Second-Year Seminar Peer Assistant Information

General Description

The pilot program of second-year seminars will incorporate Peer Assistants in the instruction and mentoring of students. As these seminars will serve as gateways into the discipline, the PA should be an undergraduate major in that discipline and should be in the third or fourth year at the UO. The PA will have a GPA of 3.2 or above and strong writing skills. The compensation will be $500 + benefits (excluding health).

Role of the Peer Assistant

The student should attend all of the class meetings, although s/he will not be enrolled in the course. Regular attendance and participation are necessary so that the Peer Assistant can serve as a model learner and peer educator in the classroom. By engaging in the material as the course progresses, PAs will be well prepared to demonstrate the practices and thinking of the discipline, as well as to hold regular study groups and to help the students with library research, etc. We also expect that the PA will have a pedagogical role in the classroom to the extent that the professor finds it appropriate and it fits into the subject matter. For example, some PAs may serve as co-moderators or discussion leaders. Unlike a GTF, however, the PA will not give grades or evaluate student performance. The PAs will be expected to work 4-6 hours per week. Out-of-class work may involve study groups, social gatherings, 1:1 meetings with students, email exchanges, etc.

Training of the Peer Advisor

The six PAs for fall and winter terms will take part in a half-day training session during the Week of Welcome in September. First-Year Programs staff will provide information concerning campus resources. Barbara Jenkins, Director of Instruction and Campus Partnerships, here will provide training on the virtual and physical resources of the library.

In addition to this general training, the PA should investigate and be prepared to tell students about the different resources within each department and what’s available to students majoring in the discipline. This information will be specific to each seminar and might involve such information as scholarships, internships, and preparation for graduate study in the field. Because it is subject specific, this information should come from the faculty member teaching the seminar and his/her department.