**Capstone Project Abstract Template**

**250 Word Limit**

PROJECT TITLE: An analysis of the Social Network of Campus Connections and its Relationship to Youth Outcomes

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BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION:

Campus Connections (CC) is a multidisciplinary service learning course at Colorado State University where undergraduate students serve as mentors to at-risk adolescents in a group-based setting. Development of close relationships with other participating adolescents and mentors is a key component of the program.

OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of this study is to model the development of relationships between all adolescents and mentors in the program; and to determine if development of a strong social network at CC is associated with improved depression outcomes within adolescents.

METHODS/PROCESS/STRATEGY:

Social bonds between all adolescents (N = 83; Mean age = 14) and program staff were measured at five intervals during the 11-week CC intervention period during Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. Social networks values were calculated at each interval.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES/PRODUCT:

Individual level network statistics of centrality and reciprocity for adolescent participants were calculated to assess their added value in a predictive model of depressive symptoms at program end. The addition of the social network statistics to the model predicting adolescent depressive symptoms at the end of CC significantly improved model fit (Partial F(4, 71)=2.71, p<.05). Adolescents who made more connections demonstrated less depressive symptoms than would otherwise be expected.

CONCLUSIONS/FUTURE RESEARCH OR USE:

Results from this study may be used to improve the well-established CC Program by incorporating more activities that encourage the expansion of adolescent friendships with other adolescents and mentors. Future research is needed to understand the importance of additional descriptors of adolescent social networks (e.g., relationship with paired mentor).