

Institutional Description

The University of Central Florida is an emerging preeminent research institution and America's Partnership University. Our 13 colleges provide education and opportunities to more than 63,000 students from all 50 states and more than 150 countries. Located in Orlando, Florida, UCF is the nation's second-largest public university with 212 degree programs from which to choose. UCF is ranked as one of the "Most Innovative" universities by U.S. News & World Report, a best-value university by The Princeton Review and Kiplinger's, and one of the nation's most affordable colleges by Forbes.

Program Development

The Peer Outreach Mentoring Program (POMP) was piloted in Fall 2011 beginning with 11 students and has now grown to a little over 90 total program members. POMP is very unique because it utilizes a coaching framework to motivate, lead and empower all members, Peer Mentors and Mentees alike. For example, Mentees are groomed to become Peer Mentors similar to the structure on an athletic team where upper-classman assist freshman and new transfers to eventually lead the team. Another example of the coaching framework is that in addition to giving members tools and information to succeed in the classroom and in their careers, POMP provides members the opportunity to consistently practice what they are learning in an open and family-oriented environment. Overall, the program was developed for students at-risk, on probation, returning from academic dismissal (disqualified) and targeted groups such as new students, specifically transfers.

The organizational concerns are that program members leave the program due to the financial stress that most of our students are facing in today's economy. Some of them are in circumstances where they do not qualify for financial need however may be in a position where they are paying out of pocket for tuition. The commitment that is needed to make a positive impact in the program takes away the time that they could have earning an income so therefore we are not able to always retain veteran program members that have made major contributions to the program. However, we have built a great foundation and reputation for the program that we also continue to recruit quality members which assists in sustaining our mission and goals for the program.

The cohort that has been an intricate part in building a great foundation for the program are the Readmission students who are required to participate in POMP their first two terms returning to the University of Central Florida (UCF) after being academically dismissed. These students must earn a 2.0 term GPA to remain at UCF or the alternative is being Excluded marking them ineligible to return until after 5 years. POMP provides them and other at-risk students (new transfers, first time in college, first generation, probation, etc) invaluable support but more importantly gives them an opportunity to make a positive impact in the culture of the College and in the hospitality industry. Typically, programs that are created to assist at-risk students have a negative stigma but POMP has overcome that stigma by creating a culture of inclusiveness. Mentees have an opportunity to advance to the Peer Mentor role, hold leadership positions within the program and can proudly wear a POMP Graduation stole. Because of these opportunities, Mentees are honored to be in POMP and they become the most invested in the program and continue on to be Peer Mentors in the program.

Goals and Objectives

POMP supports the values of the Office of Student Services at the Rosen College (Professionalism, Leadership and Service) as well as the UCF Creed of Integrity, Scholarship, Community, Creativity and Excellence.

Mission: To partner upper-level undergraduates with peers who seek assistance to enhance their collegiate experience by providing them with the information, support and encouragement they need to achieve their academic, personal and/or professional aspirations

Our Promises:

1. Reduce the amount of students on academic probation and increase graduation rates
2. Enhance the undergraduates' experience personally, academically, and professionally
3. Establish academic and social support networks
4. Provide an environment that promotes the understanding of diverse cultures
5. Increase awareness of departmental, college and University resources

Goals:

1. Improve by 2% in the next 2 years the current POMP average per term of 90% of members increasing their UCF Cumulative GPA at the end of each term they participate in POMP
2. Increase by 2% in the next 3 years the current POMP average per term of 48% of members on Academic Probation at the beginning of the term being removed from Academic Probation at the end of the term they participate in POMP
3. Contribute to the Rosen College of Hospitality Management 2020 goal for the First-Year Retention Rate of increasing our percentage from 90.9% to 94% as a College
4. Contribute to the Rosen College of Hospitality Management 2020 goal for the 6-Year Graduation Rate of increasing our percentage from 78.1% to 80% as a College

Program Description

POMP is unique in that despite the program beginning as a retention initiative out of the Office of Student Services at the Rosen College, the students have a plethora of opportunities to take ownership of the program. For example, the members have facilitated workshops during program meetings, networked with individuals to be guest speakers, assisted with the creation of the logo brochure and poster, negotiate the times and goals/topics of individual meetings with Peer Mentors/Mentees, plan and facilitate the end of the year ceremony, etc.

The most notable contribution is when program members decided to create a Knight-Thon Team for the first time in Rosen College History. Knight-Thon is the largest student-run philanthropy at UCF and it benefits the Children's Miracle Network. In 2014, we created a Rosen Team late in the year and were still able to raise a little over \$2,000 and in its second year of existence almost tripled the amount raised earning the team the "Rising Knights" Award for having the highest percentage increase in fundraising.

