



Student Mentors' benefits in the Higher European Education: Academic Orientation

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For several years the Spanish University has been experiencing changes that affect not only the educational area but also innovation and investigation in the classroom. In this sense, we carried out a first step in a senior student mentor project in order to facilitate adaptation of the new students, providing information, advice and guidance on different academic and social aspects. Here, we understand mentoring (including e-mentoring) as a relationship between a more senior student (mentor) and a few junior lesser experienced students (mentees). Mentoring is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the mentees aiming to help them succeed.

Consequently, this work arises from our concern about students' need. A test has been designed to assess students' interest in the three fundamental aspects of mentoring: academic, social and administrative orientation. The test involved 16 questions related to these three different aspects on mentoring, evaluating each question from 1 (none) to 4 (totally).

Surveys have been conducted on this topic at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) with students on different levels and modules of degrees in Agricultural Engineering. The same activity has been applied to the new degrees that have started last course (2010-11) in the Bologna Plan's requirements and will replace the precedents progressively. We have analyzed the answers considering sex, age, course and attitude to participate in the mentoring project. Several discussions are presented based on these results.

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