a survey given to recent doctoral graduate nurses, with one of the questions referring to advice you would lend to a best friend who just obtained their doctoral degree. Responses spoke to the importance of having a mentor, no matter your field of study. Also mentioned were, having someone who you can relate to, when others do not and staying connected to your fellow peers. Doing these things made the transition, from a student to graduate, smoother if they had experienced transformational mentoring (Brill et al., 2014; Heinrich, 2005). Having a continuous mentor opens the world of researchers and scholar practitioners (Heinrich, 2005).

Those who participated in the study discussed accomplishing their degree completion while having a mentor or the luxury of not having one. While having a mentor is not a total prerequisite of success, it definitely helps aid in the process and can propel you towards your professional goals faster. Good mentoring relationships provide structure and support so one does not feel as though they are journeying alone. Without a mentor, people expressed feeling isolated and unwilling to transfer knowledge out of fear that their work may be exploited, as a result of people feeling the need to selfishly, look out for themselves and their individual agendas (Heinrich, 2005). Recruitment and retention of promising students and nurse educators only occurs when traditional views of mentor-mentee partnerships are replaced with a new lens of mentoring tactics that yield itself to creativity and innovation (Heinrich, 2005).

### **The Benefits of Mentoring**

There is a myriad of benefits to mentoring, especially in terms of matriculating graduate and doctoral students. Traditional mentoring can produce successful scholars and is a chief elemental component to favorable outcomes throughout matriculation (Brill et al., 2014; Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2000). A mentoring relationship is continuous and obliging (Mullen, 2007). During the dissertation process, doctoral students traditionally meet with an advisor. However, a mentoring relationship provides more holistic and personalized support (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Doctoral students who are successful, typically have benefited from transformational mentoring, either individually or in the form of a organized program (Brill et al., 2014; Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2000). When developing a mentoring program for graduate and doctoral students, ways that members will benefit should be advertised and outlined understandably. Mentee benefits include instructional and professional development, participating in social events and opportunities to elevate their network (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

Mentoring is a way for students to enhance objective analysis and receive specialized support in instructional as well as personal decision making (Brill et al., Mullen, 2007; Peterson, 1999; Webb, et al., 2009; West, et al., 2011). Development and achievement are primary focal points of a mentor-mentee partnership, while placing an extra emphasis on providing support and model exemplification (Brill et al., 2014; Crisp & Cruz, 2009). Mentoring can have a positive effect on career, social, financial, academic, professional and post-graduate development (Brill et al., 2014; Pinheiro et al., 2014). Research proves mentorship helps provide clarity to career choices and increases vocational commitment (Lunsford, 2011).

Being involved in a mentoring program can help build a sense of community amongst peers. For newly accepted as well as seasoned doctoral students, mentoring encourages knowledge transfer and group bonding (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Mentor programs are a great medium to implement assessment and data collection. Evaluation statistics and individual reports are valuable data that strengthen investigative and analytical adroitness (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

### *Effective Practices*

Heinrich (2005) includes the point that mentoring comes in many forms, such as group mentoring, partnerships, or co-operative mentoring (Heinrich et al., 2005). There are many effective practices for graduate and doctoral level mentoring programs that have been identified. When creating a mentoring program, it is key to follow and implement best practices such co-mentoring, tele- mentoring, group learning, virtual mentoring and maintaining diversity.

Guidelines and expectations should be understandable and comprehensible in order for a mentoring program to prosper (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Operating a mentoring program solo is difficult and may be ineffective if not properly organized. To minimize negative results, it is encouraged to consider staffing a program coordinator who will keep track of participants, year-round (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

**Faculty Mentoring.** One mentorship model for graduate and doctoral students includes a mentor-mentee relationship with a faculty member. However, research shows that this particular relationship or partnership, may not be the best fit for every student and may come with implications. Contrary to popular belief, it is rare that faculty within higher education devote to mentoring doctoral students (Mullen, 2007). Newly accepted doctoral students enter their programs with the false assumption that faculty within their department will serve as their mentor. Students may also assume they have the option to match with a faculty member of their liking. Regrettably, this does not occur. What often ensues these presumptions are students on the hunt, attempting to seek guidance from faculty within their department (Mullen, 2007).