Program members are required to attend 2 program meetings per month (consisting of training workshops and guest speakers), meet with their Peer Mentor/Mentee 2-3 times per month and volunteer for 4 ½ hours per term. All of these face to face contacts create the family atmosphere and supportive culture that POMP is known for on campus. POMP has partnered with departments at UCF such as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Integrity & Ethical Development, the Recreation and Wellness Center, the UCF Counseling Center and the Rosen College Career Services Office. These offices specifically provide invaluable training for both Peer Mentors and Mentees so that POMP can continue to be a certified mentoring program. Another valuable partnership is with the UCF Alumni Association to create a better relationship with our Rosen College Alumni. Alumni who are in the Hospitality Industry are matched mentors with POMP Peer Mentors according to their interest and career goals. Just this past year, a Rosen POMP Alumnus has agreed to sponsor a \$500.00 scholarship towards the Mentee of the Year Award.

Because POMP challenges the members to truly invest in the progress of the program, it creates an environment of partnership, community and pride. It also fosters leadership skills and overall enhances student development and success. Giving opportunities for Peer Mentor and Mentees, alike, to take initiative and contribute to the success of the program empowers each member.

For those students that are not honor students or have the ability to join other organizations due to GPA or lack of funds may leave this College without feeling that they have made any significant contributions. But POMP gives them the opportunity to make a positive impact in the culture of the College and in the Hospitality Industry. Typically, programs that are created to assist at-risk students have a negative stigma attached to it but POMP has overcome that stigma; members are proud to be in the program. Program members are now able to walk in Commencement wearing a POMP Graduation Stole and they are able to include on their resume that they have been certified by the International Mentor Training Program through the College Reading & Learning Association.

As reported in end of the semester summary reports, the one on one interaction made with our current students has made a positive impact in their success. The program creates an engaging environment through social events, interactive workshops and opportunities of exposure in the community, specifically in the Hospitality industry. More importantly, the program has impacted members' ability to learn throughout their lives. A recent graduate who progressed from a Mentee to Peer Mentor in the program stated, "I have certainly grown a great deal through this experience and learned of ways to deal with stress and how to find help for different challenges. Most importantly, it [the program] taught me that I never had to go through any hard time alone."

Procedures Used in Program Evaluation

Throughout the term, program members attend workshops to maintain certification and members assess each workshop for quality assurance. At the conclusion of each term, Peer Mentors and Mentees are given a Program Satisfaction Survey for a qualitative evaluation to assist in determining what changes may or may not be needed in the program.

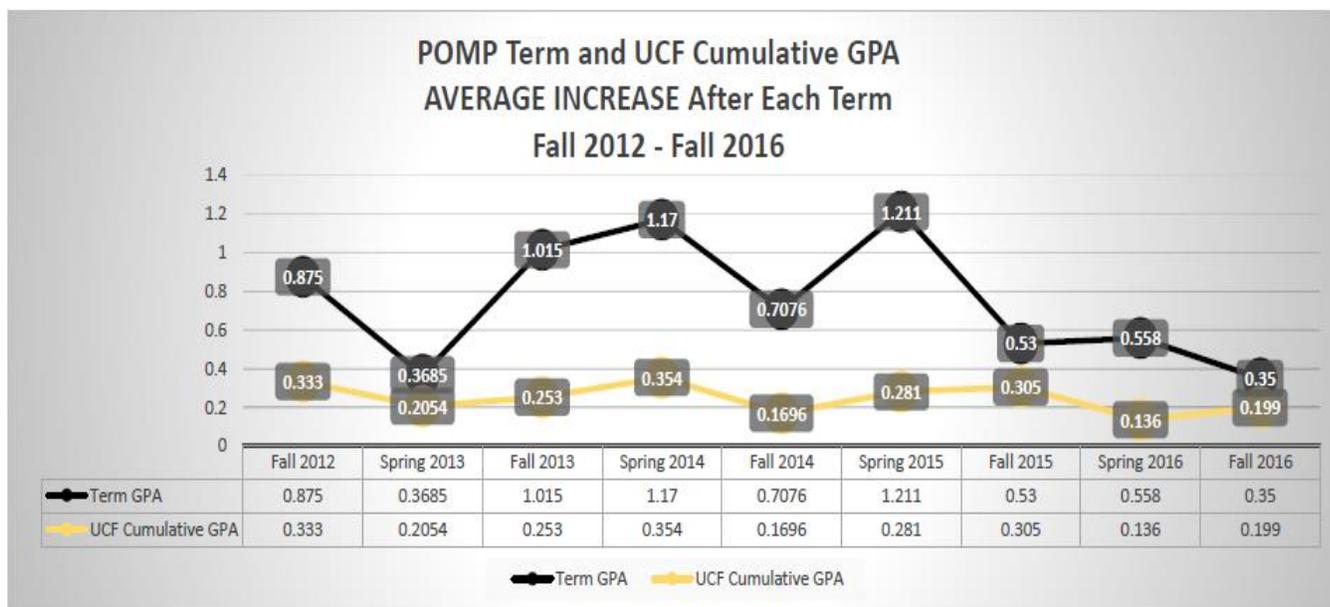
Data is collected at the end of the term to determine the average increase of the Mentees' grade point average and their academic standing is recorded to determine the retention rate. This quantitative assessment assists in determining the effectiveness of the program's approach to meet and exceed the mission and goals of POMP.

