



How to Scale Peer-to-Peer Support Programs to Close Equity Gaps

Improve Student Equity, Optimize Support Resources, and Revamp the Mentor Experience



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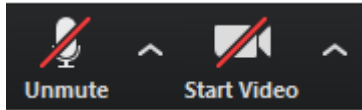
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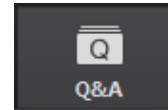
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An Equity Moment in Education and Beyond

Political and Social Forces Bring Historical and Current Inequalities to Light

*"Being Not-Rich':
Low-Income Students
at Michigan Share
Savvy Advice"*

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

*"Canadian Universities,
Colleges Working to
Indigenize Programs,
Campus Life"*



*"Mobility Report Cards:
The Role of Colleges in
Intergenerational
Mobility"*

**Equality of Opportunity
Project**

*"Columbia student seen
ranting in video: I'm not
a racist"*

AP

*"Homophobic and anti-
Semitic incidents took
place [at UMass
Amherst] last week"*

THE MASSACHUSETTS
DAILY COLLEGIAN

*"A Black Yale Student
Was Napping, and a
White Student Called
the Police"*

The New York Times

*"Higher Education Alone
Can't Bridge the Wealth
Gap That Separates
Black Americans from
Their White Peers"*

The Atlantic

*"A Confederate Statue
Continues To Stir Unrest
At UNC-Chapel Hill"*

npr

2023

Projected year when U.S.
high school graduating class
becomes majority-minority

Focusing on What Higher Ed Can Control

What Institutions Do (or Don't) to Create or Worsen Gaps

Seeking to Increase Access and Improve K-12 Education



Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success on Your Campus



Helping to Create Jobs and Meet Employer Workforce Needs



Two Guiding Questions

"What gaps do we have to react to and attempt to remedy?"

"What gaps do we contribute to or make worse by action or inaction?"



Infographic: Barriers to Student Success

Disparities Identified Across the Student Lifecycle

Barriers to Student Success Achievement Gaps Across the Student Lifecycle

A Guide for Gap Identification

EAB has identified over 100 hidden disparities that may impact single or multiple underrepresented students on your campus. Each gap can impact a student's feelings of belonging on your campus and make them more susceptible to conditions of stereotype threat. Use this handout as a guide to identify potential disparities across your campus.

Using this Infographic



Thematically organized around key functional areas of your portfolio



Assists taskforces in identifying potentially hidden disparities



Prioritize key areas of focus based on broader strategic and institutional goals



Designed to identify leading indicators of gaps in common success metrics

Education	Family Expectations and
9. Geographical access to higher education institutions	12. Family expectations of
10. Diversity of high-school teachers	13. Family expectations of
11. Segregation of high-schools	14. Student expectation of
	15. Resilience during the p
	16. Impact of first-aided ed
	17. Acceptance rates in col
	18. Family perception of in
	19. Undermatching in colle
Financial	
36. Perception of cost of college	44. Int
37. Ability and desire to take on debt	45. Ad
38. Application fee waiver request rates	46. Ne
39. FAFSA submission rates	47. Su
40. Financial aid verification selection rates	48. Ad
41. Financial aid verification completion rates	49. Im
42. Impact of unmet financial need	50. Lo
43. Ability to afford social experiences	51. Ad
College Navigation	
63. Likelihood to register late for classes	71. Understanding of re-enrollm
64. Student expectations of coursework rigor	72. Perceptions of time needed
65. Utilization of mental health resources	73. Parental engagement by ELI
66. FAFSA resubmission rates	74. Expectations of faculty inter
67. Summer math rates	75. Understanding of academic
68. Unproductive credit accumulation	76. Impact of academic jargon
69. Enrollment in toxic course combinations	77. Knowledge and use of medi
70. Graduation application submission rates	
Policies and	
88. Student loan default rates	92. Need and
89. Participation rates in internships	93. Ability to
90. Participation rates in learning communities	94. Faculty de
91. Participation rates in service-learning	95. Need for-
	96. Mismatch
	97. Mismatch
	98. Placement
	99. Referrals
	100. Impact of
	101. Impact of

Surprising Gaps Identified:



