Lessons the Posse Mentors Have Learned from Posse Students:

1) Transition from high school to college is very challenging; students in Fall Quarter feel that they didn’t want to work really hard since they had worked really hard to get here.
2) Posse students didn’t feel welcome on campus; they felt like outsiders (LA, students of color) more than others.
3) New students don’t really know yet what “working hard enough” means; don’t know how to be students at this level. They are not really sure who to turn to for modeling good college student behavior.
4) All students need to feel that the classroom is a safe space for them.
5) Little things—both positive and negative—can make a big difference for sensitive students.
6) Students need to feel engaged; need to feel encouraged to participate.

Suggestions for Faculty to Consider from the Posse Mentors:

1) Students need to feel welcomed inside and outside classroom.
2) Students need support services to focus on learning objectives and to identify when they are “struggling.”
3) There’s a need for providing good student mentors.
4) Ways to create a safe space: [contact a Posse Mentor for information about these]
   - One person, one mike
   - Step up/Step back
   - Address the issues, not the person (separate the person from the content)
   - Active listening (listen to all, be ready to report back)
   - Micro lab
   - Don’t assume students know how to work together, how to collaborate
   - Grade on engagement, not performance
5) How to maintain the fearless Posse spirit of learning:
   - Inspire response to issues/not individuals
   - Students treated as a whole person (family issues, social issues on campus, money issues, extracurricular activities)
   - Faculty need sensitivity to race/class/politics of students
   - Be a vocal advocate for a student if systemic problem becomes apparent
6) Be aware that what is happening in the classroom often has very little to do with the class (know your students, but don’t assume that you know them)

Suggestions for Faculty to Consider from the Small-group Discussions:
1) Incorporate strategies for cultivating/fostering “safe space” in all First-Year Seminars.
2) Develop/discover and use more strategies for collaboration.
3) Enlist upperclassmen as mentors/deputize them to help deal with constraints of time.
4) Try to be aware of students as more than just students.
5) Ask students “what’s the larger context” behind a poor grade or negative feeling.
6) Try to be more personally aware of what’s going on with students.
7) Be deliberate in asking students to come see you; invite individuals specifically if they seem to need attention/help.
8) Anonymous survey to get at unwelcoming/unsafe atmosphere/dynamic in classroom:
   Are you learning here?
   Is your voice being heard?
   Your contribution valued?
   What do you recommend to improve classroom dynamics/atmosphere everyone needs to examine themselves?
9) When you identify a problem, deal with it; don’t let it linger.
10) Notice student shut-down→ask why.
11) Ask posse mentors for help when you encounter these kinds of problems.