How To Guide: Peer Education

Introduction

The Peer Education Network (PEN) is a university-wide alliance and community of practice that seeks to elevate and streamline peer education efforts at the University of Cincinnati. PEN is UC's centralized resource, information repository, and referral clearinghouse for peer education. PEN has created criteria for consistent quality and practice across UC's network of peer education programs.

This *How To Guide* provides UC faculty and staff with guidance and resources for implementing processes inherent in administering peer education. The contents are applicable in a variety of peer education settings and structures. The guide offers step-by-step help for the novice as well as tips for the experienced administrator around a comprehensive set of topics ranging from defining the peer educator role to managing the logistics of recruitment, selection and hiring, training and development, supervision, performance and program assessment, publicizing impact, and more. When applicable, sample documents and forms are offered for peer education administrators to adapt and use.

Peer Education at UC

The PEN White Paper outlines UC's vision for peer education:

> *Peer education is a process and pedagogy that deploys students to assist in the delivery of teaching or mentorship to each other (Collier, 2015; Ender & Newton, 2000). Peer educators at the University of Cincinnati are student leaders who are specially selected and trained to hold positions with the specific responsibility to facilitate meaningful learning through discussion, instruction, and/or mentorship to their peers, individually or as part of a group. Peer educators instruct students at their own academic level. For instance, undergraduate students might teach other undergraduate students. However, graduate students who teach undergraduate students are not peer educators.*
>
> *Peer education is a highly effective, cost-efficient tool for increasing learning and sustaining student advancement through graduation. Peer education also contributes to students' satisfaction with their educational experience. This strategy is particularly well-suited for UC's mission, experiential learning culture, and student population and therefore has emerged as a vital component in the University of Cincinnati's student success support structure. Nearly every strategy for enhancing student success incorporates peer education—from faculty-led course redesign efforts to co-curricular programming aimed at developing a culture of student success.*
>
> *The University of Cincinnati is nationally distinguished by our level of student engagement in Learning with Peers (National Survey of Student, 2015). According to the 2015 National Survey of Student Engagement, UC first-year students are engaged in Learning with Peers, specifically Collaborative Learning, at levels comparable to the top ten percent of all 2014 and 2015 NSSE institutions (2015). UC's 500 plus peer educators, deployed across four different university divisions—Academic Affairs, Campus Services, Enrollment Management, and Student Affairs—touch well over 10,000 students annually and play a central role in forwarding student success. Documented results include increased student performance and career readiness, higher GPAs, lower DFW rates, increased retention, and increased student satisfaction with their experience at the University of Cincinnati.*

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Peer educators are deployed specifically to advance the success of the students they serve. But the peer educators themselves benefit as well. Peers who instruct and/or mentor their peers are engaged in a specialized form of experiential learning. As a result, peer educators gain valuable career-related skills that are transferrable to a variety of professional contexts where effective interpersonal and communication skills, problem-solving and use of good judgement, life-long learning, leadership, and similar skills are valued.

Advancing Peer Education
The Peer Education Network collects examples of how peer education is deployed across the university. Please share your materials, impact data, and other documents that might be useful to UC colleagues by emailing pen@uc.edu. PEN can also help you connect with colleagues to conduct studies, prepare presentations, apply for grants, work collectively to generate resources, and disseminate information for the advancement of peer education.

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms
PEN White Paper

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CHAPTER 1: DEFINING YOUR PEER EDUCATOR POSITION

Importance/Relevance

- Peer educators offer a type of clout and credibility with their peers that is unique. For this reason, peer education can be an effective tool for supporting student learning and academic success, psychosocial development, sense of belonging, and connectedness within the university community.
- Thinking about your goals and how the peer educator role will address them is critical. Effective peer education structures are designed and developed to meet specific objectives derived from the learning and experience outcomes you have articulated for students participating in your course, program, or initiative.
- The role and desired outcomes for the peer education component of your course or program will determine how you address other important issues. The development and assessment of the peer education model you enact is interwoven with the ongoing design, content, and evaluation of your course/program.
- Peer educators are paraprofessionals whose success is dependent upon clearly articulated selection processes, job descriptions and expectations, training and supervision, and evaluation.
- UC recognizes peer education as a specific type of experiential learning which obliges faculty and staff to tend to the learning needs of the peer educators as well as the learning needs of the students the peer educator is serving.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- What are the learning outcomes for students participating the program, course, or initiative into which you want to incorporate peer education?
- What role and impact you want the peer educators to have as they mentor and/or facilitate learning for their peers? Are these goals that peer educators can achieve?
- Are there other peer educators on campus working with faculty and staff in courses or programs that are similar to what you want to do? Would you like to model your program after theirs? Could you partner together to accomplish your goals?
- What are the best practices for this type of program, course, or initiative? For this peer educator role?
- How will you compensate peer educators for their service? Will this be a paid or volunteer position? Will peer educators enroll in a course to receive the Peer Educator attribute and/or course credit?
- What skills, abilities, characteristics, and expertise will you want peer educators to possess in order to bring about the outcomes you want the role to achieve? Are these pre-requisite qualifications or can you train the peer educators to acquire this knowledge and skill?
- How many hours per week, term, etc. will peer educators be required to work? How and when will they receive training, supervision, and feedback?
- How will you measure the effectiveness of the peer educator role or program that you enact?

Informational Content

<u>What can Peer Educators do?</u>

Peer educators may be engaged in a wide range of activities. Commonly, peer educators may:

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- Work with students individually, or in groups
- Facilitate instruction, in or out of the classroom, around defined learning outcomes or content
- Mentor students about how to make the most of their college experience generally, or in relation to a particular opportunity
- Work closely with faculty while assisting in specific courses, tutoring, and/or connecting their mentees with learning resources, academic program expectations, and the like
- Engage in high profile positions, sometimes with public speaking responsibilities, or in lower profile settings behind the scenes
- Help supervise other peer educators or oversee processes that contribute toward overall management of your program, course, or initiative
- Carry out operations logistics and detail so long as they are also engaged in instructing or mentoring others
- Help resolve conflicts and/or connect students with university resources

To carry out these responsibilities, peer educators may work anywhere from a few to as many as 24 hours a week when enrolled in classes (e.g., during fall and spring semesters) and up to 40 hours per week during breaks including summer.   Your goals for your program and the defined outcomes of the peer educator role will determine the intensity and duration of the job. For example, Peer Tutors in the Learning Assistance Center are expected to dedicate at least 7 hours per week throughout the year, whereas New Student Orientation Leaders dedicate 40 hours per week from May to August only.

<u>What Qualifications are Needed?</u>

Peer educators are generally more experienced or accomplished than the students that they are instructing or mentoring.   Peer educators are often motivated by a desire to "pay-it-forward," by paving the way for students coming up behind them to succeed in areas where they themselves either struggled or benefitted from specialized programs. And less experienced students respect the expertise of those who are just ahead of them, watching what they have managed to do, depending upon their shared insights for guidance.   To build upon this peer-to-peer dynamic, common qualifications include:

- A minimum number of terms or years of enrollment at UC before assuming the role, most often one year of enrollment at UC
- Minimum grade point averages, usually a "B" average but minimum requirements may vary significantly depending upon the specific tasks to be performed and goals of your program. For example, peer educators involved in facilitating instruction are expected to hold higher grades overall as well as in the content areas where they teach or tutor. All peer educators should be in good academic standing in accordance with their academic program requirements.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills, and a commitment to diversity and inclusion, in order to create positive learning environments
- Specialized experience or expertise related to the focus of the position/program. For example, lifeguarding credentials are required to be an aquatics lead.

As you set your qualifications, focus on the minimum qualifications necessary knowing that you will offer peer educators opportunities for training, practice, and reflection. Keep in mind that many of the skills and abilities you may desire in a peer educator can be taught to them through your training programs.