Impact of grading practices



Effect of parental expectations on academic perseverance



Effect of student self-efficacy on first-year course grades



Faculty dropping students from courses

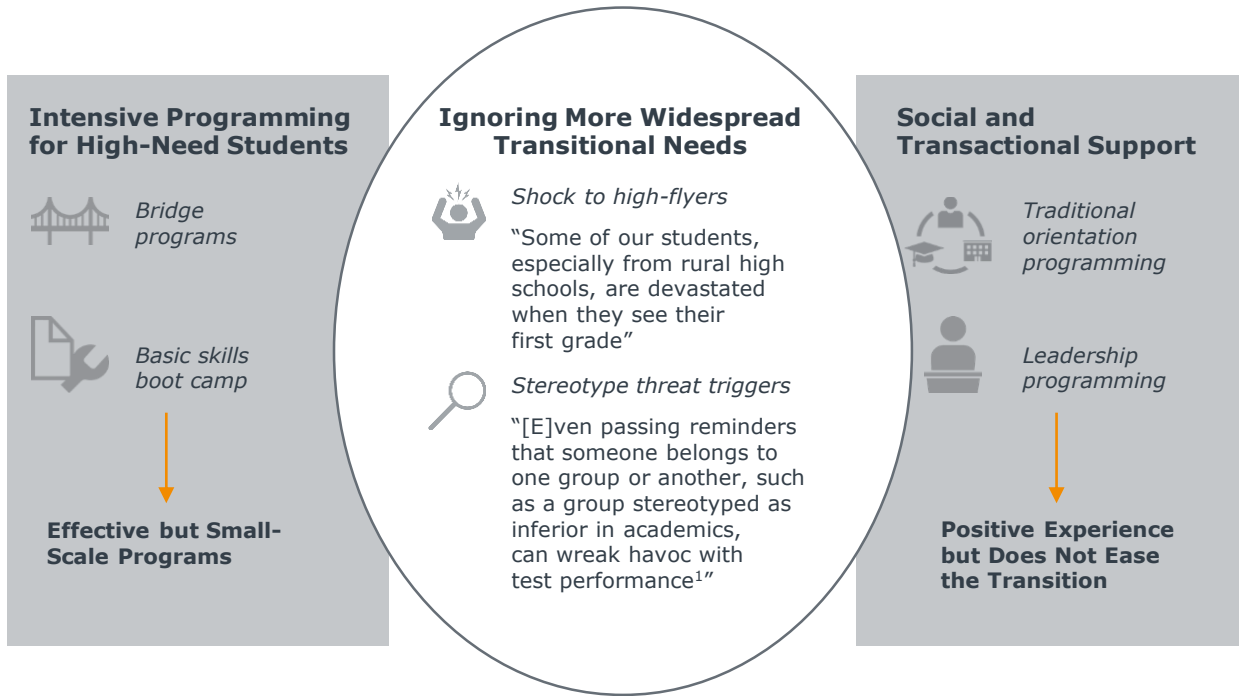


Responses of faculty to comments on student discussion boards



Missing Less Visible Contributors to Stop-Out

Traditional Support Programs Narrowly Focus on Social, Remedial Needs



1) American Psychological Association citing Claude Steele, Joshua Aronson, and Steven Spencer

Limits to Advising's Economics

More Professional Staff Not Enough to Destigmatize Help-Seeking

Never Going to Hire All the Advisors and Staff We Need...

Current Staffing



Ideal Staffing



Not enough funding to make initial investment



Struggle to determine the exact placement of new staff

...And We Miss an Opportunity to Engage Students and Close Trust Gaps



Chance to build belongingness among current students plus experiential learning among mentors



Perceived lack of common experience



Less able to normalize help-seeking behaviors among hesitant students

Clear Benefits to Using Peers as Coaches and Mentors

Retention

- Retention gains over similar non-participants

Sense of Belonging

- Students with engaged mentors report less feeling of isolation on campuses

Lower DFW, Higher GPA

- Course performance gains in sections with course assistants

Failing to Deploy Peers Broadly



Disconnected from core academic experiences



Mentorship not leveraged as experiential learning



Relegated to programs tangential to primary student success efforts

Student-Teacher Trust Deficit Emerges Early

Peer Support Bypasses Fraught Relationships with Authority Figures

Inconsistent Relationship with Authority Figures



Discipline

48% of preschool children receiving multiple out-of-school suspension are African American



Physical Restraint in Schools

75% of students who are subjected to physical restraint at school are students with disabilities



Referrals to Law Enforcement

24% of students who are referred to law enforcement at school are Hispanic



Teacher Expectations

Secondary teachers predict that high-poverty students were **53%** less likely to earn a college diploma



...Creates Lasting Impression on Students

- 1) Includes African American, Hispanic, and Native students
- 2) Compared to 45% who mentioned formal networks

Reliance on Peers and Informal Networks Impossible to Overcome

47%

Increase in proportion of URG¹ students receiving As and Bs when peer-led workshops introduced

58%

Of adults with a four-year degree received advice about major choice from informal social networks²



"...as a student, I can identify with my peers and imagine myself using the course material in the same way they do. This gives the material meaning and a sense of purpose that goes beyond memorization. **When I hear a peer's story, it connects to the story I am telling myself about who I want to be in the future.**"

Cary Roseth, Professor of Educational Psychology, Michigan State University

Source: Ulrich Boser, Megan Wilhelm, and Robert Hanna, "The Power of the Pygmalion Effect: Teacher Expectations Strongly Predict College Completion", *Center for American Progress*, October, 6, 2014; U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, *Civil Rights Data Collection, Data Snapshot: School Discipline*, March 2014; "Peers, More Than Teachers, Inspires Us To Learn", *MSU Today*, March 21, 2017; Ralph W. Preszler (2009). Replacing lecture with peer-led workshops improves student learning. *CBE: Life Sciences Education*, 8, 182–192.; Major Influence: Where Students Get Valued Advice on What to Study in College, STRADA Education Network & GALLUP, September 2017; EAB interviews and analysis.

