

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. 16th, 2009)

<i>Enrolled full-time, Postsecondary program, 1st semester</i>	2,369
Number of respondents	2,234
Non-FGSs	1,665
FGSs	489
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 ,
1st semester of a post
secondary program
(Sept. 16th, 2009)**

Experimental Group

**77 FGSs – Random distribution;
contacted as of the 3rd 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
Total	77 FGSs

COMPOSITION OF GROUPS

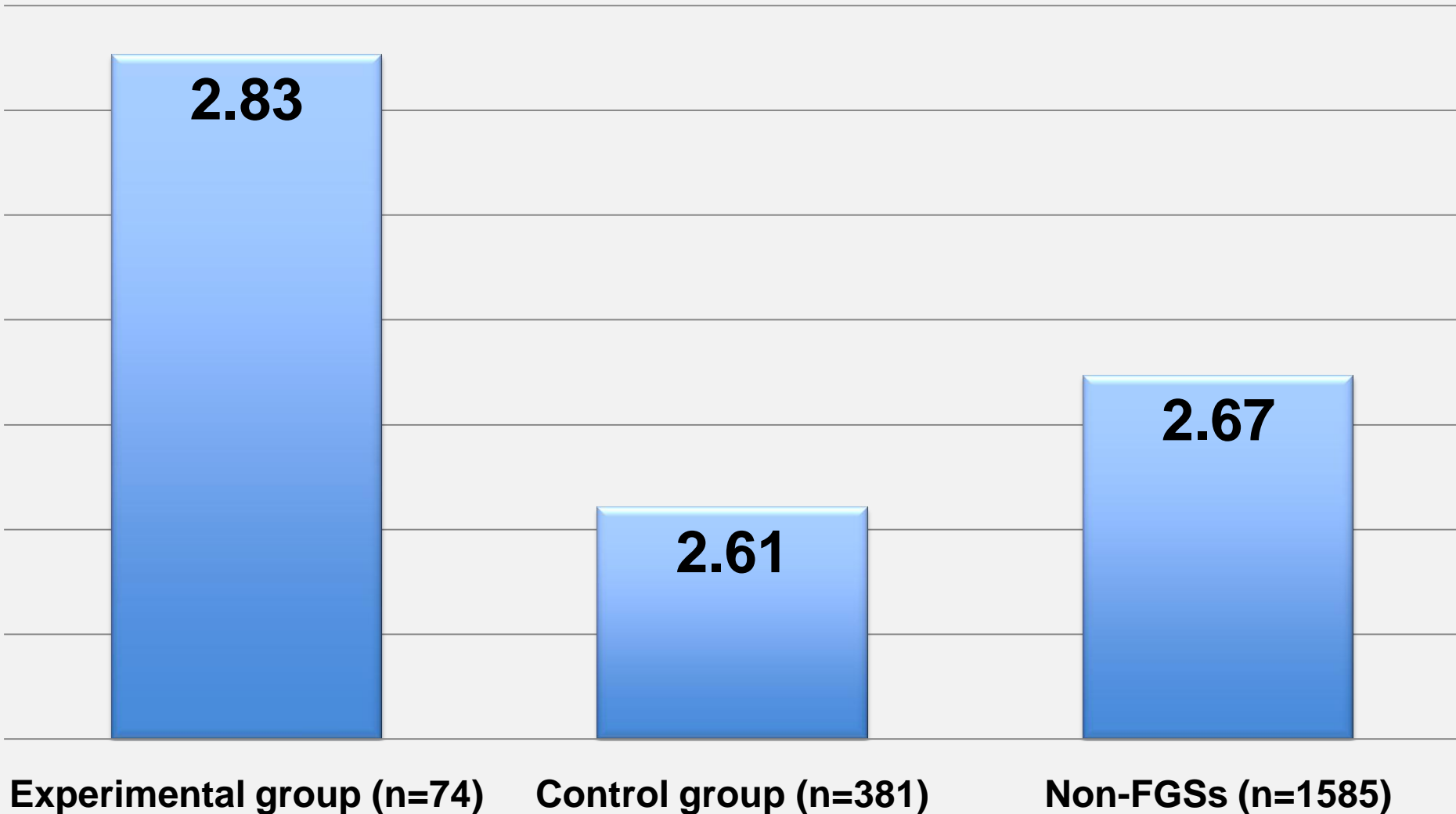
	Mother tongue (FR)	Language most commonly used (FR)	Age (average)	Country of secondary studies (CAN)	Aboriginal persons	Country of birth (CAN)
Experimental group (n=77)	75.3%	76.6%	20.9	88.3%	7.8%	78.0%
Control group (n=412)	85.0%	82.3%	21.0	92.0%	6.1%	87.6%
Non-FGSs (n=1665)	85.2%	80.4%	20.6	91.5%	5.2%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