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Developing Learning Outcomes for Peer Educators

Learning outcomes for peer educators can help guide the development of your peer education program, including the training and assessment. Before creating learning outcomes, it's important to know what your peer educators will be doing. Learning outcomes will focus on what peer educators need to learn to perform effectively as well as to grow and mature in their role. When it comes to developing learning outcomes, the [National Peer Educator Survey] is a good resource. They utilize several learning outcomes based on *Learning Reconsidered*. Examples include:

- Cognitive complexity
- Interpersonal competence
- Humanitarianism and civic engagement

Depending on the specific needs of your program, you might add more learning outcomes. Include topics that are specific to your program's stated goals. For example, if you are creating a peer health education program, you might include a learning outcome focused on health knowledge and literacy.

Current Implementation Examples

There are several established peer education programs at the University of Cincinnati that illustrate how you might design your peer education position:

- Peer educators in the Student Wellness Center do programming on health and wellness topics.
    - They are paid positions.
    - Students become Certified Peer Educators through the BACCHUS Initiatives of NASPA as part of the program.
    - They are evaluated using the National Peer Education Survey.
- Peer educators in First Year Experience and Learning Communities Peer Leaders are responsible for providing academic support and leading Learning Community meetings twice each week with content focused on the FYE target learning areas, planning and implementing social events for LC members, and providing individual and small group mentoring. Peer Leaders attend weekly meetings, have weekly office hours and develop lesson plans to meet the needs of their students. Peer leaders must have experience and the academic background needed to address the academic needs and interests of their students. An important role of Peer Leaders is collaborating with faculty, advisors, organizations, and others to give students a high quality LC experience that prepares them for subsequent academic accomplishments.
    - They are paid positions
    - All who complete training receive the highest level of certification through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Job description and program links available from www.uc.edu/pen under the tab, Become a Peer Educator

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CHAPTER 2: RECRUITING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- Student involvement has been shown to increase persistence through college.
- Highly motivated students who have a desire to learn and lead inspire other students by modeling responsible behavior.
- Peer Educator positions benefit the student by enhancing their learning and professional experiences.
- Through training, coaching, and mentorship, student leaders who may not "have all the right answers" initially, but who have the right disposition and attitude, will grow into exceptional Peer Educators.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- When embarking on the task of recruiting Peer Educators for your program, it is important to start with the "why" and work your way backwards.
    - Why is this position important for your program?
    - Why would this be a desirable position for students?
- After asking the "why" question, the team of professional staff members must begin the process of building a recruitment process that answers this question.
    - Once you understand "why" a position is important for your program, use that information in recruiting the students with advertisements, email blasts, in-person conversations, etc… Tell a student "this position is important for our department because…"
- When you have answered the question of why this position would be desirable for students, you can begin using that information to "sell" the experience once they have committed to applying.
    - "Through this position you will gain experience in this area" or "the skills you will learn (name them) in this position will help your career in ______ field".
- Finally, articulating what skills students will gain and why they will learn these skills puts the responsibility of teaching your Peer Educators back on the shoulders of the professionals.
- Selling the position is one thing. Selling the *experience* is quite different and requires a different level of thinking.
    - Once you have established the "why" of the position that is firmly grounded in what you want out of the Peer Educators, recruiting, interviewing and selecting the students should become much easier.

Informational Content

Creating a sound recruitment and interview strategy is the next step in growing a Peer Educator program. Developing a timeline is a good place to start. Sometimes it's easiest to work backwards. When do you want the Peer Educators to start their position? How much training will be involved and when will that start? How much time does the hiring process with HR take? When must offer letters go out in order to get students through the HR system in time for training? How far in advance do your students need to know of their employment for purposes of housing, co-op, or other academic commitments? When does your program need to know who will make up your Peer Educator team? When should you make final hiring decisions and offers? When will you interview your candidates? How long should you publicize your position in order to fill a substantial pool of candidates?

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Once you have a solid calendar of events planned, implementing the various tasks should be pretty self-explanatory. Have fun with the process and think creatively about how you want to recruit your candidates, interview and evaluate them, and ultimately select and train them!

To hire the best of the best, the program must have a clear vision of "why" the position matters, have a clear timeline of events, and think creatively of how best to market the position and select Peer Educators.

While objectives may be different from one program to another, there are several guidelines that a program should consider when implementing the process.

- What are you trying to "sell" in your advertisements of the position?
  - Do not "bait and switch" the position by advertising one experience and then selling a different one when the students are in the process.
  - Think creatively about what you are advertising and how you will do this.
    - Do your students respond to email? Or is the preferred method through social media outlets?
    - Do you want to have a "theme" for recruitment? Is that theme based on something institution or program-specific? Is it related to something going on in the world (i.e. summer Olympic games)?
- Think critically about who you want to hire and what you want the overall make-up of your Peer Educator team to be.
  - Does your team reflect the diversity of the student body?
  - Did you attract a wide range of student applicants?
  - Did you partner, possibly, with identity-based offices to get their feedback and support in recruiting students they may work with on a regular basis?
  - When putting your team together, ensure that the students who will interact with the Peer Educators will be able to *see themselves* in the Peer Educator staff.
    - This helps a student transition to the university or seek assistance when needed, and you may ultimately be recruiting these students into the Peer Educator role down-the-road by giving them solid examples and role models to look up to.
- Finally, settle on a process that excites you as a program.
  - It's ok to try a process, take notes, and make changes for future years.
  - Establish a process that is manageable but gets at the purpose and *why* of your position.
  - Ultimately we are here for our students and want to create a quality experience for them. This begins with the structure you have in place and must be one that you're proud of at the end of the day.
  - Have fun with it. Enjoy the possibilities that each student potentially brings to the table!

Current Implementation Examples

- Coming Soon

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- FYE Turn Up Your Life Recruitment Flyer
- FYE Table Events Recruitment Flyer

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CHAPTER 3: SELECTING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- A well-designed selection process facilitates your ability to employ qualified individuals who are a good fit for your Peer Educator role.
- Effective implementation requires a comprehensive understanding of recruitment, selection, hiring, training, and the calendar period (start/end date) for your Peer Educator role.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- What do you need to know in order to determine whether or not a candidate is a good fit for your position?
    - What is the most effective method to obtain that information?
- If your Peer Educator position is a compensating role, how will your selection process align with the UC hiring process?
- How much time will you need to complete the selection process in order to have Peer Educators in place by their start date?
- What are the legal requirements that you need to abide by?
- Who should you collaborate with to facilitate completion of this process?

Informational Content

<u>Application Materials</u>

How will students apply to your Peer Educator position? Will they need to submit their resume, fill out an application, provide references, or submit letters of recommendation? The answers to these questions are up to you.

Resume

It is typical practice to have students submit resumes in addition to a completed application. Resumes are great for quickly gaining a sense of the applicant's experience. Additionally, it is good practice for applicants, as college students, to put together and keep an updated resume.

Application Platform

The University of Cincinnati does not have a required application platform for student worker positions. There are plenty of platforms available to help you build a job posting for a position. You have a couple of options:

Application Type	Pros	Cons
UC Appointed System (Success Factors)	-Lends well to the hiring process -Online allows for easy access	-Limited capability to ask unique questions
Alternative System (Survey Monkey, Online Form, Hard Copy, etc.)	-Can make specific to your position -Easily adjusted system for your office	-Does not lend as well to the hiring process -Hard copies may be difficult for multiple people to access

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Application Content

Deciding what questions you want to ask on your position application will depend on how you plan to utilize the application in the selection process. Common content includes:

- Basic information – utilized to eliminate candidates that do not meet qualifications
  - Contact information
  - Demographics
- Details regarding applicant interest and capabilities – utilized as a screening process to cut down the amount of applicants that move to the next phase of the selection process
  - Short-answer/essay responses
    - Interest in position
    - Ability to perform xyz skills
    - Knowledge or insight

Do Include: In order to look up any additional information on your applicants like GPA, courses taken, etc., you will need to include a question in the application that asks for the applicants to consent to the access of their records.

Do Not Include: In order to comply with legal obligations, certain things are unlawful and not allowed to be asked on an application. For a complete list, contact Human Resources.

- Age
- Race
- Sex
- Nationality
- Religion
- Disability
- Marital/Family Status

Application Supplemental Materials

Many programs require some sort of reference or recommendation.

