



Implementing EduGuidance Intervention in a Time of COVID-19

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Abstract

We report on recent innovations in online mentoring of entering university engineering students. The interventions were implemented in Fall 2020, to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic, using online mentoring that we call educational guidance. The guidance proceeds through asynchronous counseling and guidance, using "EduGuide." EduGuide is an evidence-based online mentoring program that incorporates collaborative social and emotional learning activities. We used it to support and track changes in student's academic attitudes, engagement behavior, and achievement over the course of the Fall 2020 semester [Berger and Braxton, 1998, Golding, Golding and Pitchers, 2020].

The intervention is a partnership between the STEMGROW Program and the Yes SHE Can Program at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). These interdisciplinary programs aim to support STEM graduation rates. STEMGROW supports students at the El Paso Community College (EPCC), a two-year institution, graduating and transferring to a four-year institution (UTEP), while the Yes SHE Can program aims to implement new engagement techniques, mentoring approaches, professional development opportunities, and career pathways to leverage the preparation, education, and career development of underrepresented minority (URM) student groups in STEM academic programs, especially Hispanic female students. The main intervention activity consisted of incorporating the Mentoring Community of the Yes SHE Can program into the STEMGROW Programs asynchronous online education EduGuide innovation platform [Golding et al, 2021].

The mentoring component within EduGuide was carried out by professional and near-Peer mentors. The mentors actively coached the entering engineering students, who were enrolled in a Foundations in Engineering core course at UTEP. Following the completion of the course and the semester-long use of EduGuide, the stakeholder students provided feedback and insights on the impact of the experiences, by responding to open-ended self-reflection prompts. The



feedback is overwhelmingly positive, indicating that the process was valuable, especially in the time of COVID-19.

References

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