

# **Personal Mentoring Pilot Project for First-Generation Students at La Cité collégiale (2009-2010)**

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# CONTEXT

Rae Report (2005) recommendation:

« ... develop a First-Generation Strategy that involves early outreach to students and ongoing supports to ensure success while they are enrolled ».

# ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES (FGSs)

- Support from family
- Academic preparation
- Academic aspiration
- Financial resources

# IDENTIFYING FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS

## Questions:

*What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?*

*What is the highest level of education completed by your father?*

**Students have the following choice of answers to these two questions:**

- a) High school - not completed*
- b) High school graduation certificate*
- c) Partial postsecondary studies (incomplete college, university or trade program)*
- d) Trade certification*
- e) College diploma or CEGEP*
- f) B.A.*
- g) College diploma and/or certificate and B.A.*
- h) Professional degree (lawyer, doctor)*
- i) Master's or Doctoral degree*
- j) Don't know*

# IDENTIFYING FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS

College Entry Survey – La Cité collégiale  
Fall 2009 (Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009)

<i>Enrolled full-time, Postsecondary program, 1<sup>st</sup> semester</i>	<b>2,369</b>
Number of respondents	2,234
Non-FGSs	1,665
FGSs	<b>489</b>
Percentage of respondents identified as FGSs	21,9%

# OBJECTIVE

Provide ongoing individual, personalized support to a group of FGSs at the start of their college studies by pairing them with a professor-mentor, and to subsequently evaluate the retention rate and academic success of this experimental group.

# RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

**489 FGSs**

**Number of FGSs enrolled ,  
1<sup>st</sup> semester of a post  
secondary program  
(Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009)**

## **Experimental Group**

**77 FGSs – Random distribution;  
contacted as of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of  
Fall 2009 and paired with a  
professor-mentor**

## **Control Group**

**412 FGSs – no special  
monitoring or mentoring as  
part of this project**

# PROFESSOR-MENTORS

Faculty – La Cité collégiale	FGSs assigned
School of Administration, Hospitality and Tourism	19
School of Arts, Media and Communications	11
Health Sciences	9
Community Services	25
Technology Institute	6
Preparatory Programs	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>77 FGSs</b>