- References
  - If you prefer to call and speak with a reference
    - Have time and office staff to make phone calls for all applicants
- Recommendation Letters/Forms
  - If you prefer to read or review what a recommender says, either:
    - Ask for letters
      - No preference to what the recommender tells you about a candidate
    - Ask recommender to fill out a form
      - Have specific traits/characteristics you would like recommender to evaluate
- Guidelines
  - Provide applicants with specific guidelines as this may be the first time they have submitted a job application
    - How many
      - 2-3 references or recommendations is most common
    - Acceptable vs. Not Acceptable

Acceptable	Not Acceptable
(Previous) Supervisor	Family Members
Advisor	Friends
Professor	
Peer Educator	

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<u>Interview Process</u>

We recommend that you always institute an interview process when selecting Peer Educators. Interviews provide you with a way to gain valuable insight and evaluate the candidates.

- Set-up an interview process in which students can be successful. Remember that for most of your Peer Educator candidates, this may be the first time they've ever interviewed for a job.
  - Remember that you are selling an experience and that experience begins the moment the student decides to apply and interview for your position. Put your best foot forward because you want them to rise to the challenge.
- The interview portion of the hiring process should focus on the individual and their fit with your program.
  - If you are simply looking for a particular personality, say so upfront so that the student is set up for success and not failure.
  - It is your job to find the best Peer Educators possible, not "haze" a student during the interview.
- Every interview you conduct should look exactly the same in order to ensure an equal opportunity for all candidates.
- Individual Interviews
  - Better for assessment of an individual's experience and capabilities
  - Good for individual Peer Educator roles
- Group Interviews
  - Better for assessment of an individual's interaction with others, capabilities of working in a group
  - Good for Peer Educator roles that will require work primarily in team environments
- Other things to consider:
  - Scheduling process
  - Interviewing team
  - Length of interview
  - Interview location
  - Interview dress code
  - Interview questions
    - Gear your questions towards the job description and how a students' experience or level of interest matches up with that job description.
    - Some things are unlawful and not allowed to be asked during an interview. Please view the University of Cincinnati [Recruitment and Search Guide] for a complete list.
      - Nationality
      - Age
      - Family/Marital Status
      - Disabilities
      - Arrest Record
      - Religion
      - Sex
      - Race
      - Military
      - Personal: Height/Weight, etc
  - Interview Evaluation
    - Rubric
    - Recommendation for hire

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Selection

So how will you make selections and decide on the best candidates to fill the Peer Educator positions you have available? The following are examples of things you can do in order to make a selection:

- Utilize hiring recommendations from multiple interview team members
- Utilize interview rubrics
- Reach out to references or read letters of recommendation/recommendation forms
- Review resumes
- Review application materials
- Consult with other departments, faculty, and staff

Current Implementation Examples

The Peer Leader Program with First Year Experience & Learning Communities is a current, well-established peer education program.

- FYE & LCs hire approximately 130 – 140 Peer Leaders for Fall Semester
- Fall Semester position begins in August
- Success Factors application opens in early January
  - Priority application deadline is about one month later
    - All qualified candidates that apply prior to priority deadline are granted an interview
- Resume and two recommendation forms required
- Disqualifiers:
  - Below a 3.0 University GPA
  - Graduate students
- Interviews immediately follow priority deadline for about two months
  - Candidates dress professionally
  - Interview team consists of a FYE & LC staff member, Peer Leader Captain (undergraduate Peer Leader supervisor), and current Peer Leader
  - 30 minutes
    - 20 minutes asking standard question set
    - 5 minutes answering candidate questions
  - Interview evaluation
    - Rubric filled out
    - Interview team comes to consensus on hire
  - The Associate Director (who makes all of the selection decisions) then reviews all candidate files to fill the open Peer Leader positions.
    - This process happens on a rolling basis, it begins two weeks after interviews begin taking place and continues until all positons are filled.

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Peer Leader Application
- Resident Advisor Application
- Peer Leader Recommendation Form
- Peer Tutor Academic Reference Form
- Supplemental Instruction Professional Reference Form

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- Peer Leader Interview Questions
- Peer Leader Interview Rubric
- Resident Advisor Applicant Interview Panel Questions and Evaluation

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<u>CHAPTER 4: HANDLING HUMAN RESOURCES</u>

Importance/Relevance

- Proper completion of the hiring process ensures your compliance with legal requirements
- Timely completion of the hiring process will eliminate delays for Peer Educators starting in their positions, being properly compensated, handling retirement benefits, etc.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- Is your department capable of full compensation or work-study students only?
- What are the legal requirements?
- How will you obtain Social Security Numbers?
- What will compensation look like?

Informational Content

Offering Peer Educator Positions

After your department has selected which students to hire as Peer Educators, you need to officially offer them the position. This is most commonly done in the form of an offer letter addressed to the candidate that they will need to sign and return in order to accept the offered position.

- If candidates accept the position, move forward with the hiring process.
- If candidates decline the position, it is important to delete and/or shred any sensitive material as their information no longer needs to be kept on file

Determining Work-Study Status

Once a student has the employment offer, you should determine whether or not the candidate qualifies to receive work-study assistance. Contact Financial Aid to determine a candidate's work-study eligibility.

- Candidates eligible to receive work-study assistance will receive 75% of their compensation from the government (up to $3,000 per academic year across all work-study positions) and 25% of their compensation from your department.
- Candidates not eligible for work-study assistance will receive full compensation from your department.

Determining Position Title

When filling Peer Educator positions, you need to have or create an open position within UC Flex. Each and every Peer Educator that you hire will require a unique position number. Depending on work-study eligibility, a different position title will need to be assigned to the candidate.

- Student Worker Position
- Work Study Student Position

Determining Type of Hire

After searching for the student within UC Flex, the type of hire may become evident.

- <u>New hire</u> – Search for student returns as "M0000000 does not exist"
- <u>Additional assignment</u> – Search for student is successful and returns M0000000 with an active position

- Re-hire without service break – Search for student is successful and returns M0000000 with a position that the student has been withdrawn from. The withdrawal date must be within 30 days of your requested start date
- Re-hire with service break – Search for student is successful and returns M0000000 with a position that the student has been withdrawn from. The withdrawal date is not within 30 days of your requested start date
- Transfer – Utilized to move an employee out of an existing position and into an alternative position.

Completing the Hiring Process
For each student you hire, you will need to complete one of two forms in order to put them into the UC Flex system.

- New Hire Personnel Change Request (PCR) Form
  - This online form must be completed for each student you hire who is a brand new hire to UC. You will fill out this form through UC Flex.
    - You will need to include the following information in the New Hire PCR
      - Position hire date – first day of work/training
      - Job Type
        - For student positions, this will always be "Project"
      - Position number
      - Student's personal information
      - Basic pay rate
        - You will need to define this for each person you hire.
        - If this is a work study student position, you will define the basic pay to be 25% of the hourly pay rate.
      - Worksite and mail location
- Non-Recruitment Event Hire Form
  - This form must be completed for all other hire types. It can be found on the Human Resources website: https://www.uc.edu/hr/tools/HRforms.html
    - You will need to include the same information on this form as described above for the New Hire PCR

Completing the Onboarding Module
After each student is submitted to UC Flex and processed, you will receive an email notifying you that the student can be found in the onboarding module within SuccessFactors.

- You will need to then complete the Post-hire Verification Step.
- Once this has been done, the student will receive an email with instructions to complete the hiring process.
  - Student will complete the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification form online
  - Student will need to verify identity with a qualified HR representative within 90 days before or up to 3 days after the position start date
    - A list of acceptable documents can be found here: DHS List
  - Students will need to complete the New Student Packet

- The OPERS waiver must be completed within 30 days (before or after) of the position start date.

Assigning Appropriate Access
Your Peer Educator is now able to begin working. Will they need any special access? Here are a few things to consider:
- Swipe card entry to rooms/offices
- Keys to rooms/offices
- Technology

Legal Requirements
- All student workers are not permitted to work more than 24 hours per week across all campus positions while enrolled in courses.
- Departments must keep employee personnel files for 7 years. These can be either electronic or hard copies.

