

Perceived Gains of the Peer Tutor Experience

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Institutions across the nation are searching for solutions pertaining to issues plaguing higher education, such as decreasing retention and improving graduation rates. Colleges and universities are increasingly data-driven, as initiatives like Complete College America (CCA) and Gateway to Completion (G2C) are directly connected to campus funding. Additionally, higher education institutions are expected to supply the future workforce of America as global competition pushes for more employees who are better prepared to enter the workforce. When discussing persistence in higher education, retention remains a central point of the discussion. In a discussion of their definition of retention, Roberts and Styron (2010) outlined the factors that contribute to persistence of college students with one common factor being student engagement, specifically social connectedness and involvement. Nunez and Sansone (2016) learned in their collective case study that campus employment allowed the students interviewed to build a sense of community at their institution. Pike, Kuh, and Massa-McKinley (2008) found that working part-time on campus had a positive relationship with the grades of those employed. A later study related such student employment to resiliency and engagement in low-income, first-generation students and reported a significant relationship in regard to student resiliency and the type of employment they had (Martinez, Bilges, Shabazz, Miller, & Morote, 2012).

Peer tutoring in higher education is known by different nomenclatures. Institutions have reciprocal peer tutoring, peer tutoring programs, and peer-assisted learning and these tutoring programs provide benefits to the peer tutors has been overlooked in the literature. Gardner (2010) briefly discussed peer teaching/tutoring as one of the meaningful experiences for

students, and peer tutoring has always been viewed as a high impact practice for campuses. As noted by Astin's analysis of factors (Astin, 1993), on-campus employment experiences, like that of peer tutoring, can provide student employees with increased time spent on campus, which could enhance their social connectedness and involvement in campus life.

While the success of tutoring is often studied in terms of the tutee, there is less research on the benefits of tutoring for the peer tutor. Abbot, Graf, and Chatfield (2018) accept early on in their mixed methods study that far less scholars "have asked tutors directly about their experiences" (p. 245). The desire to better understand the tutor's experience may allow professionals to grasp the complexity involved in the tutoring role. In a seminal study, Maxwell pointed out this discrepancy after a review of the literature on tutor effectiveness. The research concluded with the reflection, "Perhaps we have been focusing our efforts on the wrong group and should look instead at the effects of tutoring on the tutor" (Maxwell, 1990, p.114).

Understanding how tutoring can serve as a unique experience and how it relates to the development and persistence of tutors adds a new dimension to retention initiatives across higher education. Although tutoring provides academic support to aid in persistence of the student being tutored (tutee), there is a gap in the literature on the way tutoring may influence peer tutor academic performance and skillset gains.

Background

Peer tutoring is defined by Falchikov (2001) as involving "people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching" (Topping, 1996). Regarding how the literature defines the term 'tutor', they are more often defined by what they are not than what they are. Falchikov (2001) explained that they

are not teachers and they do not have a professional qualification like that of teachers. It serves as one method used in higher education to assist students in successful completion of course work through to graduation. However, tutoring can be viewed in multiple perspectives, such as that of student engagement tool, on-campus employment, and impactful experience for the peer tutor. A review of the literature on peer tutoring and its impact on college campuses allows one to understand how to utilize this practice beyond that of its benefits for the tutee (Gardner, 2010; Nunez & Sansone, 2016; Pike, Kuh, & Massey-McKinley, 2008)..

This background begins by theoretically framing the tutoring experience through student involvement theory and student development theory. The larger background of higher education persistence and engagement is then addressed, as it directly relates to the use of tutoring for student success. Tutoring can be discussed as a meaningful employment activity, which is a form of engagement as well as academic gains that may accompany the experience. While there is limited literature supporting the argument that tutoring serves as a valuable tool for course persistence of the tutee, there is not the same degree of research on how the experience of tutoring may affect the retention of those tutors, along with their academic and skillset gains and thus further exploration is warranted..

