

DLI Capstone Project: Developing an Intersectional Nursing Faculty Mentoring Program

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Background

First-gen, low-income and/or BIPOC students in particular can struggle to navigate the often obscured program design and academic expectations of nursing school. This “acute uncertainty” (Mylor Medley 2017) can produce stress. And while there isn’t a college student who doesn’t experience stress, what is important about Mylor Medley’s observation is that for first gen, low income, and/or BIPOC students their epistemological stress can all too easily become an existential threat. That is because stress, personal and environmental, can put our students at “particular risk” for non-completion (Jeffreys 165). The lack of clarity can be compounded by little visible evidence that they can succeed. “Underrepresentation of minority nursing faculty in largely White academic institutions hinders the success of minority students in nursing” (Bell B. White 2020). At UMD, while 37% of our campus is BIPOC. In the College of Nursing, AA and Latinx students represent about 20% of total student pop. Our nursing faculty diversity, however, is < 1 percent.

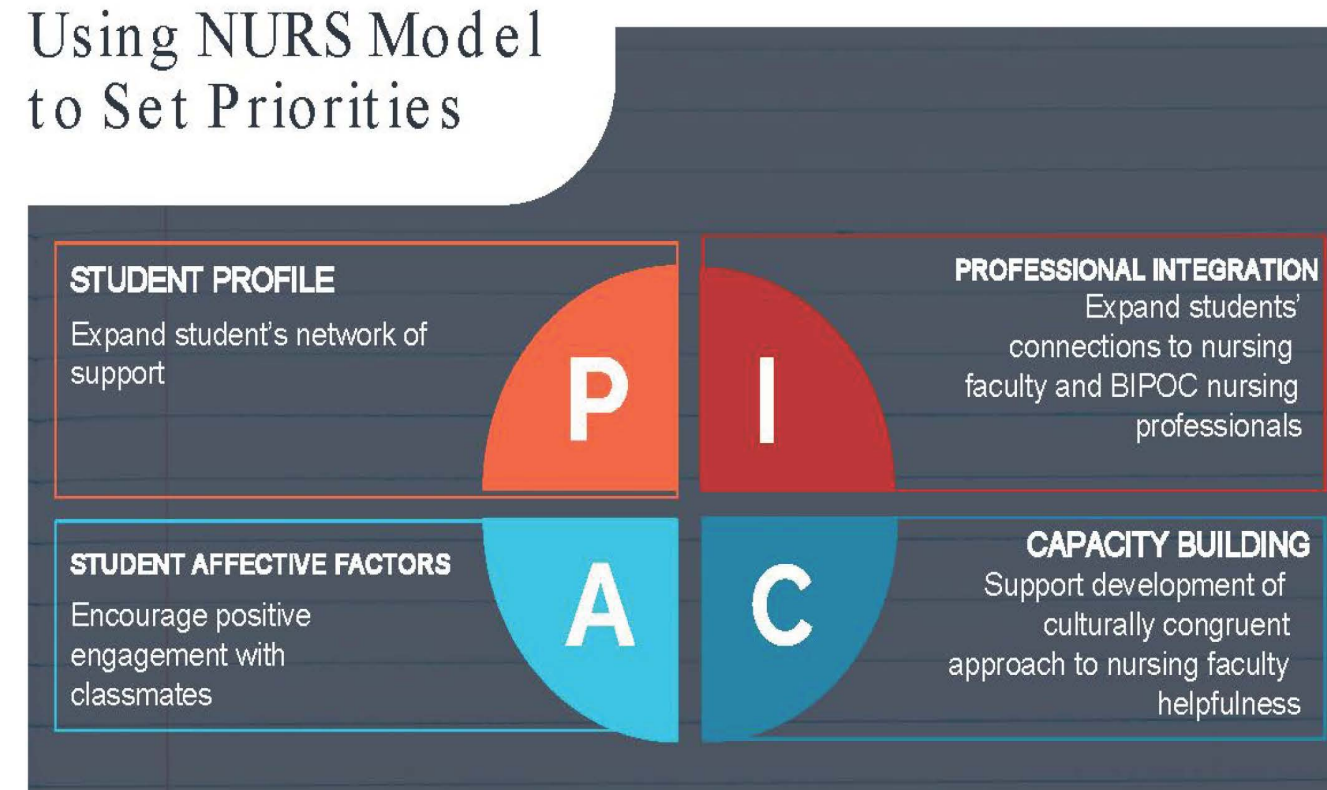
While many of our white, female nursing students are able to look into the mirror of academic and professional culture and see themselves reflected back—most male students, BIPOC students cannot. The UMD Faculty Mentoring Program will seek to address the question: How can we increase students’ understanding of program and reduce the acute stress that can put them at particular risk of non-completion?