Current Implementation Examples
To provide you with an example of what the Peer Educator hiring process looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Peer Leader Program with First Year Experience & Learning Communities.
- Selected candidates are sent an official offer letter via email
  - Accepted position offers – move on in hiring process
  - Accepted alternate position offers – hold candidate information
  - Declined position offers – delete/shred any sensitive candidate materials
- Send final candidate list (Name and M Number) to financial aid to determine work study status
- Assign each candidate to a unique position with the appropriate position title based on work study status
- Search UC Flex to determine type of hire for each candidate
  - Create Excel spreadsheet
- Complete New Hire PCR Forms and/or submit Non-Recruitment Event Hire Forms
- Students complete I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification online and fill out the New Student Packet prior to attending training
- During the first day of training, students are given time to verify identity and submit all completed forms from the New Student Packet

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms
- Peer Leader Offer Letter

CHAPTER 5: TRAINING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- A well-designed training program equips Peer Educators with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their position.
- In addition, the training Peer Educators are given sets the tone for their tenure in the position.
- In many cases, Peer Educators are required to be trained in certain areas deemed necessary by the federal government and UC.
- Your training should be a direct connection to the Peer Educator job responsibilities and learning outcomes, as well as federally or university mandated training.
- Depending on the Peer Educator role, there will be other necessary training, such as First-Aid, CPR, etc. If you are a certified Peer Educator Program, then you may have additional areas/topics that are required as part of that certification.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- Are your Peer Educators mandatory reporters? What are the federal and UC specific trainings that are required?
- Are there national standards you must meet for your training program?
- What competency areas do you need to cover during training?
  - What should be covered pre-service, during service, etc.?
- What is your training budget?
- When will your training take place and how often?
- Where will your training take place?
- How much time will you need to cover your content?
- Will you facilitate all of training or will you invite others in to facilitate?
- How will you incorporate returning staff into training?
- What materials/supplies are needed for training?

Informational Content

<u>Federally/UC Mandated Training</u>

If your Peer Educators are required reporters/campus security authorities, then they must receive training on Title IX, Clery, and Metal Health Services. Additionally, if Peer Educators have access to student grade information or are involved in academic support, it is required that they are FERPA trained.

What is Title IX?

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the university's programs and activities. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence and retaliation are forms of discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

- The university does not tolerate sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or retaliation and takes steps to ensure that students, employees, and third parties are not subject to a hostile environment in university programs or activities.

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Title IX Training

Title IX training can only be completed by the Title IX office and is 1 hour long. The training covers an overview of Title IX, what type of issues are covered under Title IX and thus should be reported, and strategies for taking the report in a respectful way. You can find a copy of the previous presentation here.

Clery Act and HEOA Information

The University of Cincinnati is required by federal law to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). In accordance with these acts, each year UC prepares an Annual Security and Fire Report. This report contains campus crime and fire statistics for the previous three years on all UC campuses, as well as descriptions of:

- UC Public Safety Services
- Fire Policies
- Safety Equipment
- University Safety Programs

This report is released annually on or before October 1.

What Must be Reported?

All criminal activity, regardless of the location or whether it is a Clery applicable crime, must be reported to the University of Cincinnati as soon as it is disclosed to a staff/faculty/employee, unless that staff/faculty/employee is a medical professional, licensed counselor (acting under their licensure), or a pastoral counselor.

Clery Training

Clery training should be completed by the UC Clery Specialist and lasts approximately 1 hour.

Mental Health Services

Depending on the level of training you want your Peer Educator to complete, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) will present to your group. Complete the CAPS Outreach Request form to schedule their presentation.

What is FERPA?

Federal records privacy law entitled, "The Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974" (FERPA) prevents any UC office from releasing information to you regarding the employee's spouse or domestic partner, or dependent(s) education or billing records. Any Peer Educator with access to student records must be FERPA trained.

FERPA Training

The University of Cincinnati is currently developing an online training module that covers FERPA. Your Peer Educators should use this online training module to obtain FERPA training. If the Peer Educator is unable to use the online module, your department is responsible for training your Peer Educators on FERPA

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College Reading and Learning Association Requirements for Certification

Depending on your Peer Educator Program, you may decide that you want your students to be certified Peer Educators. One of the national programs that certifies Peer Educators is the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). CRLA certifications include: International TUTOR Training Program Certification (ITTPC) and International MENTOR Training Program Certification (IMTPC). There are three levels of certification through each program.

- Requirements for International TUTOR Training Program Certification (ITTPC) can be found here.
- International MENTOR Training Program Certification (IMTPC) can be found here.

There are applications, fees, and renewals/re-certifications with each program.

Potential Competency Areas for Peer Educators

By the time you start planning training, you should already have a job description written and should have hired candidates to fill your positions. Here are some questions and steps to help guide your training:

- What are the areas in the job description that you need to train your Peer Educators on?
- When they start their position on the first-day, what will they need to know to be successful?
- What do you want to accomplish during training (i.e., what are your learning outcomes?)

Using those three questions (and your answers), here are some general best practices and competency areas to help you get started:

- Vision and Mission of your department/office
- Daily, weekly, monthly responsibilities and expectations
- Instructions on how to find needed resources (if paid, clocking-in and out, BlackBoard resources, research protocols, etc.)
- Connections with other offices/departments on-campus that might be pertinent to their responsibilities
  - Contact those office early enough to get them on the training schedule
- Professional behavior/ethics
- Your departmental/office policies
- Designated time for Peer Educators to work together and ask questions
- Content specific to your department/office
- Leadership and mentoring skills
- Building rapport and motivating individuals
- Mentoring boundaries/office referrals
- Public speaking skills
- Team building skills
- Inclusion/Cultural Awareness

Logistics of Training

When planning training, beyond thinking about the content, you must also think about the logistics. Some of those questions include:

- What is your training budget?
- When will your training take place and how often?
- Where will your training take place?

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- How long will you need to cover your content?
- Will you facilitate all of training or will you invite others in to facilitate?
- How will you incorporate returning staff into training?
- What materials/supplies are needed for training?

Below are some best practices/things to consider:

- Budget
  - Be sure to include all materials and supplies needed in your budget (paper costs, pens, markers, nametags, folders, etc.)
  - Consider meals and snacks, including beverages in total cost
  - Note if there is a cost associated with speakers, venues, rental equipment such as podiums, mics, projectors, etc.
- When and How Often?
  - Training should take place prior to the role starting. Options include:
    - Pre-service (on-line videos, readings, etc. prior to the actual training)
    - Training (in-person)
    - On-going training while Peer Educator is in the position
  - Will you plan to have training at the beginning of each semester/term?
- Where?
  - The location for Peer Educator training is essential. The space will determine how training can be facilitated.
    - If there are round tables, this encourages more conversation and interaction.
    - If you are in an auditorium, this encourages lecture style facilitation.
  - Keep in mind: There are limited large spaces on UC's campus. Access to view spaces available for reservation, can be found here.
  - You should plan to reserve a large space on-campus at least 6 months in advance or you may run the risk of no spaces being available.
  - Reservations can also be made at the African-American Cultural and Resource Center, as well as Kingsgate Marriott (additional fees apply) by contacting them directly.
- Length of Time?
  - In any paid Peer Educator position, training must not surpass either the 24 hour role in a given semester that a student is taking classes or 40 hours outside of that term.
  - The schedule for training generally may last anywhere from 10-40 hours, depending on the needs of your department/office.
- Facilitation Style and Strategy
  - Inviting others to help facilitate your training on their topics of expertise is best practice. It allows your Peer Educators to hear from someone other than yourself and starts to create partnerships across campus.
    - Determine specific areas your Peer Educators need to be trained on and begin to reach out to individuals on campus who can help facilitate those sessions.
  - In training Peer Educators, it is important to make sure the style of your presentations varies.
    - Don't always lecture.