Theoretical Framework

Research in the field of peer tutoring is not without its application of theoretical frameworks. However, they are applied to the act of tutoring for the tutee and not related to the tutoring experience for the tutor. For instance, as far as back Cohen (1986), scholars have applied educational theories to the act of collaborative, peer learning involved in tutoring. In studying the unique experience of peer tutoring at the college level, several theoretical frameworks provide a

useful backdrop to the discussion of the benefits for the peer tutor. Higher education has been challenged with issues of persistence and retention. As defined in the literature, retention is the calculated percentage of students that return to an institution year after year while persistence is continued enrollment in an institution (Roberts, 2010, Persistence & Retention-2015). In their seminal study on retention and persistence in higher education, Pascarella and Terenzini (1980) discussed the various models of persistence, applied previous critical models like that of Tinto to their own study and found that specific factors previously studied did indeed affect drop-out rate and persistence of the students. Historically, Tinto's (1975) work addressed persistence as it relates to drop out rates and factors leading to drop out in college. Furthermore, Tinto's (1975) theory of student development discussed the topic of retention from the context of student departure from the institution. Though it has gone through numerous revisions and versions, the theory argues that student integration with academic and social systems of the institution are related to their persistence at the institution. Both formal and informal academic experiences can affect the decision for a student departure, and it is the social environment which is described as critical to student integration into the college community.

Astin's Theory of Student Involvement (1999) and Tinto's Theory of Student Development (1975) both provided the theoretical framework for this mixed methods study. Astin (1999) explained the importance of student involvement in co-curricular activities in college. Using five statements as his starting point, Astin found that student involvement related to persistence of those same students. The longitudinal study found that students that participated in any type of extracurricular involvement, whether that be Greek life or sports, were less likely to drop out of college (Astin, 1999). This study cited part-time campus employment as one environmental factor that facilitated retention in students. Additionally, peer tutoring is one type

of part-time on-campus employment on which this study reflected. Utilizing the two lens of Tinto (1975) and Astin (1999) allowed the researcher to understand the peer tutor experience from the perspectives of involvement and development towards the goal of student retention. These two theoretical frameworks can inform this study, as tutors' connection to the campus and involvement in this co-curricular role can be achieved through the experience of peer tutoring.

Student Engagement and Persistence

Engagement is often defined as the activities students partake in that are linked to desired educational outcomes of an institution (Kuh, 2009). Engagement in higher education is often times the activities students participate in outside of the classroom, such as campus employment, Greek life, residence hall involvement, and student organization membership. It is these educationally purposeful activities that are connected to increased retention and graduation rates (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2010). Astin's (1977, 1993) theory of involvement links involvement with developmental outcomes for students. It should be noted, though, that over involvement affected academic performance (Roberts & Styron, 2010). Hu (2010) reported results to support student engagement as a pathway to success in college, but higher levels of engagement were negatively related to student persistence. Kuh et al. (2010) provided examples of high impact practices that contributed to student persistence, including collaborative learning. Furthermore, campus experiences such as internships and community service allowed students a chance to synthesize and apply knowledge from these experiences.

Employment as Engagement

Although many students work out of necessity, this experience can also be meaningful and impactful for the students. Research in the field of student persistence asserts that student

employment is a type of engaged activity that can contribute to persistence, given specific hours and types of work (Pike et al., 2008). Pike et al. (2008) found to avoid a negative impact on grades, there should be a cap of 20 hours maximum working hours per week. The same research also showed that creating a meaningful work experience for students is a significant part of student employment as engagement. Bryson and Hand (2008) view engagement on a continuum with different locations, like the classroom and the institution as a whole. A review by Trowler (2010) explains that engagement is the interaction between the time, effort, and other resources that are invested by students. Employment at the campus can be one of the resources invested by students.

Martinez et al. (2012) explored this relationship between employment and persistence in low-income, first-generation college students. The study reported that students with on-campus, work study jobs had lower levels of resilience, which is contradictory to other research in the field. As was the case with Pike et al. (2008), student employment and resiliency were studied in relation to type of employment, hours worked per week, and training provided for a relationship to be assessed. Wenz and Wei-Choun (2010) explored the grade point averages (GPA) of employed students and found that employment had a negative relationship with GPA.