Peers Help Overcome Resource Constraints and Belonging Gaps

“

For a university as large as UCF, when resources are limited, we likely need to implement a robust peer-to-peer success model.”

Elizabeth Dooley, Provost, University of Central Florida

“





Students are on campus with people who they can relate to, who have similar life experiences which I think has added to the draw of this place. At Whittier, there is mentoring with students who look the same. That is a draw. **That helps a lot to dispel imposter syndrome.**”

Joel Pérez, VP and Dean of Students, Whittier College

Peers Are Cornerstone of Learning Communities

Peer Mentors Boost First-Year Engagement and Outcomes

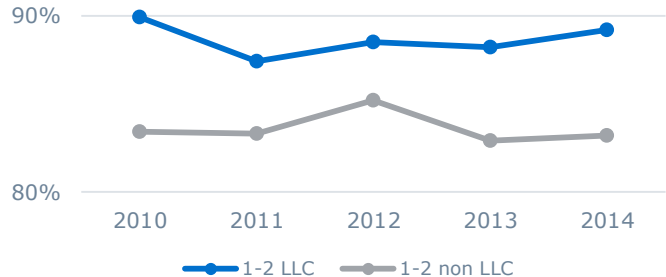
Peer Mentors Broaden Available Student Support...

-  Connecting students to resources across campus
-  Developing time management and study skills
-  Guiding students through the social adjustment to college
-  Helping students navigate administrative tasks

- 77%** Of all FYS students participate
- 83%** Of all FYS students of color participate
- 90+** Learning Communities, giving students tailored options
- 80k** Students have been served since 1995

... And Contribute to Positive Outcomes

LLC Students Have Consistently Higher Retention Rates than Non-LLC Students



“Having a peer mentor was extremely helpful. She was always available to answer major-related questions, questions about Iowa State, and just listen and be a friend.”

- LLC Student

An Initial Investment Saves Time in the End

When Trusted with Some Advisor Duties, Peers Can Free Up Time

The Challenge

40%

The commuter population quadrupled to 40% in just three years¹



The Consequences

An overwhelmed Associate Director for Campus Life struggled to engage changing population

The Response



Commuter Assistants...



Connect students to resources across campus



Conduct outreach for events and service referrals



Provide academic support



Hold 1:1 advising sessions

Leaving time for staff to...



Manage higher level cases for students



Support other student populations on campus

CAs Build Engagement and Add Capacity

Shift Transactional and Low-Level Interactions to Peers

1.6%

Retention gap between commuters and residents narrowed to 1.6%

89%

Of commuters reached in the first year

3k+

Text messages sent to commuters

1) At a small, private university on the West Coast

1

Deploy peers broadly across campus to create a sense of belonging and a continuous student support ecosystem

2

Align the mentoring curriculum to relevant points in the academic, administrative, and social calendar

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Make peer support a career-relevant experiential learning opportunity to boost program effectiveness and mentor engagement

Four Ways to Deploy Peers

A First Line of Defense for Academic, Social, and Personal Mentoring Support



Common-experience mentors for all students

Students in a holistic mentoring program reported that personal and emotional support was most beneficial



- Mentors provide personal, emotional, career, and academic support
- Each session focuses on a different skill development area, such as life skills



Extension of advising, particularly for high-need groups

Retention gains of up to 15-20% over similar control group populations, at public and private institutions



- Program designed for immigrant and ELL students
- Mentors are trained to support the unique needs of these students



Course assistants in high DFW courses

Students in classes with course assistants have higher semester GPAs and lower DFW rates



- 0.45 GPA gain for supplemental instruction participants in study of 37 institutions
- Course assistants drawn from past successful students, though typically not the highest performers



Study group facilitators

Study sessions at one University have attendance rates of 80% despite not being mandatory.



- Students can opt into a well-advertised weekly study group for high DFW courses
- Attendance agreement states students can only miss three sessions

Source: Gunn, et al. "Student Perceptions of benefits and Challenges of Peer Mentoring Programs: Divergent Perspectives from Mentors and Mentees." *Marketing Education Review*, 27 no. 1: 15-26.; Kring, Matthew. "Supporting College Students through Peer Mentoring: Serving Immigrant Students." *Metropolitan Universities*, 28 no. 3: 102-110.; Koehenour, et al. "Supplemental Instruction: An Effective Component of Student Affairs Programming." *Journal of College Student Development*, 38 no. 6.; EAB interviews and analysis.