        - Put them in small groups, facilitate activities or assessments, or perform skits or case-studies.
        - Variety will ensure Peer Educators are engaged and actively participating in training.
- Incorporation of Returning Staff
    - Returning staff need to be invested in the training curriculum.
    - One of the best ways to ensure they feel valued and appreciated is to have them share their experiences with newly hired Peer Educators.
    - Involve returners in icebreakers, panels, presentations, etc.
- Materials/Supplies Needed
    - A week or two prior to training go through your training schedule and make a list of each handout and/or materials needed to facilitate that session.
    - Take enough extra paper, pens, markers, etc. for the tables.
    - If you are giving your Peer Educators a resource manual or a handbook, make sure you give printing services enough time to create what you are expecting, usually about 3 weeks to a month in advance.
    - Determine what resources you will have electronically and what you will print for training.
    - If you are giving your Peer Educators folders or packets of information, make sure you have extra copies.
    - Additionally, if you are assigning small groups/table assignments, be aware this can take a substantial amount of time depending on how strategic you want to be.

Current Implementation Examples

To provide you with an example of what one Peer Educator Training looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Peer Leader Program with First Year Experience & Learning Communities.

- FYE & LCs hire approximately 150 Peer Leaders for Fall Semester
- Position begins the first day of the fall academic semester (for Fall 2016, this is August 22nd)
- Prior to Training:
    - Peer Leaders are required to read the Common Read for the upcoming academic year and are compensated for 6 hours, as long as they receive as least an 80% on their assessment
- Training is held August 8th-12th (two weeks prior to semester start)
- Training is approximately 40 hours
- Training is held in Nippert West Pavilion, circular tables with chairs for Peer Leaders
- Because FYE & LCs employ so many co-op students, they have in-person training (required unless there is an academic conflict) and an on-line training option
- On-boarding through Human Resources will be done as part of the training schedule
- There is a welcome and staff introductions at the start of Day 1
- Time is set aside to go over the training schedule and Peer Leaders receive a copy of the schedule printed in their training folders
- Setting training norms is done on the first day and checking in on those norms is done at least once a day
- Each day during training, there are 15 minutes allotted for check-in and 15 minutes at the end of the day for a re-cap

- Icebreakers/team builders are spread throughout training
- An Etiquette Dinner is planned at the end of training to give Peer Leaders an experience that supports their development and aligns with goals for the program
- Facilitators and facilitation styles vary throughout training. There is a lot of small group interaction, as well as hands-on learning
- Lunches are well-planned to incorporate campus partners, faculty, and staff in the conversations
- Breaks are built into the schedule

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Peer Leader Training Schedule

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CHAPTER 6: EVALUATING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- Determining evaluation criteria prior to the Peer Educator's start date will ensure that there are clear standards set for them when they begin their role.
- It is important that the evaluation criteria directly connect to the Peer Educator's job description and responsibilities.
- How you evaluate and when Peer Educators will be evaluated should be made clear as soon as the Peer Educator starts their position as evaluation is not intended to be a surprise.
- Supervisors should have a comprehensive evaluation system and timeline. Knowing your limits is an essential part of the evaluation process.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- How will you evaluate your Peer Educators? On what criteria will they be evaluated?
- At what point in their role will they be evaluated?
- Are you the only person evaluating them or will others be able to give feedback for their evaluation?
- What feedback will be given informally and what will be given formally?
- How will you hold your Peer Educators accountable to their job duties?
  - If there are accountability measures taken, what are the steps?
- Will everyone be re-appointed their position automatically or will re-appointment be based on job performance (if positions last more than one term)?
- How will the evaluation measures be communicated with the Peer Educators?

Informational Content

Evaluation

There are many ways to evaluate Peer Educators. Once a job description is in place, creating a formal evaluation form and process is simple. You should use the job description to create evaluation mechanisms that will be easy to assess.

- For instance, one evaluative measure may be that the Peer Educator reports to work on time and stays on task while at work. The response for this question can be "Always, Sometimes, Never".
  - Each evaluation measure should have options for the supervisor to distinguish his or her response.
  - In addition, each evaluation measure should have a place for the supervisor to write comments.
  - Note: If thorough, writing performance evaluations can take a significant amount of time. Be aware prior to starting this process.

You will need to determine how often the evaluation will take place. Generally speaking, it is best practice to evaluate employees at least once a semester (at a minimum). If at all possible, give the Peer Educator informal feedback or do an informal evaluation 6-weeks into their role, so they have time to adjust their performance prior to being formally evaluated.

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There are several other ways that Peer Educators can be evaluated. Some of these include:

- Direct observation of the Peer Educator performing their job duties
- Assessment results from Peer Educators clients/mentees

Accountability measures are also important when evaluating Peer Educators. If a Peer Educator has been under-performing in their role, it is vital that the supervisor is managing and documenting those conversations.

360 Evaluations

360 Evaluations or reviews are extremely valuable and can add insight to a Peer Educators performance from a variety of sources.

- Generally, 360 evaluations include information from the Peer Educators clients/mentees, peers (co-workers who most closely interact with them), the supervisor, and their own self-evaluation.
- 360 Evaluations are most commonly used for developmental purposes. It allows for multiple perspectives and gives the Peer Educator feedback from all facets of their position.
- If you determine this is how you would like to assess the performance of your Peer Educators, make sure that you leave enough time to solicit all feedback from invested parties and can analyze that feedback prior to giving the formal performance evaluation.

Elements of Effective Feedback*

- Goal-Referenced
    - Feedback should reference where the Peer Educator is trying to go. How much progress have they made toward the goals you have set for them/they have set for themselves?
- Tangible and Transparent
    - Peer Educators should understand how to utilize the feedback immediately to improve performance.
- Actionable
    - Feedback should reference what steps the Peer Educator can take to make improvements, as well as measure if and how they have made those improvements.
- User-Friendly
    - Two or three pieces of concrete feedback is ideal and leads to productive conversations. It should be specific and personalized.
- Timely
    - The sooner you are able to give the feedback, the better. Waiting weeks to offer feedback is not ideal.
- On-Going
    - Ideally, formative performance assessment precedes summative performance assessments. The Peer Educator should have opportunities, if performance is less than optimal, to reshape the performance to better achieve the goal. In summative assessment, the feedback comes too late; the job performance is over.
- Consistent
    - Feedback should be stable, accurate, and trustworthy. It should concentrate on job performance, not on personality or things unrelated to the job.

*Elements of Effective Feedback adapted from Seven Keys to Effective Feedback by Grant Wiggins

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Current Implementation Example

To provide you with an example of what the Peer Educator performance review looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Peer Leader Program with First Year Experience & Learning Communities.

- Peer Leaders are evaluated by both their students in the Learning Community, as well as their supervisors (Peer Leader Coordinators).
- Students evaluate their Peer Leaders at two points in the semester.
  - One is through an "early term evaluation," approximately 4 weeks into a semester. This is a centralized service through course evaluations/UCIT.
  - The other is at the end of the semester.
  - Both are on-line evaluation measures.
- Peer Leader Coordinators evaluate their subset of Peer Leaders informally throughout the semester and formally at the end of each semester.
  - The informal evaluation process takes place during individual one-on-one meetings, as well as through accountability conversations if Peer Leaders are not meeting their minimum job responsibilities.
  - The formal evaluation example is below. Each Peer Leader Coordinator completes the performance evaluation form and has an individual meeting with their Peer Leader to go over the form.
- In addition to evaluating the Peer Leaders, the Associate Director of First Year Experience and Learning Communities evaluates the Peer Leader Coordinators twice throughout a given semester. Both are 360 evaluations.
  - The Associate Director gives each set of Peer Leaders the opportunity to give feedback regarding the performance of their Peer Leader Coordinator.
  - The peers of the Peer Leader Coordinators give feedback.
  - The Associate Director gives feedback.
  - The Associate Director meets individually with each Peer Leader Coordinator to go over the feedback given by PLs and other PLCs (anonymously), as well as her own performance evaluation.

