Peer Mentor Handbook

2015-2016

SUCCESS

RESPONSIBILITY • SUPPORT

Name:

_____

Learning Community:

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Additional materials available for download at **lc.wayne.edu**.

Acknowledgement

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What are Learning Communities?

Vision

To support Wayne State University's commitment to student learning, the Learning Community initiative seeks to enhance our undergraduates' experience by providing all interested students dynamic, focused communities in which students, staff, and faculty can learn and grow together.

> "Such communities can be organized along curricular lines, common career interests, avocational interests, residential living areas, and so on. These can be used to build a sense of group identity, cohesiveness, and uniqueness; to encourage community and the integration of diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences; and to counteract the isolation that many students feel."
>
> Astin, A. W., *Achieving Educational Excellence*
> San Francisco: Josey-Bass, p. 161, 1985

Background

Wayne State is part of the national movement in higher education to develop Learning Communities as a means to enhance student learning and success. The initiative was structured to incorporate principles that have been shown to be most effective (Shapiro, N. and Levine, J., *Creating Learning Communities*, San Francisco: Josey-Bass, p. 3, 1999):

- Organizing students and faculty into smaller groups
- Encouraging integration of curriculum
- Helping students establish academic and social support networks
- Providing a setting for students to be socialized to the expectations of college
- Bringing faculty together in more meaningful ways
- Focusing faculty and students on learning outcomes
- Providing a setting for community-based delivery of academic support programs
- Offering a critical lens for examining the first-year experience

Further, according to Shapiro and Levine, Learning Community models can be varied to meet specific needs and interests of students and faculty:

- **Curricular Structure**: How courses and students are organized to form communities
- **Faculty Role**: The levels of faculty development and ways that faculty collaborate to achieve curricular integration
- **Curricular Opportunities**: The ways that Learning Communities approach integrating students' in-class and out-of-class experiences
- **Opportunities for Peer Leadership**: Leadership roles in Learning Communities for community members or upper-division students

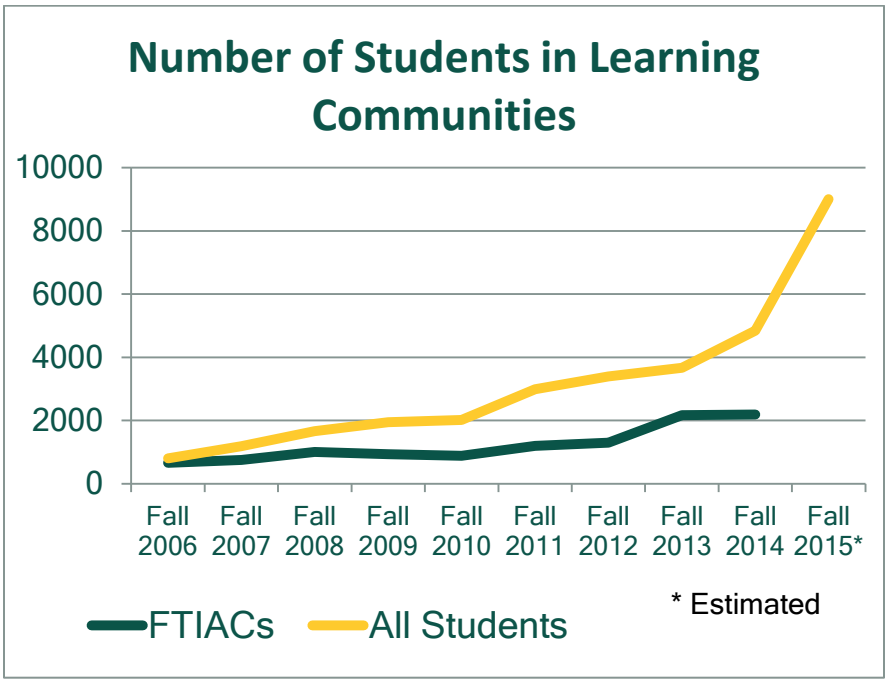
Our Program

The Learning Community program began in 2004 with the advent of Living Learning Communities (LLCs) in the newly-constructed residence halls. The program was a collaborative initiative of the Honors Program, the Office of Housing and Residential Life, the Dean of Students Office, and the schools and colleges. The idea was for students with similar academic and co-curricular interest to live in the residence halls and join thematic and academic communities that promote a heightened sense of commonality and encourage collaborative learning. LLCs were not limited to residential students - commuter students also were encouraged to participate.