Results/Outcome

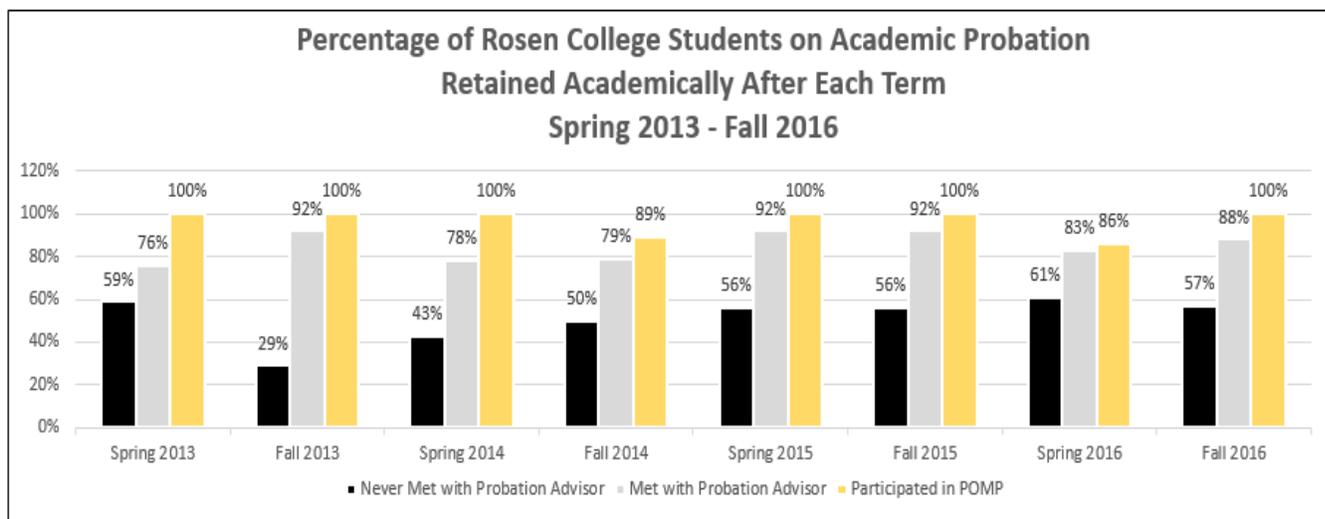
POMP has a high Success and Retention Rate as indicated in the UCF Academic Advisor Enhancement Program (AAEP) Summary Reports from Spring 2012 to Fall 2016 (Summers excluded). The Mentees in the program consist of a majority of first semester readmission students (students who were previously dismissed from the University due to academics) but we also have had at-risk, probation, new students and good academic standing students participating in the program.

The POMP has achieved a 48% overall success rate in regards to Mentees who were on probation status at the beginning of the term then becoming Removed from Academic Probation at the end of the term of which they participated in POMP. In terms of Mentees increasing their UCF Cumulative within the semester of participation, POMP has a 90% overall success rate. The overall retention rate of the program is 98%. The success of POMP can be attributed to, in part, the coaching framework that is implemented in the one on one interaction between the Director and among the Peer Mentors and Mentees. The program, itself, embodies coaching philosophies specific to empowerment and cultivating individual strengths.

The following graph illustrates the average increase of Term and UCF Cumulative GPA of POMP members from Fall 2012 to Fall 2016:



The following graph illustrates how POMP members on academic probation compare to students who met with a Probation Advisor but did not participate in POMP and students who neither met with a Probation Advisor or participated in POMP:



In terms of graduation and current enrollment, 81.88% (113/138, unduplicated) of Mentees have either graduated (54) or are currently enrolled (59) at UCF and 90.6% (122/127, unduplicated and does not include Peer Mentors who began as Mentees) of Peer Mentors have either graduated (88) or are currently enrolled (34) at UCF. Overall, the program has served over 300 students from all walks of life (this number includes Spring 2017 term).

Potential for Adaptation by Other Institutions

The POMP Director has facilitated almost a dozen presentations regarding POMP at State Conferences, National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Region 4 Conferences and NACADA Annual Conferences since 2012. Two of those presentations were commission-sponsored concurrent sessions by the Peer Advising & Mentoring Commission. POMP has also received the UCF Judy Boyte Innovation Award and the Florida Academic Advising Association's Exemplary Practice Award. Attendees from several Universities, Colleges and Departments such as Florida Gulf Coast University, St. Petersburg College, UCF Daytona Beach, the UCF Sophomore and Second Year Center and the Veterans Academic Resource Center have contacted me for information as they are implementing the framework presented during conferences. Therefore, the program will potentially have a broad reaching impact that will span thousands of students regionally and possibly even impact other institutions across the country.