Another highly possible implication that can be an obstacle in cultivating successful mentoring relationships, is students requesting faculty partnerships that are demographically diverse and reflect their major or research area. As Holley & Caldwell (2012) indicate, there is a lack of diversity present amongst faculty who enlist in

mentoring agreements (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Lack of diversity is often a barrier to faculty mentorship partnerships with graduate and doctoral students from underrepresented populations.

In addition to the aforementioned implications, some faculty members lack the professional development and knowledge essential to being a great mentor for graduate and doctoral students. According to Holley and Caldwell (2012), “many faculty members—even within major research universities—function as trainers who view mentoring as a transmission process and doctoral degrees as models of training; as illusionists who mainly are concerned with keeping up appearances; as tricksters who capitalize on weaknesses in the system; or even as escapists who disappear altogether” (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Fundamental changes need to be implemented in an effort to enhance the standard of mentoring doctoral students in higher education (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Mentorship on the graduate level should be transformational. If this is not the result, the mentor has failed the mentee. Mentors should strive to be transformational leaders, instead of managers (Mullen, 2007).

***E-Mentoring.*** As summarized by Mullen, Tele mentoring or virtual mentoring should be structured, diverse and holistic (Mullen, 2007). Design is key when implementing e-mentoring programs. Utilizing technology and e-learning tools, you can increase communication and provide a more methodical way to circulate data, insight and understanding spawned from the mentoring program (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

Proper measures should be in place to ensure everyone receives the necessary information. By taking advantage of multiple social media platforms, blog formats, university websites, and other communication outlets, the program could enhance its reach and impact (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Recording professional development workshops and making them available virtually, will expand participants’ access to information. Utilizing social media and distance learning mediums such as websites and blogs could further magnify capacity and influence (Holley & Caldwell, 2012).

## **Peer Mentoring**

As it relates to doctoral students, literature is insufficient in terms of the efficacy of peer mentoring (Brill et al., 2014; Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2000). This presents an opportunity for further research and study. Within graduate programs, a knowledgeable and adept doctoral student may be designated by the department to serve as a peer mentor. Students may also opt to create their own peer support community, bonded by similar passion, significance or comradery (Brill et al., 2014; Holley & Caldwell, 2012). The response is typically more positive, in terms of peer mentoring, especially in environments where bonding is difficult.

According to Brill et al. (2014), doctoral and graduate students sometimes take matters into their own hands and create peer support groups. By amalgamating, it provides a safe space to talk about obligations, uncertainties and plans of action (Brill et al., 2014; Hadijoannou et al., 2007). Although research shows that it does not lessen the

degree of stress, peer-mentoring partnerships present educational and group writing opportunities as well as holistic support (Hadijoannou et al., 2007).

### **Summary**

Literature is lacking in terms of the effectiveness of peer mentoring, e-mentoring, and utilizing social media platforms as a tool to cultivate mentoring relationships and build up community, especially as it relates to graduate and doctoral students. The articles reviewed answered the inquiry question, “Is e-mentoring effective?” E-mentoring will need to be systematized, diversified and humanized. Using “best practices” such as, utilizing social media, blogs, teleconferencing and technology to disseminate information, helps make this source more effective. There is a need for further research and explore this methods effectiveness further. The literature surrounding faculty mentoring is strong and highlights many of the challenges and “implications” that stem from that mentor-mentee relationship or partnership. There is room for improvement in terms of satisfaction received from students in a faculty mentoring partnership. Graduate and doctoral faculty should be sure to incorporate “best practices.” Mentorship can be formal or informal and yields and success. Students may find the traditional method, not suitable to their liking or needs. Many students create groups and networks within their cohort or doctoral and graduate community, seeking mentoring out of just faculty. They also form partnerships with peers, recent graduates, and scholars in the field as a way to build camaraderie, find support, and obtain professional development. Research shows that those who have good mentoring relationships, do better throughout their matriculation, are more aligned in their career post-graduation and reach back to help others.

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