Leaving Peer Advising to Chance

Too Few Students Have Formal, Structured Peer Learning Opportunities

Haphazard Connections vs. Multiple Formal Near-Peer Relationships



Orientation leader

Short-term engagement



Resident assistant

Minimal formal connection



Course assistants

Effective but typically in too few courses



Tutors

Ad hoc interactions purely focused on subject



Student leaders

Meaningful interactions but haphazard connections

1

Number of formal, extended peer guide relationships



Peer guide through pre-enrollment experience

Sets stage for help seeking



Peer mentor in shared academic experience

Regular contact and formal curriculum



Several courses with student assistants

Sustained engagement and lower trust gap



Study group facilitators

Low-stakes, supportive relationship building college success skills



Major peer advisor

Shared goals and experiences increase trust and openness

3-5

Best-in-class institutions create more chances for formal peer learning

Making Mentoring Work on Your Campus

Key Components of Successful Peer Support Programs

1 Program Scope

Status Quo: Mentoring excluded from core success initiatives



Best Practice

All students receive peer support during college adjustment

2 Type of Support

Status Quo: Institution relies only on pro staff to support new students



Best Practice

Peers support both the academic and social transition to college

3 Mentor Training

Status Quo: Minimal training only covers basic program requirements



Best Practice

Interactive training prepares mentor for full mentoring cycle

4 Mentor Benefits

Status Quo: Mentoring program is built solely with mentee success in mind



Best Practice

Programs designed to support both mentors and mentees

Cohorted Mentoring Supports Transition

UTA's University Leadership Network Provides 360° Support

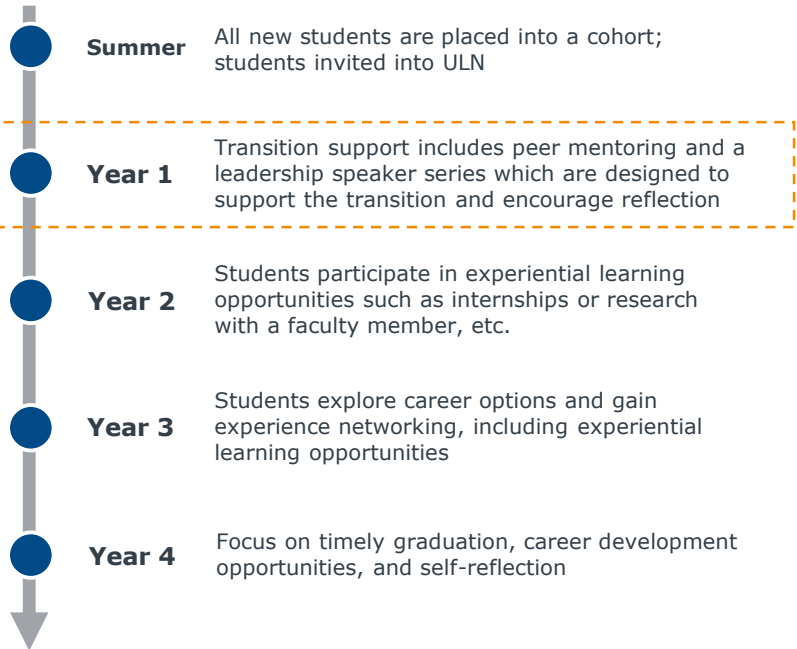
Case in Brief



Students in the University Leadership network (ULN) receive group and one-on-one peer mentoring in their first year

- Public R1 University in Austin, Texas
- ~45,000 UG students
- Mentoring program is run by one full-time staff member
- 500 first-year students served each year
- 50-75 mentors serve each year

ULN Supports Students for Entire College Career

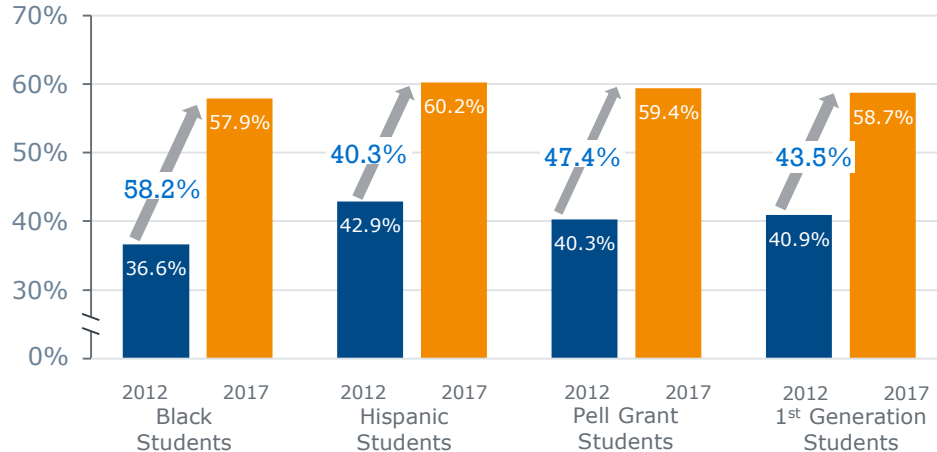


Graduation Rates on the Rise

360° Support Pays Off With Increase in Graduation Rates

Underrepresented Students Show Marked Improvement in Graduation Rates

4-Year Graduation Rate Increases for Underrepresented Students



33% → 55%

Predicted versus Actual

The first ULN cohort was predicted to have a graduation rate of 33%, but had an actual graduation rate of 55%