In her essay, Nicola Andrew describes learning as an action that derives its meaning, in part, from the social interactions within and outside of the group. For example, sharing personal histories; sharing personal journeys; weaving a narrative; [and] contextualizing professional and practice development (“Developing Professional Identity” 2009). Multiple studies have shown that positive role models contribute to the success of students with similar racial and ethnic identities (Njie-Carr VPS 2020). One reason that mentoring can be an effective strategy for retention (Dewitty qtng Crisp 2011) is because it builds students’ relationships with a “wider but identifiable group of people” (Andrew 608). To put it another way, mentoring is learning that takes place within the context of the student’s own personal development.

Framework

For our HRSA grant, we utilize Marianne Jeffreys’ Nursing Universal Retention and Success (NURS) Model (2012). The NURS Model is an evidence-based persistence and retention model designed explicitly for diverse nursing students. Jeffreys NURS model provides the main priorities for the faculty mentoring program: 1) Increase information about nursing curriculum design and academic expectations; and 2) Increase access to role models.

Using NURS Model to Set Priorities



Building a faculty mentoring program in a PWI means starting from where we are. While we do not have faculty racial and/or ethnic diversity that is not to say we have zero diversity. Using Kimberlé Crenshaw’s theoretical framework, faculty gain cap-

acity to work across differences. Further, training will place intersectionality within the context of nursing education as illuminated by Green-Monton. Structured activities will cohere around a single topic. Each meeting will focus on one topic, and all topics will build on each other over the course of the total 3 meetings per semester. Enrichment programming will be an option that students are asked to select as part of the mentoring contract.

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Building Community



Program Description

The format of the UMD Faculty Mentoring Program will be simple: A total of five faculty members will mentor a group of 7-8 grant-eligible students. Faculty will facilitate 1 meeting per month for 1 hour, in Fall 2021.

Each meeting will focus on a single topic, such as science relevancy and intrinsic motivation. Through activities and discussion about the wide range of careers in nursing and building personal connections with nursing faculty, we hope to increase professional integration. Activities can be chosen by faculty from a plug-and-play format. The goal of this approach is to create accessible context for students that’s also easy for faculty to use. Additionally, monthly events for students and faculty to attend will include Diversity in Nursing Conversation series and panel discussions.



Assessment

Success will be measured by:

