



# Faculty and Peer Mentors Correlate with Personal Growth

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Undergraduate students are at a point in their lives where they are undergoing rapid personal and academic development. One of Loyola's goals is to contribute to that development. Mentorship can be one mechanism of that contribution. Having a mentor, it is hoped, facilitates student development. Students may have different kinds of mentors, such as faculty and peer mentors. This report looks at how mentorship is correlated with students' personal development and in their gaining a Jesuit education.

The Boston College Questionnaire (BCQ) was designed to gather information from seniors at Catholic colleges and universities. The project originated at and was administered by Boston College. The survey focuses on several areas, including student activities in and out of the classroom and the significance of those activities; student-faculty interaction; religious/spiritual orientation and behaviors; personal development; and education in the Jesuit tradition. It also asks about students' mentors. "Mentor" was not defined on the questionnaire. Students were meant to define the term on their own, because the investigators were interested in what students themselves perceived a mentor to be, and did not want to impose a definition to which students might not themselves relate.

All graduating seniors at Loyola were invited to take the survey in spring of 2010. At Loyola, the response rate was 43%, with 741 seniors completing the survey (not all answered every question). Compared to the Loyola senior population, Loyola respondents were slightly more likely to be female and slightly more likely to be white. They were representative in terms of their school (CAS, Business, etc.)

Students were asked how much they had developed personally in several areas at Loyola. They were also asked how much Loyola contributed to various aspects of their Jesuit education. This report discusses the correlation of having a mentor with personal development and gaining a Jesuit education. One caveat is that while having a mentor probably encourages growth, it may also be that students who are growing most personally are most likely to obtain mentors, especially if they are obtaining those mentors later in their time at Loyola.

## Key findings

### Mentorship

- Ninety percent of responding seniors had at least one mentor (they could report multiple mentors; see Table 1).
- The most common type of mentor was a faculty member, with 77% of respondents having a faculty mentor.
- Thirty five percent of seniors reported having a peer mentor, the second most common type, while 23% said they had a staff member as a mentor.
- Twelve percent had a Jesuit mentor, 11% had a graduate student mentor, and 5% said they had some other kind of mentor.

### Personal growth while at Loyola

- Responding seniors with a Jesuit, peer, or staff mentor said more often that they had grown stronger or much stronger in their ability to articulate their religious/spiritual beliefs, compared to those without such mentors (see Table 2).
- Seniors with a faculty, Jesuit, peer, or staff mentor were more likely to report having grown stronger in their ability to get along with people of different races/cultures.
- Seniors with a faculty or peer mentor were more likely to say that they had grown stronger in their ability to reflect on their lives and life choices.
- Seniors with a staff mentor were more likely to say they had grown in their understanding of local social issues, while those with a peer mentor were more likely to say they had grown in their understanding of national and global social issues.

### Loyola experience contribution to Jesuit education in personal growth

- Responding seniors with a faculty, Jesuit, peer, or staff member were more likely to report that their Loyola experience had contributed quite a bit to their understanding of Loyola's mission, to their understanding of the Jesuit principle of being "women and men for others," and to making connections between their intellectual and spiritual lives (see Table 3).
- Seniors with a faculty, Jesuit, or peer mentor were more likely to report a contribution to their defining

their own values and beliefs.

- Seniors with a faculty, peer, or staff mentor were more likely to report a Loyola contribution to their devoting effort to help others in need and to leading by example. They were also more likely to report a contribution to their increasing awareness of the relationship between global and local issues.
- Seniors with a faculty, peer, or staff mentor were also more likely to say that their Loyola experience had contributed to their development in actively working to further social justice and toward a more inclusive community.
- Seniors with a faculty or peer mentor were more likely to report a Loyola contribution to their development in demonstrating respect for others' differences, as well as the ability to look critically at society and its institutions.
- Seniors with a faculty or peer mentor were also more likely to report a Loyola contribution to their development in making ethical decisions in both personal and professional situations.