ULN Designed with Students and Mentors in Mind




Program Details Help Campuses Adopt Best Practices

Peer-to-Peer Support Profile

Program Details: Peer Mentoring in the ULN

ULN Designed with Both Students and Mentors in Mind



Program Details

- Recruitment and Audience**
 - University of Peer Mentoring Reduces Stigma
 - UT Austin builds the 300 student US cohort each year using predictive analytics
 - USN is an incentive-based scholarship program where students receive structured support, like peer mentoring and leadership development, during their four years at UT Austin
 - Students are invited to USN as an exclusive access to a supportive leadership opportunity
- Calendar and Curriculum**
 - Curriculum Built Around Shared Experience
 - First-year USN students participate in a bi-weekly Leadership Speaker Series (LSS), group mentoring sessions, and one-on-one mentoring
 - Mentors work through a curriculum meant to ease the student transition to college based on *Colleagues to Promote Theory* and to promote leadership skill development
 - During once-monthly one-on-one sessions, students receive individualized support
- Meeting with Students**
 - Sessions Aligned with First-Year Milestones
 - Mentors create a supportive, community-centered environment
 - During one-on-one sessions, mentors and students outline 3-5 holistic SMART goals and talk about other study concerns, like academics and social challenges
 - During leadership speaker series sessions, mentors lead group discussions where students apply and reflect on the leadership principles they have learned
- Training and Advancement**
 - Qualifies Trainees Aligned to Mentor Curriculum
 - Mentors receive free days of training before the academic advising process, like the role of the mentor and mentoring office
 - Weekly mentor training during the semester helps mentors grow in their role
 - Over the course of the year, mentors receive 12-23 total hours of training plus 10-23 hours of face-to-face mentoring
 - USN is working on becoming certified by the College Reading and Learning Association to enhance mentor training and provide a certification opportunity
- Mentor Recruitment**
 - Mentoring is a Competitive EL Opportunity
 - All second- through fourth-year USN students can apply to be a mentor by submitting an online application, resume, and letter of recommendation from a current USN mentor
 - Out of ~120 students who apply, 75-80 students are selected
 - After one year of mentoring, students can apply for a more advanced lead mentor role
- Mentor Benefit**
 - Mentor Skills Transferable to Career Readiness
 - Mentors are not paid, but they satisfy their ULN educational learning requirements
 - Mentors develop job-ready skills like leadership development, facilitating groups, conflict resolution, record keeping, and organization
 - Lead mentors lead mentoring groups called "mentor circles" that meet weekly for discussions, training, and reflection
 - All mentors receive performance reviews from professional USN staff

[Read more about the ULN Peer Mentoring program](#)

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Calendar and Curriculum

Curriculum Built Around Shared Experience

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Peer-to-Peer Support Profiles

Key Attributes of Innovative Peer Support Programs

Also Featured In This Resource

- Key Components of Successful Peer Support Programs
- Profile: Cohorted Mentoring
- Profile: Course-Embedded Mentoring
- Profile: Peer Success Coaching
- Profile: Peer Tutoring
- Additional Resources from Profiled Institutions

Graduation Rates on the Rise

360* Support Pays Off With Increase in Graduation Rates

www.eab.org/2017/04/04/360-support-pays-off-with-increase-in-graduation-rates/

- Results
- The first 1
- The first 1
- In Fall 20
- In Fall 20

Making Mentoring Work on Your Campus

Key Components of Successful Peer Support Programs

Through more than 50 research calls and an extensive literature review, EAB has identified key features that contribute to the success of peer support programs. Each of the programs highlighted in this guide demonstrates one or more of these features.

1 Program Scope

Status Quo: Mentoring Excluded From Core Student Success Initiatives

- Peer mentoring is relegated to niche programs geared towards traditionally at-risk students
- Students may experience stereotype threat when they find their group is being singled out
- Other students who could benefit from peer support lack built-in opportunities for guidance
- The sense to seek support is on students

Best Practice: All Students Receive Peer Support During College Adjustment

- **Early-Middle research** shows that student success initiatives should not be limited to traditionally at-risk students
- Integrating peers into core experiences for all students helps scale success initiatives and provides a sense of belonging
- Mentoring can be embedded in first-year seminars, majors, gateway courses, interest groups, etc.