Peer Tutoring

Campus tutoring centers provide tutors a different kind of on-campus work experience than other campus jobs because of the helping nature of the tutor position (Gardener, 2010). A seminal study by Mann (1994) found that assuming this significant role-taking responsibility allowed the tutors in the study to take on a more adult and reflective point of view. Although one of the larger goals of the study was to understand how tutor training could be altered to benefit

the tutor, the journals utilized in the study showed tutor gains in conflict resolution skills and nonverbal communication skills (Mann, 1994). Training, when applied to tutoring centers in higher education, is normally connected to the certification a center may have with a specific professional organization. Although not the only training certification program in the field, the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) owns the certification most widely used in the tutoring field and one the current institution in this study adheres to.

In an interview for the *Journal of Developmental Education*, Rick Sheets, for six years Coordinator of the College Reading and Learning Association's International Tutor Training Program Certification, explained the background behind the certification. Sheets discussed the process of creating the certification program and noted the “need for tutor training guidelines to provide consistent training procedures” (Walker, p. 22). As tutors work with tutees to explore both course content and college success skills, the employment experience can transform into one of impact for the tutor. The literature regarding employment and engagement is limited in addressing the niche experience of peer tutors as a type of unique employment while in college. In a foreword for *Students Helping Students*, Gardner (2010) categorized peer leadership opportunities, like that of a peer tutor, as a meaningful responsibility that can increase student success.

Most of the research regarding tutoring is focused on how tutoring is positively related to tutee success, whether it be GPA, course success rates, or persistence rates. Dating back to the early years of writing centers, scholars like Harris (1995) and Bruffee (1995) recognized the benefits of engaged students discussing their writing with tutors. DeFeo and Caparas (2014) began their empirical study with a brief history of these centers, noting the positive relationship between tutoring and student retention, course completion rates, and GPAs. Tutoring, whether it

be in a general (comprehensive, broad-based) center or a content-specific center, is a high impact practice for the tutee (DeFeo & Caparas, 2014; Gardner, 2010; Colver & Fry, 2016; Comfort & MacMahon, 2014).

Noncognitive Skills Gained by Peer Tutors

Dvorak (2001) earlier seminal study approached the topic of tutoring benefits from the vantage point of the peer tutor, namely tutors at a large midwestern tutoring center. Two of the five themes that emerged from the data directly related to the research questions of the current study with one of the themes being the benefits of the tutoring experience to the tutors and another theme noted the worth of the tutoring experience (Dvorak, 2001). Between 2001 and 2008, limited research was done on the impact of tutoring on the tutor. In 2008, Alsup, Conrad-Salvo, and Peters (2008) studied the experience of tutoring as it related to future English educators. Although the researchers relied largely on anecdotal evidence and personal experiences, this study was one of the first that investigated tutoring from the tutor's perspective. In 2008, the literature began to shift to focus again on the benefits of tutoring for the peer tutor. Alsup et al. (2008) specifically applied the benefits to future English educators and learned that for these tutors, the opportunity provided field experience in a realistic setting. DeFeo and Caparas (2014) used qualitative methodology to study the experience of being a tutor. As is the case for much of the research on this topic, the experience was measured by each tutor's reflections and did not provide statistical data to support increased tutor persistence and graduation rates.

Arco-Tirado, Fernandez-Martin, and Fernandez-Balboa (2011) added to the skill-based literature but acknowledged that little is known about the effects on tutors, except in relation to

tutor personal satisfaction, a theme in most of the research. Much of the literature on tutoring integrates theories of metacognition as well. This 2011 study was no exception to that trend, as tutors' cognitive and metacognitive strategies were shown to have improved (Arco-Tirado et al., 2011).