## Conclusions

- An important caveat to these results is while having a mentor probably increases growth, it is also possible that students experiencing greater levels of growth are more likely to obtain mentors.
- All differences between those with and without mentors indicated more growth or more contribution of the Loyola experience to students' Jesuit education when a student had a mentor.
- The vast majority of seniors had at least one mentor, with more than three quarters having a faculty mentor.
- Overall, those seniors with a faculty or peer mentor reported the greatest contribution of their Loyola experience to their Jesuit education and their personal growth.
- Graduate student mentors were the least common type of mentor, and do not seem to contribute at all to students' Jesuit education or personal growth.

Table 1 Type of Mentor	
	% yes
Faculty	77
Peer	35
Staff	23
Jesuit	12
Graduate student	11
Other	5
Any mentor	90
Total respondents	734

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)

Table 2 Personal Growth While at Loyola, by Type of Mentor												
% stronger or much stronger	Type of mentor										Any mentor	
	Faculty mentor		Graduate student		Jesuit		Peer		Staff		None	Any*
	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor		
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ability to articulate your religious/spiritual beliefs	52	59	58	57	<b>55</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>59</b>
Ability to get along with people of different races/cultures	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	61	72	<b>61</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>64</b>
Ability to reflect on your life and life choices	<b>78</b>	<b>88</b>	85	88	85	87	<b>82</b>	<b>92</b>	84	89	<b>75</b>	<b>87</b>
Understanding of the social issues of your local community	77	82	81	80	80	87	78	84	<b>78</b>	<b>88</b>	72	81
Understanding of social issues nationally	79	84	83	82	82	85	<b>80</b>	<b>87</b>	81	87	75	83
Understanding of global social issues	81	84	83	86	83	87	<b>81</b>	<b>88</b>	82	88	77	84

Source: Boston College Questionnaire (unweighted data)

Note: Bolded red indicates a statistically significant difference at the .05 level.

\* Includes "Other" mentors.

% quite a bit or very much	Type of mentor										Any mentor	
	Faculty mentor		Graduate student		Jesuit		Peer		Staff			
	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	Not mentor	Mentor	None	Any*
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Understanding the mission of your institution	<b>34</b>	<b>51</b>	47	51	<b>46</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>49</b>
Devoting effort to help others in need	<b>45</b>	<b>61</b>	58	58	57	62	<b>52</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>60</b>
Leading by example	<b>46</b>	<b>63</b>	59	59	58	66	<b>55</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>62</b>
Increasing your awareness of the relationship between global and local issues	<b>41</b>	<b>58</b>	54	53	53	62	<b>50</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>56</b>
Actively working to further social justice	<b>41</b>	<b>53</b>	50	52	50	53	<b>46</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>	43	51
Defining your own values and beliefs	<b>48</b>	<b>68</b>	63	64	<b>62</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>71</b>	62	68	<b>43</b>	<b>66</b>
Demonstrating respect for others' differences	<b>46</b>	<b>67</b>	62	61	61	65	<b>56</b>	<b>72</b>	60	67	<b>41</b>	<b>64</b>
Actively working toward a more inclusive community	<b>35</b>	<b>49</b>	46	47	45	55	<b>41</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>48</b>
Ability to look critically at society and its institutions	<b>49</b>	<b>64</b>	60	63	59	70	<b>57</b>	<b>68</b>	59	66	<b>44</b>	<b>62</b>
Making ethical decisions in personal situations	<b>48</b>	<b>67</b>	63	61	62	69	<b>57</b>	<b>73</b>	62	66	<b>46</b>	<b>64</b>
Making ethical decisions in professional situations	<b>52</b>	<b>70</b>	66	63	65	73	<b>62</b>	<b>73</b>	65	70	<b>45</b>	<b>68</b>
Understanding the Jesuit principle of being "women and men for others"	<b>33</b>	<b>49</b>	45	49	<b>43</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>47</b>
Making connections between your intellectual and spiritual life	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	44	40	<b>41</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>45</b>

Source: Boston College Questionnaire, unweighted data

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