

SOC

Peer Mentoring in Sociology

CONNECT

California State University, Sacramento
Department of Sociology



Purpose

This book was designed by the SOC Connect: Peer Mentoring in Sociology Spring 2010 mentoring cohort and led by student coordinator, Monica Barba, under the direction of professor of Sociology, Dr. Mridula Udayagiri.

SOC Connect was implemented in the Fall 2009 semester and developed by Dr. Udayagiri as part of the Faculty Student Mentor Program (FSMP).

The purpose of this book is to highlight the benefits of the mentoring program and to share the experiences of mentoring partners. Students were asked to submit photos, reflect on the mentoring program and provide a personal account.

I am hopeful that you will enjoy this book and that it may inspire and motivate students to become active in the campus community as a mentoring partner.

~Monica Barba

The mission of the Sociology Department is to provide our students with the theoretical and substantive knowledge to participate as skilled professionals within the institutions and organizations that shape our region.

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Faculty Student Mentor Program

Division of Academic Affairs

The **Faculty Student Mentor Program (FSMP)** is designed to offer academic and personal support to students from low-income communities or for selected students who have requested services due to challenged experiences in their education.

The **FSMP** goals are to increase retention rates of students and facilitate graduation by providing assistance in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to complete their academic goals, introduce them to a discipline, build communities, and promote excellence.

Faculty and **Peer Mentors** are key elements to goal attainment. Program participants' integration into the campus life is facilitated by the development of discipline-based faculty and peer mentor teams. The mentors give personal, career and academic advice, and provide referrals to academic advisors and on-campus resources.



Source:
<http://www.csus.edu/fsmpr/>



About SOC CONNECT

(Soc 196 A & B)

Students with a declared major in Sociology are paired with a mentoring partner to meet at least once a week and engage in goal setting, assist with academic advising, and develop personal relationships. Throughout the semester, mentoring partners attend campus events, visit faculty office hours and explore campus resources. Participants of the mentoring program are advised to research internships, graduate school, and career opportunities.

In an effort to promote lifelong learning, students engage in community building with peers, faculty and staff. Mentoring partners are required to meet with the program director/advisor as well as a student coordinator during orientation, mid-semester check-in, end-of-semester meeting and as needed during scheduled office hours.

SOC Connect seeks to promote leadership and academic excellence. Mentoring partners enrolled in SOC 196 A, must submit weekly on-line assignments including journals or blogs, and a final essay reflecting on their experience in the program. Mentoring partners enrolled in SOC 196 B follow the same criteria with the exception of an additional leadership-based curriculum to provide a framework for mentoring.

Credits

Mentoring partners receive credit for their participation in SOC Connect. Students enrolled in SOC 196 A are awarded 1 credit, and students enrolled in SOC 196 B are awarded 3 credits upon completion of the semester-long mentorship.

Student Coordinator

Students have the opportunity to apply for the position of student coordinator where he/she can advise and orient students during office hours by assisting the mentoring cohort under the direction of the program advisor.



Student Coordinator

Fall 2009 Cohort

When Dr. Udayagiri came to me with her plan for SOC Connect, I could not pass up the opportunity. From the beginning, I knew this would be a successful program because of the passion and drive that Dr. Udayagiri had to make this program positive and beneficial for students. Being a transfer student myself and new to the CSU system, when I first began at Sac State it was a difficult time for me. I did not know many people on campus, I was not familiar with the campus itself, I was not aware of who to talk to in order to make sure I was on the right track regarding my courses, and most of all, I was far too intimidated by my professors to approach any of them. If there were a program such as SOC Connect at the time I first started Sac State, I am sure that my transition would have been far more simple and stress-free.

In my studies of Sociology, I have learned a great deal about the impact of social solidarity. Becoming more integrated into the environment that you are in is

crucial to the success that you will attain while in that environment. Giving students a sense of belonging and integration into campus life and campus interactions is key to academic achievement and success. I am thankful to have been given the opportunity to witness this during my time as student coordinator. It was incredibly rewarding to see the impact that mentoring partners had on one another and the change in attitude and boost of confidence towards their college future. I was exposed to personal stories of struggle; some of which related to the inequalities we discuss in my sociology classes.