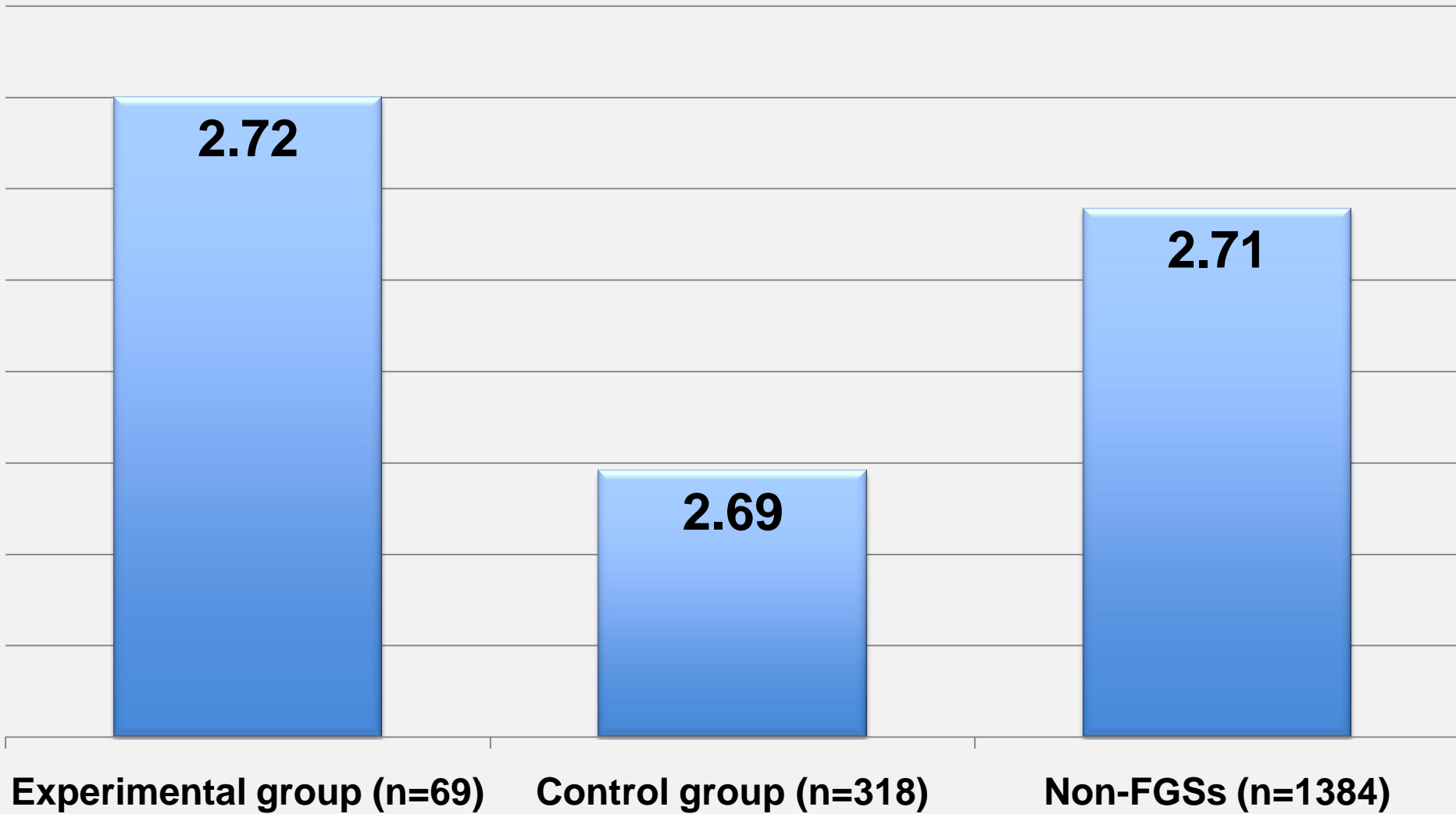


ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – RESULTS

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



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 dependent on the quantity/quality of student-staff interaction.

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