More recently, scholars have approached the topic of tutor benefits from a more generalized teaching and learning perspective. Fiorella and Mayer (2013) used an empirical study to examine the benefits of learning by teaching. This study observed that both the experience of tutoring and the experience of preparing to tutor positively benefited the tutor (Fiorella & Mayer, 2013). Fiorella's and Mayer's research was unique in the field because it tested not only peer teaching and preparing to teach as an effective learning strategy for tutors, but also added a delayed test to the study.

In 2015, research on tutoring as it relates to tutor learning continued with another study focusing on metacognitive skill gains. De Backer, Keer, and Valcke (2015) found that students participating in a Reciprocal Peer Tutoring (RPT) program had increased levels of metacognitive regulation and monitoring strategies. However, the researchers recognized that the learning materials and weekly tutor guides distributed to the tutors may have contributed to the skillset gains (De Backer et al., 2015). Previous research about the benefits of tutoring for the tutor is either generalized or subject-specific in nature, ranging from a general discussion of campus employment to the skillsets gained through STEM-based tutoring experiences.

Academic Performance and Learning of Peer Tutors

In a review of research on the *academic performance and learning* of the peer tutor, there is a focus on the academic gains for tutors within the STEM and health sciences fields. Dioso-

Henson (2012) looked at three relationships, one of which was between academic performance of tutors and non-tutors. The study is applied only to a RPT program in a college physics course (Dioso-Henson, 2012). As is the case in many of the previous studies, there was clear proof that tutoring required skills in simplification of content, communication, and organization.

Brannagan, Dellinger, Thomas, Mitchell, Lewis-Trabeaux, and Dupre (2013) continued this trend with their study of benefits of tutoring for the nursing peer tutor. There was a heavy focus on the skills gained through tutoring, but this mixed methods study also discovered that tutors perceived an increase in their content knowledge.

In a review of the literature on tutor learning, Roscoe and Chi (2007) found two tutoring activities that supported this content acquisition, explaining and questioning. Rather than solely focusing on the gains, the review found through research up to that point that measures needed to be taken to increase potential for tutor learning. Beginning around 2014, studies of peer tutoring shifted to again center on the academic performance of the tutor. Iwata, Furnedge, Sturrock, and Gill (2014) studied students who served as Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) tutors and non-PAL tutors. While the study noted that part of the statistical significance could be due to the high achieving background of the PAL tutors, the researchers also learned that those who served as peer tutors performed better on final examinations in medical school than those who did not (Iwata et al., 2014). In his study of student tutors in higher education physics classes, Sneddon (2015) found the majority of the tutors reflected thinking that the tutoring experience helped with their understanding of Physics and even felt more confident in their understanding of the content. Research in the area of tutor gains is focusing more on tutor persistence, but was restricted largely to STEM fields of tutoring.

In conclusion, the literature of tutoring uses various lenses to examine the relationship of tutoring with persistence in higher education. Peer tutoring has been discussed for its value in tutee academic support, its involvement in the campus employment arena, and finally in its relationship with tutor academic performance and skillset gains. These gains include academic performance in a course, communication skills, time management skills, and listening skills. Much of the literature examines the soft associated with being a tutor, but more recent literature is hypothesizing about the peer tutor experience as it relates to STEM tutors' persistence and graduation. Studies in the field have divided the tutor group into subsets according to specific demographics like socio-economic status and student major. The literature, though, lacks a more thorough investigation of how the peer tutor experience relates to the skillset and learning gains.

Statement of the Problem

Most American higher education institutions have at least one tutoring center on their campus, which assists students in mastering both course content and success skills. Campus administrators and research scholars alike agree that tutoring serves as an important tool in student retention. However, the amount of resources, financially and otherwise, committed to tutoring centers is not indicative of this importance. Peer tutoring in higher education is undervalued and often does not see resource allocation that is proportionate to its value in student retention. Campus tutoring centers often have one full-time staff member managing the entire center and can be restricted on space allocations, as campuses deal with issues of real estate availability. In most every sense, the higher education tutoring center is undervalued, but critical resource for student success. The literature within the field of tutoring reflects this same discrepancy.