This experience came to benefit me, not just personally, but for my future endeavors as well. Because of my work with SOC Connect, I was selected to complete a fellowship at the office of Mayor Kevin Johnson, focusing on his education initiatives and strategizing how to increase graduation rates in local high schools. Having a Sociological background as well as working with mentoring partners prepared me



HAFIZA ARIKAT

Graduate Student, Sociology

greatly for this position. I have been able to make many correlations between what I am working on, my time with SOC Connect, and what I have studied as an undergraduate and graduate student. When analyzing data regarding dropout rates and the achievement gap in local high schools, I am able to inform my coworkers of possible causes of these statistics in regard to social constraints, social inequalities, and a lack of social solidarity. My background as a sociologist and participant in SOC Connect is valued in my workplace in addition to personally giving me an expertise regarding making connections to my studies and the real world.

"Giving students a sense of belonging and integration into campus life and campus interactions is key to academic achievement and success. I am thankful to have been given the opportunity to witness this during my time as student coordinator. It was incredibly rewarding to see the impact that mentoring partners had on one another and the change in attitude and boost of confidence towards their college future."

~Hafiza Arikat



"I have always been outgoing and approachable; however, building supportive relationships was a challenge at times. Students are often rushing between class and work, unable to get to know one another on a personal basis. Thankfully, SOC Connect helped me form close relationships through mentoring."

~Monica Barba



Student Coordinator

Spring 2010 Cohort



MONICA BARBA

Class of 2010

I first heard about SOC Connect at a Sociology Cub meeting during the Spring 2009 semester. By the following semester, I was enrolled as a mentoring partner under the guidance of both Dr. Udayagiri and Hafiza Arikat. I realized the importance of mentorship in the field of Sociology after I was paired with my mentoring partner who was torn between several possible majors. I did my best to support her and introduce her to campus

resources that I felt would assist in her decision. This experience motivated me to pursue the position of student coordinator for the following semester of Spring 2010. My previous work experience on campus comprised of serving as a peer mentor for the Educational Opportunity Program as well as an intern at the Multi-Cultural Center. I feel that these experiences prepared me to support and advise students. Additionally, our on-line classroom, Sac CT, allowed me to reach out to mentoring partners as well as during office hours to guide them through their mentorships. Based on their suggestions, I was able to organize workshops and activities for all mentoring partners. It was very important to provide an inclusive environment to strengthen the sense of community and support network among mentoring partners. During my office hours I was able to connect with students on a more personal level and discuss challenges and accomplishments. One event in

particular, that stands out from the rest, was a graduate school workshop. Professors of Sociology, Dr. Cid Martinez and Dr. Jennifer Murphy assisted as facilitators for a question/answer discussion about graduate school to motivate students to begin the application process. My goal as a student leader has always been to share and distribute information and to provide access to resources that students would not have otherwise. As a first generation college student, I understand, first hand the need for mentorship in college. I know that my experience in SOC Connect will assist in my development as a graduate student and future professional. In the near future, I plan to attend graduate school for a Master's degree in Library and Information Science. With a Bachelor's degree in Sociology, I know I will continue my sociological focus in the graduate program in Library and Information Science in order to study how people use technology.