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Peer Leader Accountability Policies Chart
- Peer Leader Accountability Form
- Early Term Feedback Questions
- Peer Leader Formal Performance Evaluation
- Peer Leader Coordinator Formal Performance Evaluation
- End-of-Semester Evaluation Questions (from Student Evaluation of Peer Leaders)

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CHAPTER 7: PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Importance/Relevance

- Providing peer educators with various professional development opportunities will help them to grow as individuals and position them for professional progress and success beyond their peer educator role.
- These opportunities can range from experiences that build credentials to offering in-house continuing education programs such as diversity seminars; they can take place during various times throughout the semester or year.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- What resources does your department already have in place?
- Can you develop a partnership with another office or area of development?
- If you are hosting workshops, will your department be facilitating these presentations or will you need to find outside resources?
- Does anyone in your office have recourses that are already used?
- Where on campus can you find resources that already have programs in place?
- How many opportunities will you have in one semester, throughout the year?
- Will it be mandatory for the students to participate? If so, how will you ensure that it fits with everyone's schedule?

Informational Content

The purpose of this chapter is to raise awareness and to provoke thought about our obligations to tend to the peer educators' learning needs and opportunities within and beyond the peer educator role, knowing that for some this role is a stepping stone along their career development journey.

<u>Professional Development as Experiential Learning</u>

As a specialized form of experiential learning, the peer educator role is in-and-of-itself a professional development opportunity. For this reason, UC has created the Peer Education course attribute, which can be attached to zero-credit or credit-bearing courses that enroll peer educators. Attaching the attribute provides a way for the university to recognize the educational value that performing the peer educator role provides, and to document this learning experience on students' academic transcripts. Learning experiences that qualify to hold the Peer Education attribute incorporate the following:

- Defined learning outcomes for peer educators
- Defined learning outcomes for the peer educators' work with students
- Oversight from professional staff or faculty
- In-depth experience defined by a suggested minimum contribution of approximately 120 hours per semester (average of 8 hours per week)
- Selection of peer educators based on articulated minimum qualifications related to content and context of the experience
- Appropriate preparation and training prior to and/or concurrently with the experience
- Assessment of peer educator capabilities and growth including performance evaluation and feedback
- Assessment of outcomes for the peer educators' work with students

- Peer educator self-reflection

To attach the Peer Educator attribute to a course, peer educator administrators and faculty must propose and have the relevant course approved using the e-Curriculum system in accordance with college and university course approval processes.

Professional Development as an Integral Component of Peer Education Program Management
Many programs incorporate a professional development mindset into their training, supervision, or recognition systems for peer educators. For example, programs may build into their standard operating procedures mechanisms for providing peer educators with meaningful and timely feedback, a coaching style of supervision, and peer educator reflection.

Professional Development as Continuing Education
Many programs will offer professional development activities as an additional component of the peer education experience For example, offering a series of workshops that focus on developing skills, capacities, or networks that will position peer educators for professional success beyond their peer educator role are valuable opportunities. Examples of workshop topics include:
- Resume Development
- Conflict Management
- Dealing with Co-workers
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Finding a mentor
- Student Leadership Certificate FAQs

Promoting opportunities for peer educators to participate in conferences and deliver presentations as part of a relevant campus-based organization or external professional association is another avenue for offering professional development opportunities. For example, UC's Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development hosts a leadership conference each year where peer educations can submit presentation proposals.

Helping peer educators to connect their current work experience to post-baccalaureate opportunities in graduate school or the workplace is another form of professional development. For example, many peer educator roles will help students to develop credentials and demonstrate their qualifications for opportunities like the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant fellowship, graduate school and related graduate assistant positions, as well as an array of full-time entry-level career positions.

Current Implementation Examples
In the College of Business, student leaders are called PACE Leaders. This term comes from the Lindner program, PACE (Professionalism, Academics, Character, Engagement). The purpose of PACE is to build the ideal candidate for future employers.
- PACE Leaders work with freshmen students in their Learning Communities throughout their freshmen year.
- PACE Leaders are provided opportunities for diversity, inclusion training, and resume building.

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- In Lindner, the Diversity and Inclusion team and Career Services office provide professional development seminars.
    - The Diversity and Inclusion team and the PACE leaders discuss ways to spark conversation and learn about students in their Learning Community.
    - Career Services and the PACE Leaders discuss how to accurately and succinctly describe their skills on a resume.
        - During this workshop, PACE Leaders bring their own resume, and the Career Services team work with them on ways to make their resume stand out.

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

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CHAPTER 8: RECOGNIZING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- A well-designed recognition process carries numerous benefits, including retaining your outstanding Peer Educators, boosting their morale, and encouraging them to be invested in your program and improve as educators.
- Additionally, recognizing your Peer Educators serves as way of promoting your program to stakeholders and illustrates that you are invested in your staff.
- Effective implementation requires an understanding of different forms of recognition (internal recognition, external recognition, and promotion) and when to appropriately utilize each one to achieve a particular objective.

Question to Answer/Things to Consider

- What do you want to achieve with the recognition process, and what forms of recognition will enable you to achieve those goals?
- Once you have selected how you wish to recognize your Peer Educators, what processes will you establish to put those plans into action? Who will be involved?
- What criteria will you use to assist in the recognition process?
- What timelines will you put into place regarding the recognition process?
- In terms of external recognition, who do you want to inform regarding your student staff?
- In terms of internal recognition and promotion, how will you communicate the recognition process to your student staff, and how will you catalog their progress?
- If you are connecting financial incentives with the recognition process (e.g., offering pay raises), how will doing so impact your budget?
- How can you use the recognition process as a recruitment tool for potential Peer Educators?

Informational Content

External Recognition

- External recognition consists of sharing the work of outstanding Peer Educators with those outside your program, usually interested stakeholders.
- External recognition is the easiest to implement since you simply consider what aspects of your Peer Educators you wish to recognize (work, academic, or community accomplishments) and share those elements through different information outlets (reports, newsletters, or websites).
- External recognition will serve two goals:
    - It enables you to reward outstanding Peer Educators.
    - It enables you to promote your staff to stakeholders and demonstrate that you have exemplary students working for you.

Internal Recognition

- Internal recognition consists of recognizing the efforts of your student staff within your program.
- Internal recognition enables you to boost the morale of your student staff while communicating to them that you care about their work.

- Internal recognition comes in numerous forms, including internal awards (e.g., Peer Educator of the Month) and celebratory events (e.g., staff appreciation day).
- Internal recognition can also be utilized to highlight exemplars or role models for your student staff to follow.

Promotion Process

- Although the promotion process is perhaps the most challenging form of recognition to implement, it can be the most rewarding to students. Promotion involves recognizing outstanding Peer Educators and rewarding them with a pay increase, one-time bonus, and/or new responsibilities.
- Consult your budget and program's financial administrator to see if financial recognitions are feasible and how they will affect your budget. Depending on the structure, amount, and requirements of a proposed financial recognition, also confirm that it aligns with university payroll and HR policies. Many student staff positions are not eligible for traditional merit-based pay increases.
- Next determine how you will decide to award financial recognition. Perhaps you can put a set of criteria into place (work and training attendance, student surveys of the Peer Educator's work, or completing special projects). Or maybe you can select a set of desirable behaviors (attendance, completing training, or volunteering for extra work) that you can reward with a point system in which at a certain threshold, the student would receive the increase.
- Additionally, you can link the financial recognition to created positions within your student staff (leader or mentor roles). These positions can carry new responsibilities (contributing to training or observing new Peer Educators). You can either award these positions to returning staff or have them apply.
- The promotion process is effective in incentivizing outstanding work. Furthermore, communicating that you have financial incentives and promotional pathways is a good way to recruit new Peer Educators.

Current Implementation Examples

To provide you with an example of what the Peer Educator recognition looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Learning Assistance Center.

- The Learning Assistance Center has implemented all three forms of the recognition process in different ways.
  - Externally, the LAC recognizes individual Peer Educators in a "Student Spotlight" portion of their newsletter, and they recognize their collective staff in their annual reports and marketing materials, communicating things such as their GPAs.
  - Internally, they also have a Student Staff Member of the Month Award. They post the winner's picture and biography outside their office. They also hold special events like "Tutor Appreciation Day," end of the semester celebrations, and a Valentine's Day celebration. At this final event, students and staff members write thank you notes to the Peer Educators on paper hearts that are posted in the office.

