Students Supporting Student Learning

Peer Leader Programs at UTEP

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Core Principles of a Peer Leader Program

• Students are more likely to hear and accept information that is presented and modeled by their peers
• Students can bring about positive change in themselves and others
• Students also benefit from being Peer Leaders
Peer Leader Programs at UTEP

**Academic**
- Classroom
  - Freshmen Seminar
  - Intro Chemistry
  - PreCalculus and Calculus
- Tutors
  - Writing Center
  - Math Lab
  - Departmental

**Support Staff**
- Academic Advising Center
- University Career Center
- Enrollment & Recruitment
Elements of a Successful Program

- Clearly defined roles, duties, responsibilities, limits
- Consistent professional leadership
- Initial Training / Continued Training
- Opportunity for input
- Performance review
Who are Potential Peer Leaders?

- Nominated, self selected, or recruited
- Diverse group of students who represent all groups in the community
- Potential vs demonstrated achievement
Effective Leadership Skills

- Ability to influence others
- Ability to encourage others to establish and achieve goals
- Empathy toward the experiences and ideas of others
- A sense of purpose or direction and a vision for the group
- Willingness to take risks in the face of challenges
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Conduct a Needs Assessment
- Establish Program Goals & Objectives
- Select a Program Model
- Secure Resources and Build Support

- Involve representatives from across the community – including students
- Re-evaluate periodically
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Conduct a Needs Assessment
- Establish Program Goals & Objectives
- Select a Program Model
- Secure Resources and Build Support

- Develop consensus
- Keep in mind the Core Principles of Peer Leadership
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Conduct a Needs Assessment
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- Secure Resources and Build Support

- Formal, structured programs
- Informal programs
- Individualized programs
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Conduct a Needs Assessment
- Establish Program Goals & Objectives
- Select a Program Model
- Secure Resources and Build Support

- Cost
  - Resources
    - Time
    - Space
- Constituency support
  - Plan
  - Communication
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Identify the professional leadership
- Recruitment
- Program Content & Structure
- Training
- Evaluation & Assessment

- Oversight of the program
- Student mentor, coach, and advocate
- Teach both content and skills
- Motivated and committed
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Identify the professional leadership
- Recruitment
- Program Content & Structure
- Training
- Evaluation & Assessment

- Nominated
- Self-selected
- Recruited
- Expand the role of an existing group
- Application process
- Selection criteria
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Identify the professional leadership
- Recruitment
- Program Content & Structure
- Training
- Evaluation & Assessment

- Content
- Skills
- Observation
- Participation
- Practice
- Reflection
- Evaluation
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Identify the professional leadership
- Recruitment
- Program Content & Structure
- Training
- Evaluation & Assessment

- Initial
  - Build teamwork
  - Learn content
  - Develop skills
  - Set goals

- OnGoing
  - Reinforce
  - Build new
Implementing a Peer Leader Program

- Identify the professional leadership
- Recruitment
- Program Content & Structure
- Training
- Evaluation & Assessment

- Qualitative & Quantitative
- Formative & Summative
- Direct & Indirect
SOME EXAMPLES …
Student Leadership Institute

Terri S. Ramirez, University Honors Program
Shawna S.D. Clemente, Entering Student Program
Application and Selection Process

- Minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA
- Enrolled full-time
- Completed or enrolled concurrently in ENGL 1311 (Expository English Composition)
- Not otherwise employed at UTEP
- Attend all mandatory training sessions and events
Student Leadership Institute
Program Goals

• Enrich academic experiences
• Develop leadership skills
• Strengthen communication and learning skills
• Learn group dynamics and collaborate with other student leaders and faculty
• Enhance professional development opportunities
• Explore culture and diversity
• Learn the importance of community engagement
• Understand the impact of global responsibility
Student Opportunities

Academic, Personal & Professional Development

- Presentation Skills
- Networking and Collaboration
- Community Engagement

Student Enrichment Experience
Training Components

- Interpersonal skills
- Diversity awareness
- Communication & Group Process
- Critical Thinking & Creative Problem Solving
- Technologically Enhanced Projects
- Center For Civic Engagement
- Peer Educator Role and Responsibilities
UNIV 1301
Freshmen Seminar at UTEP
Peer Leader Program