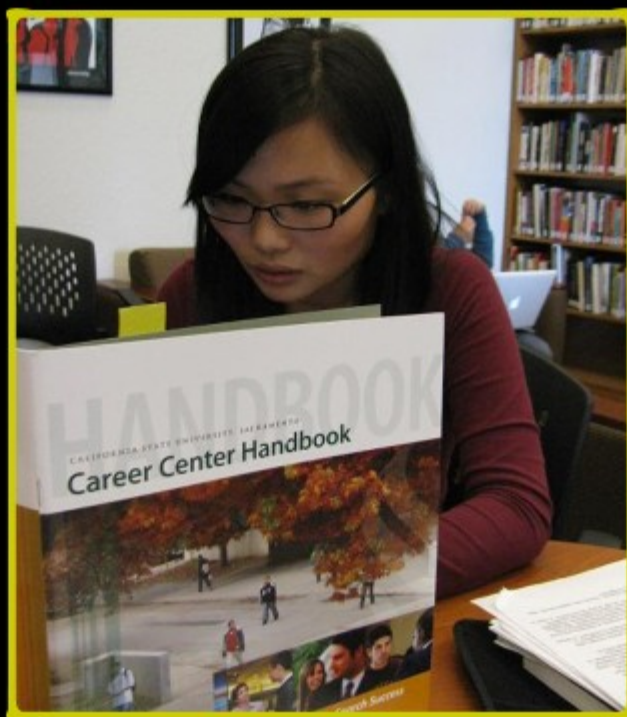


Campus Resources

Course requirement

The significance of visiting and familiarizing students with the resources available on campus is to assist and help alleviate the stressors associated with college. For some students (especially those who are the first in their family to attend college) campus life can create tensions and conflicting expectations in the classroom as well as from family and friends. Therefore, students are required to acquaint themselves with the services on campus and they are encouraged to develop supportive relationships with students, faculty and staff.

Resources include the Wellness Recreation Center (the WELL), University Union Unique Programming, Associated Students, Inc., Multi-Cultural Center, Student Organizations and Leadership (SOAL), Career Center, Writing Center, Health Center, Graduate Center, campus library and reserve room, art exhibits, theatre productions, sports and rec sports activities, and especially our partners, the Sociology Club and AKD.



SARAH CHU

Class of 2010

While at the Multi-Cultural Center, graduating senior, Sarah Chu revises her resume in preparation for her next visit to the Career Center.



Mentoring partners gather at a lecture by Tim Wise, in the University Union Ballroom. Pictured: from left to right, (top row) Alan Sakkal and Roniel Kumar; (bottom row) Jafahri Oler, Maricela García, and Monica Barba

Campus Events

Course Requirement



Mentoring Partners, Barbara Phipps and Angelina Gonzalez meet up at Round Table Pizza on campus to discuss academic plans, goal setting and to share advice for mentoring.



With over 250 student organizations, Sacramento State offers a wide range of diverse campus activities for students, faculty and staff.



Yesenia Sandoval shares campus events with her family, including her daughter, Isabelle, who joins her to both campus and community events with other mentoring partners.

Mentoring Partner Spotlight

I was born and raised in Napa Valley, California in a family of eight. As the first member of my family to attend college, I never had a role model to help guide me through college. Fortunately, in 2009, I transferred from Napa Valley College to major in Sociology at Sacramento State which was a huge step in my life because I never thought that I would make it this far. I soon found out about SOC Connect from a Sac State alumni who showed great interest in the program.

At the start of the semester, when I first met my mentor, we had an instant connection and I felt comfortable around her. Without the help of mentoring partners, I don't think I would have known about the resources on campus. The feeling of meeting new people and learning from them is exciting because I am learning about myself as well.



MARICELA GARCIA

Class of 2011

My experience in SOC Connect at Sac State has been amazing. I have met wonderful people who are involved on campus and enjoy helping others, much like I do. Thus far, I have been mentored by advisors, professors, and students who are helping me get ahead in college. I would strongly encourage students to participate in SOC Connect, especially first-generation college students like myself. I have many goals for the future including finishing my degree and attending graduate school, and obtaining a profession where I can help others. But most importantly, my goal is to serve as role model for my family and friends.

Mentoring Partner Spotlight



SUZANNE CHANG

Class of 2011

As a senior, having the mentoring program has been a blessing. Since I work full time, I attend classes at night and I usually go straight to class and then head home. Prior to my enrollment in SOC Connect, I was not aware of all the campus resources at Sac State. I never realized the variety of campus clubs and services available to students including Mellow-Me-Out, which is a great resource for all those massage needing days. Everyone that I've met through SOC Connect has been great! For students reluctant to join the program, I would encourage them to do so because we are all here to help each other succeed in college.



Mentoring Partner Spotlight



ANGELINA GONZALEZ

Class of 2010

Being in the mentoring program has increased my involvement on campus than I would have been otherwise. I am quite grateful for this program because I am a relatively shy person. It has motivated me to build relationships with my peers.

ESMERALDA ACOSTA

Class of 2010

I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to be a part of SOC Connect. I remember how I felt during my first year at Sac State—frustrated, nervous, and lonely at times. It was difficult getting accustomed to campus life and being away from my family. I had few close relationships with other Sociology undergrads and many times I felt uncertain of the choices I made. I hope that SOC Connect has been as helpful for my mentoring partner as it has for me and that I have been able to make a difference in her college experience. Together, we've become more involved on campus and learned about campus resources, including the Multi-Cultural Center. I encourage every student in the Sociology Department to be part of SOC Connect and discover for themselves the great benefits it has to offer.