Upon review of the scholarship, one finds limited literature regarding the lived experiences of the peer tutor. The limited research that has been conducted was through quantitative methodologies and focuses on specific tutoring content areas, namely in the STEM field. Additional study is warranted to better explore the perceptions of the tutors as they relate to gains of their experience in the peer tutoring center. Ultimately, further study of this topic could result in a higher profile for the value of the peer tutoring center and, in turn, increased funding for these centers. Furthermore, there is little to no assessment done of the peer tutor experience as it relates to their persistence and retention. Tutoring center administrators reflect on their work usually in non-empirical ways, which is not sufficient for data-driven change. In order to provide tutors with the best experience possible in this role, there needs to be a better understanding of the experience.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore how the peer tutor experience in the context of one university's learning center is perceived in relation to potential gains by the tutors in that center. Through the use of diverse data sources like tutor interviews and focus groups, the study will examine the way one center's tutors see their experience in relation to short and long-term skill sets and gains.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What are the perceptions of peer tutors regarding the influence of the tutoring experience on their academic performance?

2. What are the perceptions of peer tutors regarding the influence of the tutoring experience on their skillset gains (i.e., self-confidence and fulfillment and social and professional skills)?
3. How do university peer tutors describe the benefits of their peer tutoring experience in relation to professional development skills?

Significance of the Study

Research pertaining to increased student retention and persistence rates in higher education and the impact on peer tutoring exists, but there is minimal discussion, specifically on the benefits to the tutor in an effort to better understand the experiences of being a peer tutor. This understanding may result in increased value placed on that experience, as it may increase the retention rates of the students that serve as peer tutors. Scholars have recognized the impact that tutoring has on the peer tutor's connection to campus and also persistence rates. With evidence-supported research that tutoring adds not only to the retention of the peer tutors but also to their skillset development, the findings could be relevant to campus administrators searching for additional strategies to increase retention rates at their institution. Related to this skillset development is the need for the college graduate to be work-ready, prepared with necessary professional development skills that many are finding missing from the current college graduate. In addition to the connection to skills gained for their tenure at the institution, tutoring may provide peer tutors with critical professional skills that many are leaving college without. The current study adds to this under-used perspective of the tutor as the recipient of these benefits, but also provides a unique context for studying the peer tutor experience.

This study may have real implications for the students and staff working in the college tutoring centers. It is important that both student staff and full-time tutoring center staff understand the value of the tutoring experience. With said information, center staff can create and implement training that draws most effectively on the strengths of the peer tutoring job. Upon completion of the study, the findings may be utilized by tutoring centers to tailor the center's training agenda to meet the needs of the tutor while also emphasizing the strengths tutors found in the experience previously. Further, by understanding the implications of peer tutoring on the student tutors, upper administrators can make informed decisions regarding funding and resources for the under-valued tutoring center on the college campus. One of the key indicators for success of a tutoring program is support of the program across campus. This support, for example, may be in the form of financial being allocated from the top level of university administration; a well-informed upper administrator can not only speak for the benefits of tutoring but can also be an advocate for the tutoring center.

Upon review of the literature on tutoring benefits for the tutor, one sees this topic is increasingly becoming an important piece of the retention discussion. However, most of the studies since 2001 have used a quantitative research design and examined the relationship as it exists in the STEM and pre-med content areas. Various areas relating to the impact of tutoring have been studied through a quantitative lens, areas like course grades and course persistence. This current study, though, would add to the limited qualitative research regarding benefits for the tutor.