# COMPOSITION OF GROUPS

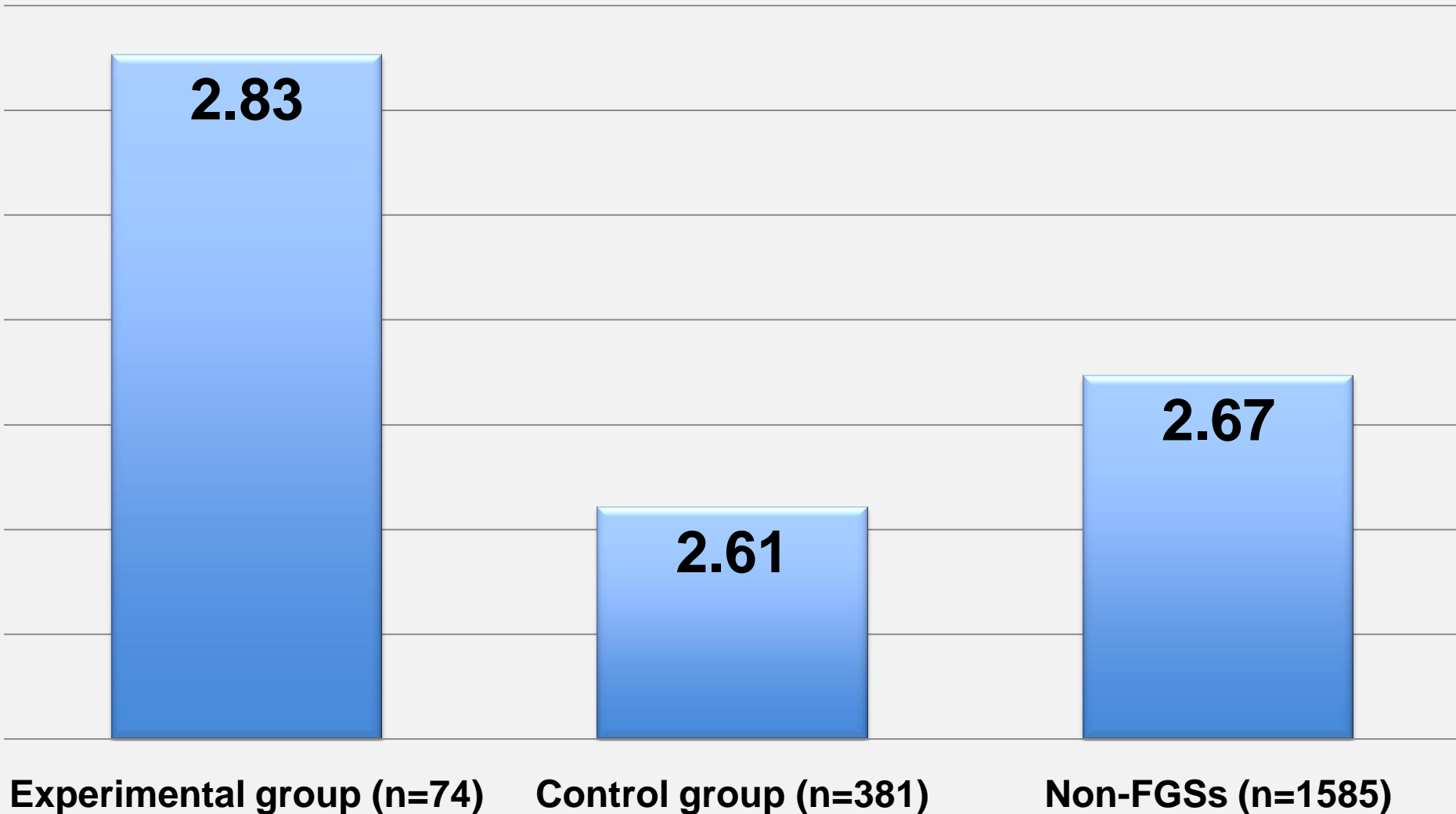
	Mother tongue (FR)	Language most commonly used (FR)	Age (average)	Country of secondary studies (CAN)	Aboriginal persons	Country of birth (CAN)
Experimental group (n=77)	75.3%	76.6%	20.9	88.3%	7.8%	78.0%
Control group (n=412)	85.0%	82.3%	21.0	92.0%	6.1%	87.6%
Non-FGSs (n=1665)	85.2%	80.4%	20.6	91.5%	5.2%	83.5%

# RETENTION RATES – RESULTS

	Enrolment	End of term	Retention rate	Inter-term (Week 3 – W10)	Inter-term	End of term	Retention rate
Experimental group	77	74	96.1%	72	93.5%	69	89.6%
Control group	412	381	92.5%	335	81.3%	318	77.2%
Total FGSs	489	455	93.0%	407	83.2%	387	79.1%
Non-FGSs	1665	1585	95.2%	1427	85.7%	1384	83.1%

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – RESULTS

## GPA - Fall 2009



# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – RESULTS

FALL 2009	A,B,C,D Rate	F,I,W Rate
Experimental group (n=74)	88,3%	11,7%
Control group (n=381)	81,5%	18,5%
Non-FGSs (n=1585)	82,5%	17,5%