2 Type of Support

Status Quo: Institution Relies Only on Professional Staff to Support New Students

- Time-strapped professional staff struggle to provide in-depth support to first-year students
- Students are upgraded for meetings with staff, on the bulk of staff time is spent on low-level, transactional support
- Staff face a trust barrier with students and struggle to develop the kind of relationship necessary to fully support the academic and social transition to college

Best Practice: Peers Support Both the Academic and Social Transition

- Peers support the academic and social transition to college while preparing students for in-depth support from professional staff
- Students receive peer support in a variety of settings to touch on an array of topics related to the college adjustment
- Peers bridge the trust barrier that is often present with faculty and professional staff

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Source: EAB, 2017. www.eab.org/2017/04/04/360-support-pays-off-with-increase-in-graduation-rates/.
 EAB's 360 Support Pays Off With Increase in Graduation Rates report is based on data from 2016 and 2017. The report is available at www.eab.org/2017/04/04/360-support-pays-off-with-increase-in-graduation-rates/.
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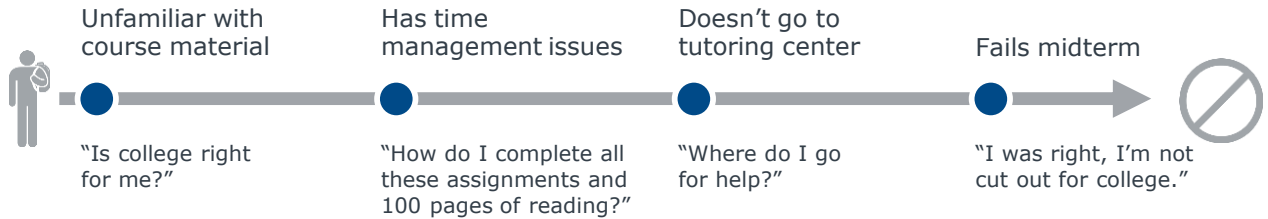
3

Make peer support a career-relevant experiential learning opportunity to boost program effectiveness and mentor engagement

A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

High-Stakes Challenges Compound Existing Concerns

Early Semester Obstacles Reinforce Student Fears About Belonging in College



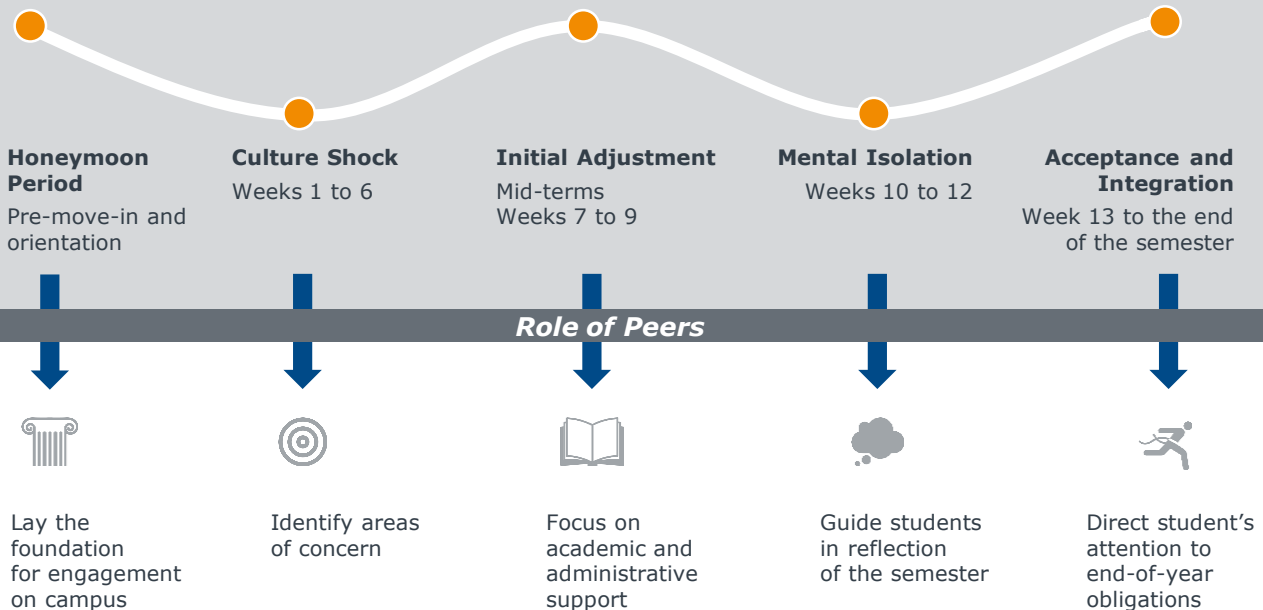
Harmful to All, but Worse for Those Already Experiencing Uncertainty and Distress