Procedures

In an attempt to recognize that bias and fault lies in all research methodologies and that a wholistic approach is best used for these research questions, this study used a mixed methods design. The mixed methods approach allows the researcher to come at the topic at hand differently, thus, expanding on the study's purposes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Education is increasingly digital in practice and form, as technology changes its landscape. Like most organizations, higher education is driven by data and it is through mixed methods research that one can process and analyze this data in a more complete and useful manner (Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2013). This research design allows the researcher to augment data obtained from the instrument to explore the experience of peer tutoring in a more in-depth fashion (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the researcher will conduct a survey of the peer tutor experience through a researcher-created instrument; the results from this survey will be analyzed and will use qualitative methods to explore the phenomena in more detail (Creswell & Creswell, 2018)

Phase 1- Quantitative

Quantitative research methodologies, such as that of the survey, will allow the researcher to confirm or reject the hypothesis that the peer tutoring experience does serve as an impactful one at Georgia College and State University (GCSU). By using deductive analysis in the quantitative part of the study, a broader understanding of the peer tutor experience can be investigated. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain the application of mixed methods arguing, "all methods had bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized the weaknesses of each form of data" (p. 14). Both the survey and the interviews will be completed with peer tutors currently employed through the Learning Center at GCSU . The researcher does recognize the inherent issues that conducting research in one's own

workplace can create, but hopes implementing a digital version of the tool will help address this issue. The tool was used both in a previous pilot study and an earlier study. Piloting the tool through two separate groups allows the researcher to modify the survey as needed, per the suggestions of each pilot group. For example, the option to not respond to specific questions in the survey was removed, as was a suggestion from the first round of survey use.

The tool will be sent via anonymous link through Qualtrics to the full current tutor population at GCSU. An email explaining the purpose of the study will be sent with the link and a reminder email will go out approximately two weeks in to the survey's open time period. The survey will be open for one-month total and contains both demographic information and content specific to this study. Using a review of the literature, the researcher created the survey with themes common in the tutoring literature; the survey questions, as illustrated by the matrix, is broken down into three categorical skillsets and areas- academic performance and learning, self-confidence and fulfillment, and social and professional skills.

Phase 2- Qualitative

Phase two of the procedures entails interviewing pre-determined peer tutors about their experience as a tutor. Implementing both surveys and interviews concerning will allow the researcher to get a fuller idea of the peer tutor experience. In essence, "the overall intent of this design is to have the qualitative data help explain in more detail the quantitative results" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 222). Data obtained from the survey will be analyzed and then Phase 2 of the procedures will begin as a small sample of the tutors surveyed are interviewed. Selection of the sample to be interviewed will be dependent on the results of Phase 1 and

whether outliers exist, specific trends needs to be addressed, or set demographics need to be taken into account.

The researcher will create a set of interview questions for participants, but, as Hatch (2002) explains, additional questions can be generated during the interview if responses warrant explanation. Hatch (2002) refers to this type of interviewing as semi-structured because although the researcher sets brings guiding questions to the interview and records it, they are also open to probing into areas the respondent prompts. Interviews will take place on the GCSU campus, as to allow for convenience for the interviewees. Prior to beginning the interview, potential participants will be required to complete a consent form, which acknowledges the opportunity to opt out of the study at any point. The researcher will record the interviews using technology and will use themes from transcription to further inform the quantitative data. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) noted the two data sets will not be merged during integration; instead, the qualitative data will be used to better understand the experience of peer tutoring found in the quantitative results.

Definition of Key Terms

Peer tutoring --Peer tutoring involves specific role taking between the two parties, the person being tutored and the one tutoring and can encompass a variety of learning situations (Falchikov, 2001).

The *tutor* is a student that has been selected based on “the excellence of their grades” to assist others in course content mastery and success skill development (Falchikov, 2001, p. 5). By comparison, the *tutee* is the student on the other end of the relationship, receiving tutoring.

Certification, when applied in the context of peer tutoring centers, regards the use of training programs for tutors that set standards and create consistency among tutoring centers across the globe.

Roberts and Styron define *retention* as “a calculation of the percentage of students who return to the same institution year after year” (p. 2).

Persistence is defined by the National Student Clearinghouse as “continued enrollment (or degree completion) at any institution” (Persistence & Retention- 2015).

Engagement is a complex concept that has been tackled differently by various scholars. In the simplest sense of the word, “student engagement refers to the contribution that students make towards their learning, as with their time, commitment and resources” (Krause & Coates, 2008).