BARBARA PHIPPS

Class of 2010

I grew up in Auburn, CA since I was 8 years old in a large conservative family. When I first entered college, the first Sociology course that I took as a requirement completely changed my perspective of higher education. Since then, I have enjoyed all of my courses in Sociology and I plan on getting a Master's degree in Sociology in England following my marriage in July 2011. Serving as a mentoring partner for SOC Connect has helped me become a better student, family member, and piano teacher for my private students.

JAFARI OLER

Class of 2011

Early in the semester, I did not know what to expect from the program or whether my mentoring partner and I would get along. But through thick and thin, all has gone well. The program offered me an opportunity to explore my academic interests, share them with others, and learn from others' experiences. Through this exploration, I have adapted a new set of skills and gained valuable knowledge that has made me a better and more organized student. As a student who is very involved in numerous campus organizations, I found mentoring partners to be very inspirational, as they often became more involved on campus using the resources they were introduced to. The experience was exciting and I welcomed the challenges it brought. Without SOC Connect, I would not have met other students in Sociology.



Mentoring Partner Spotlight



TATIANA CLARK
Class of 2010



My role as a mentoring partner in SOC Connect is much like my role as an athlete on the Track and Field team. The past four years have been a long learning and growing opportunity. My experience with older teammates on the Track and Field team reminds me of the relationships between mentoring partners. Even though we weren't necessarily being mentored, the guidance and support was there. My teammates serve as mentors to help guide me through the, not-so pretty politics of Track and Field. Additionally, I have support from my coaches who constantly motivate me to excel in the classroom and on the field. My coaches also took on the role of mentors by offering advice and opening doors of opportunity. Overall, being a part of both SOC Connect and the Track and Field team has been a rewarding experience. I have developed lifelong friendships, established connections to assist me in the future, and shared countless memories that have enriched my college experience. I am truly blessed to have been able to participate in both.

SOCIAL SELF-CONFIDENCE NEW
RELATIONSHIPS GOAL **ACADEMICS**
PEER-MENTOR COMMUNITY
ACTIVITIES



Mentoring partners from top left (clockwise):
Angelina Gonzalez, Maricela Garcia, Beatrice Williams, Esmeralda Acosta, Phoebe Pelton, and Monica Barba



DELTA KAPPA SOCIETY ALPHA HONORS **SOCIOLOGY CLUB AKD**

Sociology Club & Alpha Kappa Delta Honors Society (AKD)

SOC Connect is dedicated to maintaining a strong partnership with the Sociology Club (Soc Club) and Alpha Kappa Delta Honors Society (AKD). Together, SOC Connect and Soc Club offer opportunities for students to engage in leadership and mentoring. Soc Club student leaders dedicate their time to building community amongst Sociology students, faculty, and staff.

Under the guidance of faculty advisors, Soc Club leaders plan, promote, and facilitate events for students to gain a clearer understanding about graduate school options, career opportunities and how to submit research and attend regional conferences. Soc Club leaders are often concurrently enrolled as mentoring partners in SOC Connect and as active members of other campus organizations.



Co-Presidents: JAFAHRI OLER & JOHN-PETER TAN
Class of 2011 Class of 2010



Save Higher Education

Sacramento State students and members of the California Faculty Association (CFA) protested against fee increases, mandated furloughs, decreased class offerings, closed enrollments and ongoing hardships limiting accessibility and quality of higher education. Students and faculty struggled to adjust to reduced class time, increased tuition, and pay cuts. A series of rallies at the California state Capitol in Sacramento were held throughout the month of March to raise awareness of the struggles for both students and faculty.

On March 4, 2010, Sociology students united in solidarity with Sacramento State alumni, community supporters, and parents of students in public education to rally and educate state legislators on the importance of public education for the future of the state of California.

SOC Connect mentoring partners worked together during Sociology Club meetings to create signs for the rallies. Student organizations, including the Sac State Coalition, organized and promoted opportunities for students to speak out against budget cuts to the California State University and University of California systems.

Sources:
www.csu.edu/cfa
www.sacstatecoalition.blogspot.com