- Creates potential for stereotype threat to arise
- Reinforces uncertainty of ability to succeed
- Challenges college navigation skills during recovery
- Inspires doubts about relevance of education due to immediacy of financial needs

Understanding the Adjustment to College

Right-Time Support to Help Students Where They Are

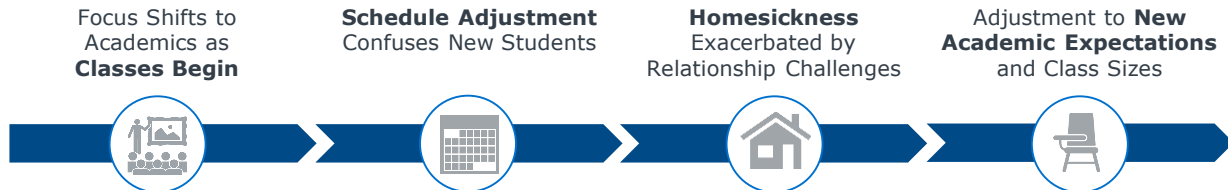
The W-Curve of Student Adjustment



A Look Into Culture Shock



Weeks 1 to 6



How should peers support students?

- Peers review syllabi and study expectations
- Students set long-term goals for college and beyond
- Mentors support semester planning based on exam dates and other deadlines
- Mentors review schedule adjustment and add/drop policies
- Peers review basic degree planning
- Mentors review basic administrative and financial policies
- Mentors discuss college adjustment and any early concerns
- Mentors share their own adjustment challenges
- Peers refer students to other relevant campus resources
- Mentors address new academic concerns
- Mentors discuss value exploration
- Mentors make time management and study skill suggestions

Goals for each milestone



Students understand how college academics will differ from high school experiences



Student confusion over new planning responsibilities is mitigated



Students learn that it is normal to struggle and are introduced to multiple means of support



Students learn how to overcome new academic challenges instead of letting them build

Peer-to-Peer Support Calendar and Curriculum

Align Peer Support to the Academic, Administrative, and Social Calendar

Also Featured In This Resource

- Phases of Student Adjustment
- Goal Setting Exercise
- Guide for Structuring a Mentoring Meeting
- Sample Lesson Plan from A Peer Mentoring Program

Peers Welcome Students Before Day One
 Provide Early Short-Term Support While Setting Expectation for Peer Guidance

As students
 a new year
 Peers are
 available
 connect
 During the
 guidance is
 formed, he

Honeymoon
 Pre-move-in

Excitement
 Students
 Meet

How should
 Peers reach
 students via
 media or sm
 Peers introd
 students to e
 and encoura
 group discus

Goals for stu
 Peers answer
 quell fears, an
 excitement.
 Students have
 face to turn
 day one.

Identify Long-Term Goals

Research suggests that setting specific, actionable goals and reflecting on how to meet them helps encourage goal attainment. Below, identify some academic and personal goals, as well as why they are important to you.

List three goals that you have for the next four years or beyond

- _____
- _____
- _____

Why have you chosen each of these three goals?

- _____
- _____
- _____

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Make peer support a career-relevant experiential learning opportunity to boost program effectiveness and mentor engagement

Scaling Peer Support and Experiential Learning

Make Peer Support a Career-Relevant Experiential Learning Opportunity



Pre-Semester Training

Students receive intensive structured training before the start of the semester



Mentoring the Mentor

Mentors are paired with a professional staff member to discuss cases and professional development



End-of-Semester Performance Review

Students get the feedback they need to continually improve



Ongoing Professional Development

Mentors regularly meet throughout the semester for additional training



Reflective Exercises

Through discussion groups and exercises, mentors reinforce the value of their experience

Professionalizing the Mentor Experience is a Win-Win

Mentors should...