Dr. Dorothy Ward
Director, Entering Student Program

Shawna Clemente
Director, Peer Leader Program
Peer Leader Program
Application and Selection Process

• Completion of Student Leadership Institute
• UNIV Peer Leader Requirements
  – Minimum GPA of 3.0 in at least 30 credit hours
  – Full-time student
  – Completed or enrolled concurrently in English 1312 (Research & Critical Writing)
  – Completed UNIV 1301
• Recruitment
  – Requests from Instructor
  – Student Major/Minor
  – Topic Interest/Experience
  – Student Class Schedule
Peer Leader Program
Roles and Responsibilities

• Model ideal classroom behavior
• Mentor students
• Assist with lesson development and classroom instruction
• Act as liaison between students and instructor
• Monitor students’ academic progress and make necessary referrals when appropriate
• Attend all class sessions
• Hold 2-5 office hours per week
• Attend scheduled training sessions
Peer Leader Program
Training Schedule

Fall Schedule
– Microteaching
– Online Modules
– Campus Safety
– LASSI and Discover
– Classroom Concerns
– Motivating Students
– December retreat
  • Recognize Fall Graduates
  • Awards & Recognition

Spring Schedule
– Career Services
  • Resume Building
  • Mock Interviews
  • Career Fairs
– Case Studies
– Classroom Concerns
– May Retreat
  • Recognize Spring Graduates
  • Awards & Recognition
“I really enjoyed the experience of being a peer leader, and it has helped me to meet more people and learn just how hard it is to run a class! I think that the position helped me in my career path, as I am majoring in Human Resources and will have to deal with people every day.”
“As a result of working as a peer leader I learned how to be open to understanding other people's opinions and respecting different points of view with keeping mine aside, a skill that I think is necessary for any professional setting and that I will use no matter where I work in the future.”
As a result of working as a peer leader . . . | % Agree or Strongly Agree
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My self-confidence has improved | 90.3
I know more about leadership | 90.4
I am more confident about assuming a leadership role | 90.3
I am more knowledgeable about UTEP resources | 93.5
My own study habits have improved | 67.8
I am more aware of teaching methods and strategies | 96.7
I plan to teach as part of my career | 51.6
Peer Career Advisors

George Barton, Director
Peer Career Advisors (PCAs)

Promotes success by offering direct, career-related resources and services.

- Well trained students will serve as effective instructors and role models for their peers
- Students who receive the services and instruction will
  - devote greater energy to career exploration
  - be better prepared to seek meaningful, career-related internships and professional employment
  - transition more easily and successfully into the world of work.
- Peer Career Advisors will each be selected from and work within each college.
Job Description

• Assist their fellow students with career information, resources, and referrals
• Serve as first point of contact for students desiring to connect with the University Career Center
• Represent the Career Center and staff in university programs and functions across campus
• Facilitate career preparation workshops on various topics (resume development, job search correspondence, interviewing skills, navigating a career fair, etc.)
• Advise students about the career planning process
Roles and Responsibilities

Provide university students their first point of contact with the University Career Center and enhance their understanding of available resources for career planning.

Assist students individually and in groups with the use of career exploration software, resume writing, interviewing, and other skills related to career planning and the job search.
Roles and Responsibilities

• Plan, schedule, and present workshops
• Refer students to appropriate career-related programs and services
• Inform members of the college community regarding recruiting activities
• Provide input and feedback to Career Center professional staff regarding student needs and requests for services/programs/workshops
• Publicize career events and activities
Roles & Responsibilities

- Attend weekly meetings and trainings scheduled by the Coordinator
- Track and report on projects and PCA activity
- Assist with recruitment and training of new Peer Career Advisors
- Perform other related duties as assigned
Performance Assessment

Participation - consistent, individual participation in monthly projects to include attendance, availability, and flexibility

Involvement - involvement with college activity related to the Career Center

Skill Growth - identify effectiveness in the facilitation of presentations, as well as assess ability to provide quality career related material to various audiences
Overall Benefits of Peer Leader Program

- Hourly wage for students
- Increased knowledge about content area
- Strengthened skills as mentors and leaders
- Improved academic, communication and interpersonal skills
- Stronger connection to the university for all students involved