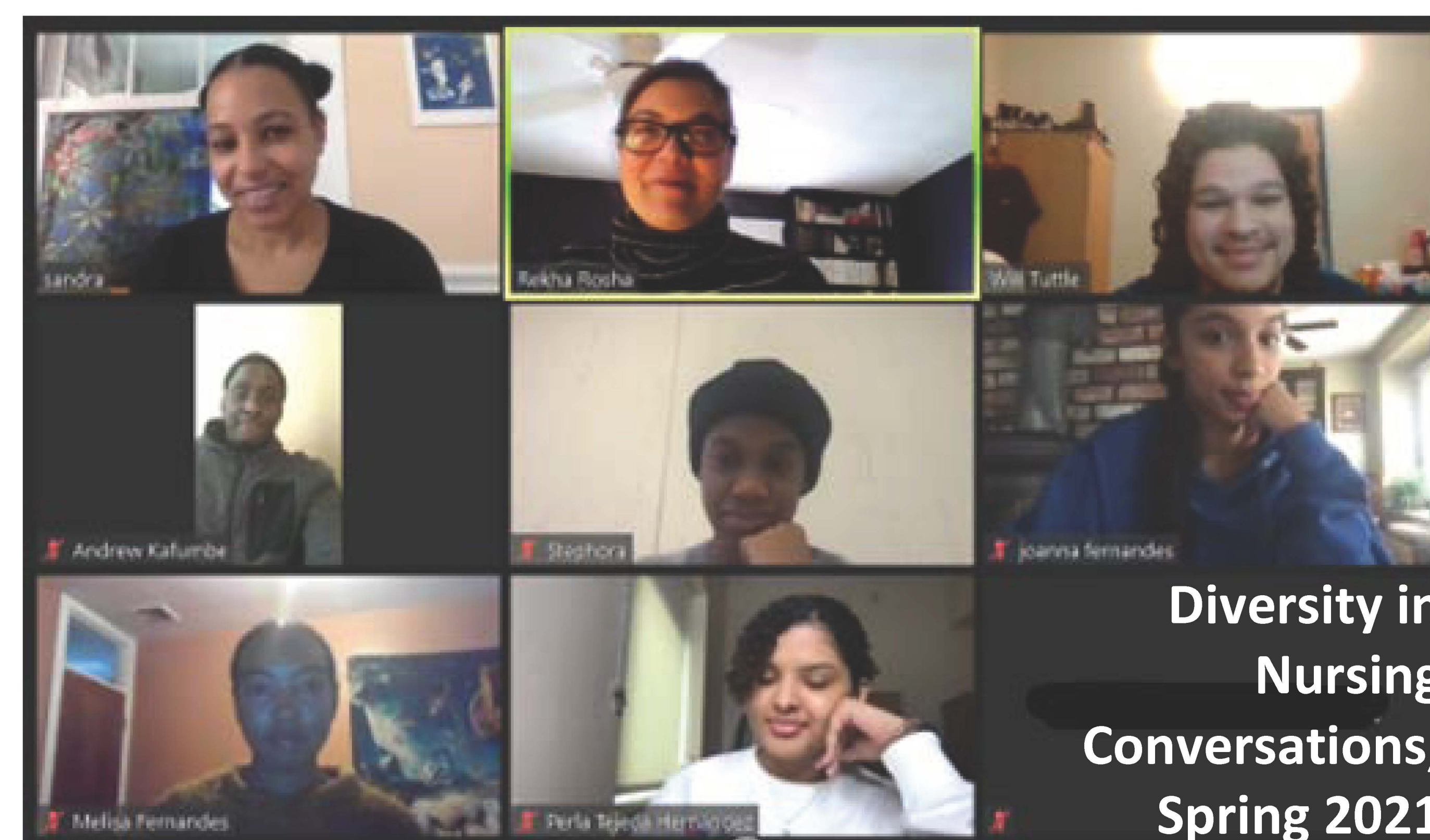
- ↓ number of course failures in Year 1 and Year 2;
- ↑ progression rates 1st and 2nd and 2nd to 3rd year;
- ↑ self-reported measures of self-efficacy and social/professional engagement (pre-test; post-test drawing from Jeffreys Student Perception and Active Promoter tools; and Enrichment Program Satisfaction)

↑ self-reported measures of faculty satisfaction with culturally congruent mentoring (Jeffreys Faculty Self-Assessment survey results). Qualitative measures: .

Measuring Outcomes



Meaningful mentoring experiences with peer mentors, professional nurses, nursing faculty, and on-campus partnerships for nursing



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DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



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diversity, equity, and inclusion*

Biography

Dr. Rosha holds advanced degrees from The University of Vermont and Brandeis University. Dr. Rosha began her career inside the college classroom teaching American literature and composition. Having been a first-generation and low-income college student, and based on her research on class and capital, she discovered a love of academic advising, and for the past seven years has worked on increasing persistence and retention among first-generation, low-income, and BIPOC students. Currently she provides holistic supports to URM nursing students in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, University Massachusetts Dartmouth, in support of the HRSA workforce development grant.



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