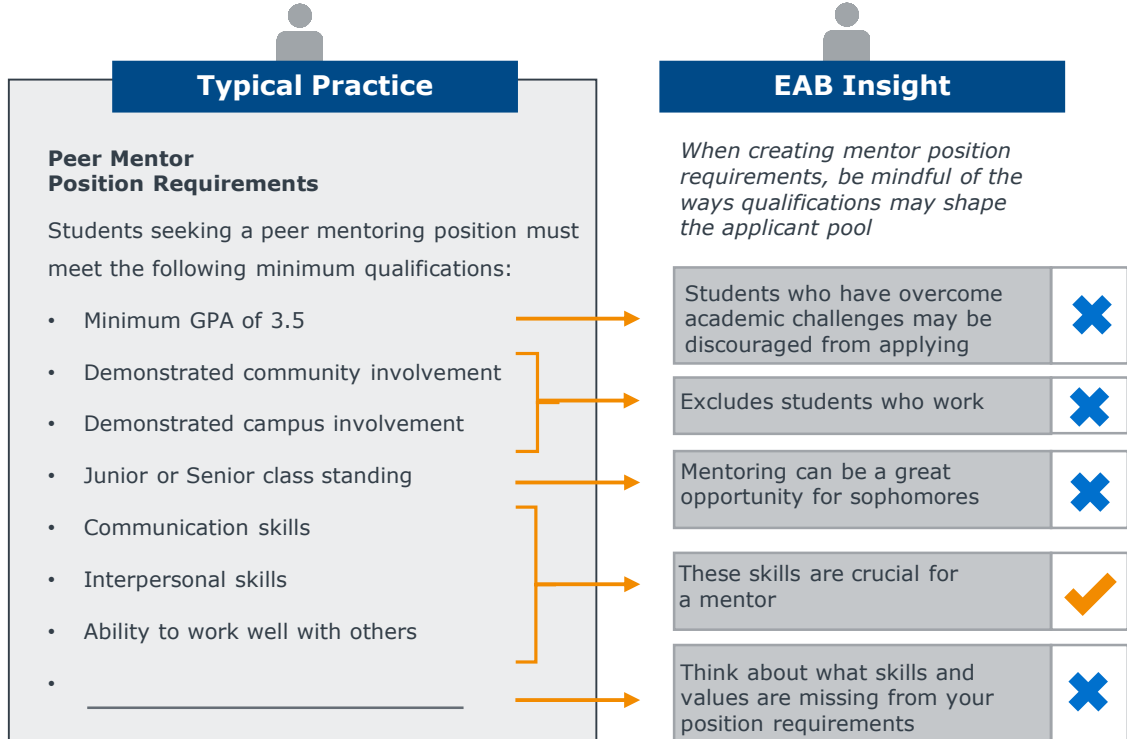
- Manage a caseload of students
- Be responsible for session documentation
- Understand the work of campus partners
- Lead skills workshops and study sessions

In order to...

- Gain experience managing workflow
- Develop a career-ready skill
- Save employee time
- Gain leadership skills

Beware the Implications of Mentor Qualifications

Status Quo Position Requirements May Exclude Great Leaders



Mentor Support Guide: Recruitment and Training



Optimizing Mentor Experience for the Duration of the Mentoring Lifecycle

Also Featured In This Resource

- Features that will Maximize the Mentor Experience
- Recruiting Guidelines
- Planning Exercise for Peer Training
- Resources from Institutions, including:
 - Training Schedule
 - Training Description
 - Confidentiality Statement
 - Rubric for Evaluating Mentors
 - Reflection Exercises
 - Mentoring Training Learning Outcomes

Planning Guide for Peer-to-Peer Support Training

Proper training is crucial to the success of peer support programs on campus. Incomplete training programs can lead to mentors overstepping the boundaries of their role or embarrassing students. While developing a robust training program is time-intensive, the results will pay time for professional staff throughout the year. Use this planning guide to help jumpstart the process of preparing for peer-to-peer support training.

What kind of peer support program are you looking to create?

Course-Embedded Peer Mentors	One-on-One Peer Mentors	Peer Success Coaches	Course Assistants and Tutors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Who will be the audience for this program?

EAB Insight Consider: The most innovative programs provide peer support broadly for new students. It is not necessary for every program to scale to all students, but each program should try to reach a broad audience. Individual peer support programs should be thought of as a subset of a peer support ecosystem.

What are the intended goals for the program that will dictate the scope of the mentor role?

EAB Insight Consider: Some institutions shared that their peer support programs struggle with mission-drift because specific goals were never established during the program design period. Identify concrete goals, and make sure to reflect back on goals during every stage of the design process.

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In the Peer-to-Peer Support Toolkit

- Peer Support Profiles
- Calendar and Curriculum Guide
- Recruitment, Training, and Mentor Support Guide
- ***Audit of Current Practices***

Peer-to-Peer Support Audit

Identify Areas of Improvement for Peer Support Programs



Core Elements of High-Performing Peer Support Programs

Training for the Role		
<p>Mentors receive minimal training that only covers basic program requirements and logistics <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Mentors receive interactive training that prepares them for the full range of experiences they will encounter <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Mentor training only prepares students to cover a rigid, scripted curriculum, not including the variety of student concerns they may face <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Training does not clarify the appropriate mentor-mentee relationship, leaving doubts about how to engage with mentees <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Training clearly defines the mentor role and relationship with mentees and mentors rarely overstep their mentoring boundaries <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Mentors are trained for a solely transactional role so mentors struggle to develop a relationship with their mentees <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Questions



If you have any additional questions, please type them into the zoom chat box.

We Hope You'll Join Us Next Time

Final Webconference in the Series



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[Four Strategies to Reinforce the Career-Education Connection](#)

Tuesday, August 13th 2019

12 PM ET – 1PM ET



Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis

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