Chapter Summary

The use of peer tutoring as a strategy to increase retention and graduation rates in colleges is not a new approach, as scholars recognize the impact peer learning can have on the tutee in terms of their course persistence and learning objectives. However, there is lack of discussion as to how this peer tutor experience impacts the tutor themselves. Peer tutoring can be studied through various lenses, such as that of retention strategy and even the student employment experience, but additional research is needed about the way this on-campus engagement experience can contribute to tutors' academic and skillset gains.

Currently, scholars study the peer tutoring experience in a contextualized way, largely pertaining to tutors in the STEM fields and pre-professional medical fields. This study aims to apply the discussion to the context of a peer tutoring center, which offers a variety of course

support. Utilizing a mixed methods methodology for this study, the implications include potential increased attention and support of the campus tutoring center. This study goes beyond the common quantitative approach utilized for this topic and applies an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, which allows the qualitative data to inform the initial quantitative findings. The researcher recognizes that both qualitative and quantitative research designs have limitations, but using a survey tool and interviews to follow will add a new dimension to the already limited research on the peer tutor experience.

Peer tutoring centers are a common element of most higher education campuses, but the extent to which they serve students is not matched by the financial support provided for these centers. Upper administration staff on these campuses should better understand how tutoring is a multi-dimensionally positive retention strategy, as the experience of tutoring allows the peer tutor to develop professional skills, interpersonal skills and academically. Additionally, it is important that the staff working in these centers understand the experience of tutoring, as this can directly affect tutor training approaches and content. Across all levels of administration, college staff may be making uninformed decisions about their tutoring centers, whether it be regarding funding for the center or even content for center tutoring training. Using the data from this study, the institution can analyze various elements work of the tutoring center and better support the student staff that are employed at the campus tutoring center.

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Appendix A

Survey on Peer Tutor Experiences

Note: The survey was created in the online Qualtrics software tool. The questions have been replicated here, but the formatting and presentation are different.

Survey on Peer Tutor Experiences

The purpose of this survey is to study the attitudes and experiences of being a peer tutor at a university in Georgia. There are two parts to this survey, the demographics section and the tutoring experience section.

Part I: Survey Items

Please respond to the below statements by circling the number that reflects the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. For current tutors, think about your experiences so far. For former tutors, think back on your experience while in the tutoring role. Below is the 5-point Likert scale that should be used when rating the statements.

- 1= Strongly Disagree
- 2= Disagree
- 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4= Agree

· 5= Strongly Agree

1. Serving as a peer tutor increased my self-confidence.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Serving as a peer tutor improved my academic performance.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Serving as a peer tutor improved my communication and listening skills.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Serving as a peer tutor improved my own time management skills.

1 2 3 4 5

5. Peer tutoring gave me feelings of fulfillment and accomplishment.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I developed a better sense of responsibility through my peer tutoring position.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Being a peer tutor allowed me to develop more patience.

1 2 3 4 5

8. Being a peer tutor helped me be more aware of the learning process for myself.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Being a peer tutor helped me be more aware of the learning process for my tutees.

1 2 3 4 5

10. My experience as a tutor helped me develop social skills, such as working with diverse groups and empathy skills.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Being a peer tutor made me feel more connected to the college.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I believe that the skills I gained being a peer tutor will benefit my future professional life.

1 2 3 4 5

Part II: Demographic Information

Gender:

Male _____

Female _____

Nonbinary/Third Gender _____

Prefer to Self-describe _____

Prefer not to respond _____

Academic Level: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Former Tutor

Primary Tutoring Area:

Writing/Humanities _____

Social Sciences _____

Math _____

Science _____

Business _____

Agriculture/Natural Resource Management _____

Race: White/Caucasian

Black/African American

Hispanic/Latino

Asian/Pacific Islander

Other

Multiracial

Prefer not to respond

Years Served as a Tutor at ABAC: Less than 1 year

1

2

3

4+