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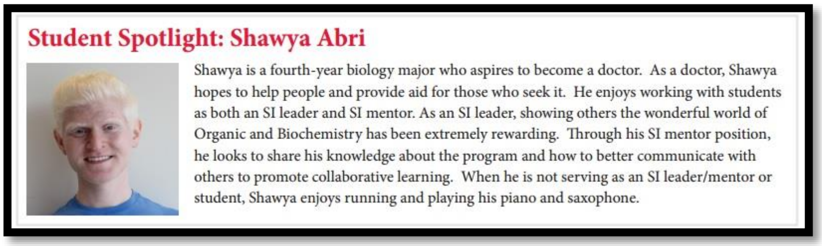
- Many LAC programs also have mentor roles for student staff. Additionally, the LAC has utilized a financial incentive system that takes into account time of employment and clear performance metrics.

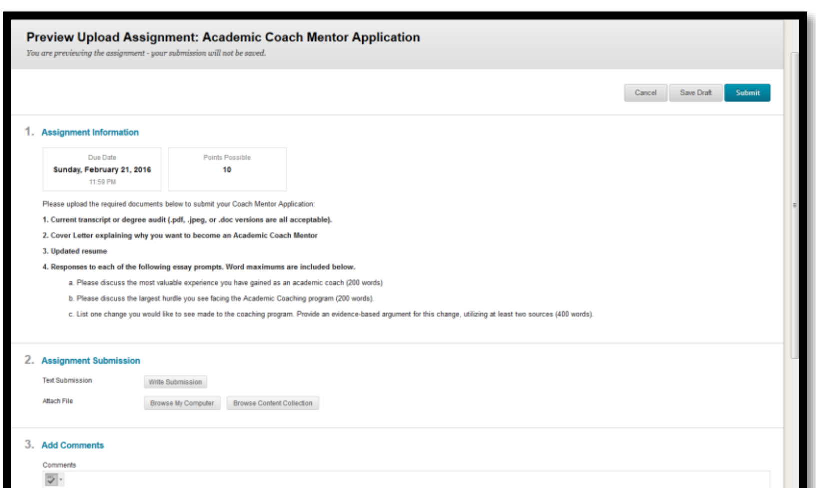
Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Student Spotlight Example



- Student of the Month Example

- Coach Mentor Application (housed in Blackboard)



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CHAPTER 9: THE SOMETIMES NECESSARY EVIL, TERMINATING PEER EDUCATORS

Importance/Relevance

- University of Cincinnati student employees serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees and may be terminated with or without cause.
- A termination is considered to have been successful if the employee understands the essential information about his or her status, you have treated the person fairly and with respect, the organization fulfills its legal and ethical responsibilities, and the disruption to other employees is minimal.
- Terminating an employee is rarely pleasant. However, a properly conducted termination meeting that preserves the employee's dignity can help defuse even the tensest of situations. Whether your reasons for terminating an employee are based on job performance, insubordination, reduction or loss of funding, or for another reason, following the proper termination procedures is essential.
- By keeping in mind some basic management and interpersonal rules, you can go a long way toward diffusing the anger of a terminated employee. It's important to remember that employees are more likely to perceive a termination as "fair" if they have had plenty of notice about what conduct and performance you expect from them. It's also important that workers receive regular feedback about their job performance and that they are warned, both orally and in writing, whenever you find that they are not living up to expectations.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

Your ability to "terminate properly" depends on the groundwork you lay, starting as early as the first day you hire somebody. You need to:

- Establish fair work rules and policies. Your employees need to know what you expect of them, which should be spelled out in workplace rules.
  - Create a student handbook that contains key rules, and ensure every new hire receives a copy.
    - If you're hiring just a few employees, you don't need to create a whole handbook, but you should give some thought to the kinds of reasonable rules your workplace requires.
  - If you need assistance, contact [Human Resources].
- Enforce your rules fairly, using progressive disciplinary measures when necessary. You can have the most reasonable set of rules, but if you don't enforce your rules equally among all employees, they are useless.
  - A four-step, progressive discipline process is encouraged.
    - Step 1: Verbal Warning
    - Step 2: Written Reprimand
    - Step 3: Suspension without Pay/Final Written Warning
    - Step 4: Termination of Employment
  - Because some performance/behavioral issues warrant skipping steps in the process, the University reserves the right to immediately terminate an employee or skip any step(s) in the progressive discipline process when warranted.
- Establish a performance feedback system to let people know how they're doing. Discipline is not very effective for an employee who doesn't violate any rules but is incompetent or is not performing work to an acceptable level.

- Through regular performance reviews you can keep the worker up to par, or at least document your attempt to do so.
- Investigate the final reason/incident thoroughly. Before you terminate a student for misconduct, you should thoroughly investigate the incident as best as you can.
    - Sometimes, after investigating, you may decide not to fire the employee after all but rather place them on probation.
- When possible never fire an employee on the spot. If a student worker does something so terrible that you must take immediate action, tell the worker that he or she is suspended, effective immediately, while you investigate the situation.

Informational Content

Once an employer has made the decision to terminate an employee, whatever the reason, breaking the news is likely to be at the very least awkward. Make sure you have done the groundwork needed to document and justify your actions. Properly conducting a termination meeting minimizes your own discomfort and makes things as easy as possible on the departing employee.

- Preserving an employee's dignity is vital. It's natural for a person being fired to feel resentment toward you and your business. Everything you do in a termination meeting should be designed to minimize, as much as possible, this feeling.
- Setting up a proper termination meeting. Termination of an employee should always be conducted face-to-face, not by letter, email, or over the phone.
    - The immediate supervisor of the employee should be responsible because he or she is usually most familiar with the reasons for the discharge. Also, the supervisor will usually be most familiar with the worker's personality and will be most able to handle him or her in the face of bad news. If you are not the immediate supervisor, let him or her handle the meeting. Besides the supervisor and the employee who is being terminated, there are situations where you may want to have a third party present.
- Where to conduct the meeting. You'll want to conduct the meeting out of sight and earshot of any other employees, in a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. The meeting room should be in a location that does not alert other people as to what is taking place. A location on neutral ground — not in your office, and not in the departing worker's office or workplace.
- When to hold the meeting. Early in the day and early in the week is generally considered the best time to hold a termination interview.
    - Avoid Fridays and the day before a holiday or vacation. An employee who is let go on a Friday has two days to brood about his or her treatment by the company and to look for ways to retaliate.
    - On the other hand, discharging a person early in the week provides him or her with an opportunity to focus on the future and begin looking for a new job right away
- Conducting a termination meeting. The actual termination meeting should last about 10 to 15 minutes and have the sole purpose of providing a simple and concise statement of the decision to terminate the employment relationship.
    - Prepare what you will say ahead of time. It's a good idea to write it out and have a checklist in front of you so that you don't get sidetracked and forget any important points.
    - Consider the following items when preparing for the termination meeting.
        - Give an adequate reason for the discharge. Many employees want a full explanation of why they were let go and a chance to give their side of the story. You don't have to spend a lot of time going over every last detail of the employee's conduct that led to the discharge, but you should provide a reasonable explanation.

- Seek out the employee's explanation or interpretation of events. You may already have done this when you investigated any misconduct that led to the termination. Even so, you should allow the employee to have his or her say and even to vent a little emotion.
    - Don't interrupt or talk over the person. If the employee feels that he or she was forced out because of discrimination, harassment, or some other allegedly offensive or illegal conduct on your part, you'll want to know about it now so that you can alert Human Resources.
- Make it clear that the decision is final. If you take the position that the decision has already been made, all alternatives have been considered, and that you are merely giving this information to the employee, you'll find it easier to keep your cool and keep control of the situation. If applicable, stress that everyone involved in management activities agreed to the decision.
    - Tell the employee the effective date of the termination. Wish the employee good luck in his/her future endeavors. Stand, extend your hand and remain standing until the employee has left the meeting site.
- Explain your job reference policy. It is the university's policy to provide only job title, dates of employment, and salary history.
- Collect what's yours from the employee. You'll need to collect any keys, files, or other property that belongs to the university. You may want to do this now, or you may want to let the employee "save face" by allowing him or her to return these items to you at a specific later date. Immediately remove any access to computer files, doors, etc.
- Processing the termination. When separating an employee for any reason, the PCR paperwork should provide a reason. Keep in mind that some reasons may hinder a student from ever working at the University of Cincinnati in a full or part-time position. Only the most grievous offenses should be classified as this type of termination.

