

# **Engaging multi-dimensional support mechanisms in a Faculty community through peer mentoring.**

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This paper focuses on a broad reaching peer mentoring program in the Faculty of Business and Law, Deakin University that commenced in late 2007 at Postgraduate level. It has since grown into a complex program that provides multiple strategies for commencing students to connect with Faculty peer mentors and supports development of those contextual soft skills so important for employment of senior students who act as mentors. The program now supports undergraduate and postgraduate (course work) students in the Faculty at the Burwood campus.

Developing a community of mentoring is a long term commitment which the Faculty had taken on as a Teaching and Learning strategy to improve student engagement. The program works primarily in partnership with students, who take on key roles of co-ordination within the program, and are supported by staff and student societies across the Faculty and University. The Faculty Student Mentors provide support through the Undergraduate and Postgraduate volunteer programs and Drop In Stations, and additionally play key roles in Faculty orientation and transition programs. The program has most recently engaged with community members such as Deloitte in a successful program pilot.

This paper will make some broad suggestions as to how a faculty community peer mentoring programs can provide opportunities for engagement that encourage meaningful interaction from a student perspective between not only Australian and International students, but between other national groups on campus.

## **Key Words**

Peer mentoring, academic and social transition, student support, intercultural interaction, soft skills, community engagement