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – RESULTS

## GPA - Winter 2010

**2.72**

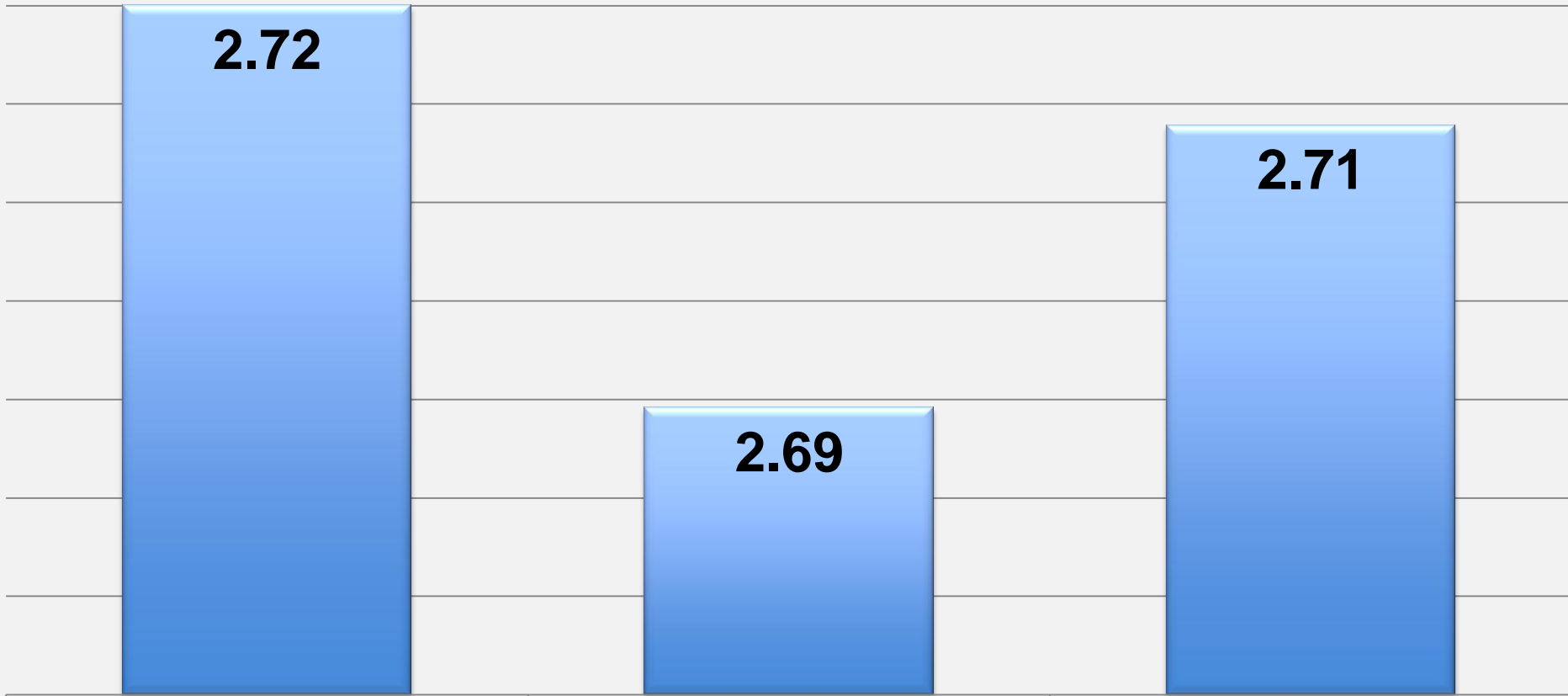
**2.69**

**2.71**

**Experimental group (n=69)**

**Control group (n=318)**

**Non-FGSs (n=1384)**



# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – RESULTS

Winter 2010	A,B,C,D Rate	F,I,W Rate
Experimental group (n=69)	89,1%	10,9%
Control group (n=318)	85,4%	14,6%
Non-FGSs (n=1384)	89,3%	10,7%

# PILOT PROJECT RESULTS

## Professor-mentors support achieved the following:

- Individual personal support with transition/adaptation in the first few weeks of college life – develop one-to-one learning relationship;
- This was followed by ongoing mentoring and regular follow-ups to track the students' progress:
  - Early warning of at-risk factors
  - Prevention: able to take prompt action
  - Students knew a resource person they could call on for support
- Advised and referred them to appropriate support service (and accompanying them if required).

# CONCLUSION

- Retention rate for FGSs in the experimental group was significantly higher through two full consecutive semesters.
- Academic achievement (GPA) in the experimental group was higher overall than the control group and the non-FGSs through two full consecutive semesters.
- FGSs had a lower overall retention rate, including the experimental group, than non-FGSs.

# CONCLUSION

- This pilot project seems to support the advantages of a human and personalized approach soon in the first semester.
- It supports the Noel-Levitz identification of the caring attitude of college personnel as the most potent force of retention on a campus
- The ongoing, personal, individual and preventive approach appears to have had a beneficial impact on the academic achievement and retention of participating students.
- It supports studies which have shown that perseverance is largely dependant on the quantity/quality of student-staff interaction.

# References

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