Current Implementation Example

To provide you with an example of what the Peer Educator termination process looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Learning Assistance Center.

- The Learning Assistance Center has established a point system that clearly establishes at what point Peer Educators will be at risk for termination.
    - See the LAC Point System Chart for an example.

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- Contact Human Resources if you have any questions about any part of the termination process.
- Student Worker Handbook

How To Guide: Peer Education

CHAPTER 10: ASSESSING THE PROGRAM

Importance/Relevance

- Assessment allows you to determine whether your Peer Educators are following protocols and best practices, whether they are working effectively with students, how the students perceive their experiences, and whether concrete outcomes result from participation in your Peer education program. This allows for continued revisions and improvements of the program's operation.
- Well-conducted and communicated assessment also demonstrates the value of your peer education programming to administrators and potential collaborators within and outside the university.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- What elements of a program should be assessed?
- How does assessment differ from research?
- What assessment resources are available to peer education coordinators at UC?
- How should you communicate your results?

Informational Content

Elements to Assess

For many peer education programs, you'll have multiple elements to assess, some focusing on the Peer Educators and some on the students they serve.

Peer Educators

- To create a baseline picture of a "typical" Peer Educator within your specific program, gather relevant demographic data on those students working in your program.
- You should assess your educators' performance. This is covered from a professional development/human resources standpoint in Chapter 6: Evaluating Peer Educators. But you may also wish to assess some elements of Peer Educator performance to answer programmatic questions. For instance,
  - Are the educators implementing a specific intervention? If so, is the implementation effective?
  - Are there specific elements of Peer Educator performance or responsibilities that need to be better understood (i.e. if you need additional money for resources, you may assess time lost, mistakes made, or staff turnover attributable to the lack of those resources)?
  - You may also want to assess whether Peer Educators are prepared for their roles after completing the provided training. This may be done qualitatively (focus groups, surveys, interviews, etc.), quantitatively (measures of specific knowledge and competencies), or through a combination of these methods.
- Finally, you may wish to assess the impact of employment on your Peer Educators, especially in terms of academic, affective, and professional growth. This could take the form of a pre- and post-administration of a relevant conceptual inventory, a survey on their perceived growth due to the position, and/or more in-depth programs like the GROW program.

- You may also consider less direct academic performance assessments such as GPA or retention rates.
- For some programs, outcomes of interest may be unique.
  - The Learning Assistant (LA) program, as designed at the University of Colorado, Boulder, is intended to support active learning in large STEM classrooms. It is also intended to transition STEM students into educational careers, so a unique outcome of interest may be the percent of students who add an educational certification or major to their program of study.

Student Clients
The impact of the program on student clients is typically the primary area of interest. A useful tool when considering these questions is Kirkpatrick's Training Evaluation Model, a four-level model of evaluating employee trainings that also provides a useful framework for program analysis. The model's levels include Reaction, Learning, Behavior, and Results.

- **Reaction** includes elements like student satisfaction, likeliness to return to or recommend the program, and evaluation of service quality.
  - This is often the easiest information to gather, and it is a good first step in evaluating a program.
- **Learning** includes whether participating students improve in understanding, confidence, attitude, or motivation relevant to the program's intended outcomes. This can be more difficult to directly assess, but some potential measures could include self-efficacy or motivation scales or direct pre-post-assessments of learning.
- **Behavior** includes how students apply their experience in the program to their academics outside of the program setting. This might include whether students report lower levels of alcohol intake after working with a wellness educator or whether they are more engaged on campus after participating in a Learning Community.
- **Results** can be individual (i.e. improved GPA) or group-based (i.e. a reduction in the percent of students earning Ds, Fs, or Ws in a given class), depending on how the Peer Educators are deployed.
  - In addition to measuring pre- and post-intervention results, you may also be able to identify a comparable cohort of non-participants and consider how their results differ from participating students.

<u>Assessment vs Research</u>
Most assessment will not require approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Assessment often does not attempt to prove causality or make generalizable claims. Assessment seeks to determine how to better administer a given program, the extent to which it is functioning as intended, and whether it is meeting institutional needs.

- Connected to this difference is the fact that collecting assessment data often does not require student consent. Data may be gathered from university record systems such as data warehouses, grade books, or program/event surveys.
- In these instances, the program administrator is beholden to institutional standards regarding data management. You will want to clarify that you are using student data appropriately and within the policy standards of the university.

- Lastly, because assessment lacks strict experimental design elements, administrators will want to be cautious in making claims about student outcomes and results. As a general rule, avoid overly causal claims.

Resources for Assessment at UC
- To assess student outcomes like satisfaction, reported confidence, or any number of other self-reported data, you might use SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, or CampusLink. UC has licensing agreements with all of these platforms, all of which can deploy surveys.
  - UCIT can help you determine what software you have available to you as an employee at the University.
- When gathering student demographic or academic achievement information, you will benefit from not using self-report data via a survey. In these instances, you should use official university records, if possible.
  - If you do not have access to CaRT, the university's new reporting tool, you may need to collaborate with Institutional Research (IR), the office on campus responsible for gathering and analyzing student data. In addition, by working with IR, your results will gain credibility and potentially improve the quality of your questions and results.
  - Depending on your familiarity with data management, you may wish to reach out to the Office of Information Security to ensure that you are taking appropriate precautions regarding student information.
- Lastly, some offices across campus have dedicated assessment resources, such as the Assessment Council within the Division of Student Affairs. Other programs have honed their own assessment regimens over multiple years. Before developing your own plan, consider reaching out to one of these offices on campus to discuss best practices or strategies to reduce the burden of collecting and analyzing your assessment data.

Communicating Assessment
When assessing your own program, there is a natural inclination to over assess. The best practice is to gather only information that you can use to evaluate or better understand your program. When communicating assessment information to others, concision is equally important. Internally, you may collect and review many elements to inform your practice, but you'll want to identify those data points that are most relevant to various stakeholders.
- When sharing these data points, strong data visualizations (e.g., graphs or charts) with a brief (one-to-two sentence) introduction will maintain audience interest and reduce confusion.
- Don't include too much background or contextual information.
- After each visualization, explain *why* the data point is relevant to a given stakeholder; what should it help the audience understand or what action should be taken as a result?

Current Implementation Example
To provide you with an example, we will look at the Peer Tutoring program within the Learning Assistance Center. The tutoring program collects the following data on student clients every semester:
- Post-Appointment Surveys on student confidence, satisfaction, and perception of services (5 questions).

- Student usage data including number of users, average rate of usage, individual student rates of participation, tutors seen, etc. (collected via office scheduling system).
- Student demographics such as race and college (collected via CaRT)
- Course grades for participating and non-participating students (collected via CaRT)
- Fall-to-Fall retention data, including comparisons to comparable cohorts (generated by Institutional Research)
- Graduation data, including comparisons to comparable cohorts (generated by Institutional Research)

The tutoring program also collects the following information on tutors:

- Observations (conducted by professional staff)
- Tutor demographics such as race and college (collected via CaRT)
- Tutor GPAs (collected via CaRT)
- Tutor-specific student feedback (collected via office scheduling system).
- Tutor perceptions of their work via structured conversations based on the IOWA GROW model

As specific questions arise throughout program administration, additional data points may be identified for ad hoc collection. This might include a more in-depth analysis of tutoring impact partitioned by ACT score.

After each semester, this data is communicated through

- A detailed internal report (~6 pages),
- External reports to offices that mandate students receive services (~2 pages),
- The LAC newsletter that goes to hundreds of stakeholders across UC (1-2 data points).
- The office also puts together promotional materials about student feedback and outcomes that are distributed to offices across campus to encourage student participation in LAC services such as tutoring

Supplemental Examples

There are many questions that may be of interest to you, and many ways to use that information to improve your program or advocate on behalf of your program. Some examples of different reporting documents from the Learning Assistance Center are included below:

- LAC Newsletter
- LAC Academic Coaching Stakeholder Report on Academic Alert Initiatives
- LAC Promotional Materials for Student