In fall 2006, the notion of Learning Communities was broadened to include ***any academic program interested in using Learning Communities to enhance student learning and success, whether residential or not***. Further, the focus could be on first-year students or upper class students. Now the university takes a broad view of what constitutes a Learning Community, but all programs denoted as Learning Communities must address the following based on best practice:

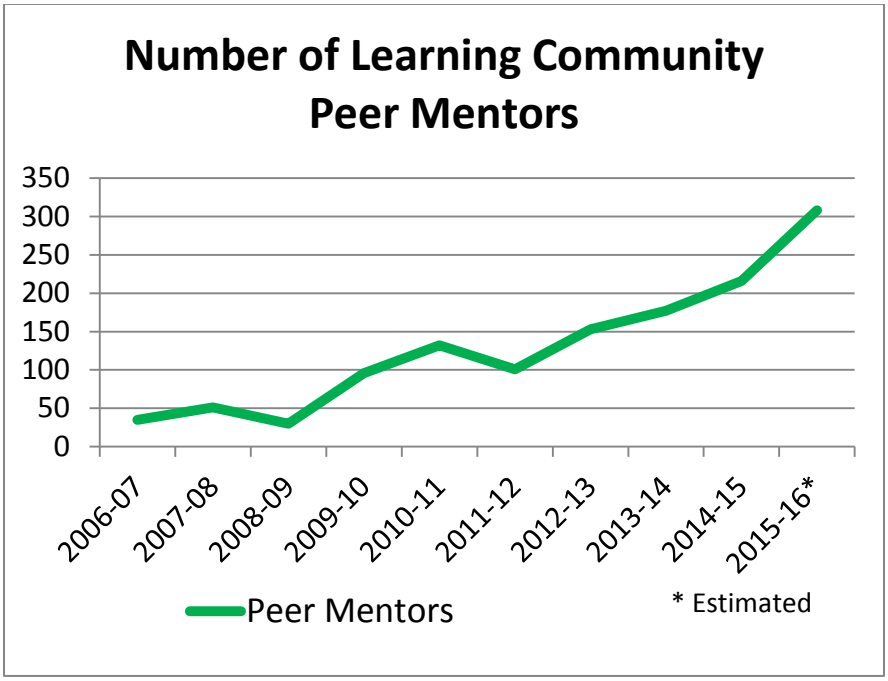
- Having clearly delineated academic *and* social goals
- Involving faculty and academic staff
- Having the support of the responsible administrative unit(s), including financial support in terms of staffing and direct cost-sharing of the programming budget.
- Having a well thought-out plan to assess the achievement of both the academic and social goals

The chart below shows the growth of Learning Communities and the increase in student participation as a result of the Learning Community initiatives started in 2006. For 2014-15, there were 44 different Learning Communities and according to our July 2015 records, 4,839 students participated.



Peer Mentor Component

Beginning in fall 2006, Peer Mentoring became an integrated part of the Learning Community program. Peer Mentors facilitate student learning in their programs, and special training sessions are held for them before the academic year begins and during the year. Research shows that peers play a crucial role in student success. As a result of introducing Peer Mentoring, student success rates among Learning Community participants have increased continually based on student retention (staying in school) and student achievement (grades, credits earned, etc.).



Learning Communities are
HIGH IMPACT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

According to Dr. George Kuh, certain kinds of college experiences provide superior learning opportunities for students. These experiences are called "High Impact Practices." They include Learning Communities, as well as other forms of learning such as undergraduate research and service learning. Success in college is much more than a grade point average or a degree – it is about learning. In fact, success is about achieving the level of preparation—in terms of knowledge, capabilities, and personal qualities—that will enable students to both thrive and contribute in a fast-changing economy and in turbulent, highly demanding global, societal, and often personal contexts.

High Impact Educational Experiences
First Year Seminars and Experiences
Common Intellectual Experiences
Learning Communities
Writing-Intensive Courses
Collaborative Assignments and Projects
Undergraduate Research
Diversity/Global Learning
Service/Community-Based Learning
Internships
Capstone Courses and Projects

George Kuh is the Director of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, Adjust Professor at the University of Illinois, and the Chancellor's Professor Emeritus at Indiana University, University of Illinois.

Learning Communities are especially effective at achieving these goals because we learn more when we learn together:

> *"More than anything else, being an educated person means being able to see connections that allow one to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways. Every one of the qualities I have described here—listening, reading, talking, writing, puzzle solving, truth seeking, seeing through other people's eyes, leading, working in a community—is finally about connecting."*
>
> [William Cronon, "Only Connect: The Goals of a Liberal Education," Liberal Education 85, no. 1 (1999): 12]

What makes these learning environments so effective? They deepen students' connection to the subject matter. Because they provide students with both independence and support, they are often deeply motivating for students. And they provide opportunities for students, faculty, and peer mentors to interact together.

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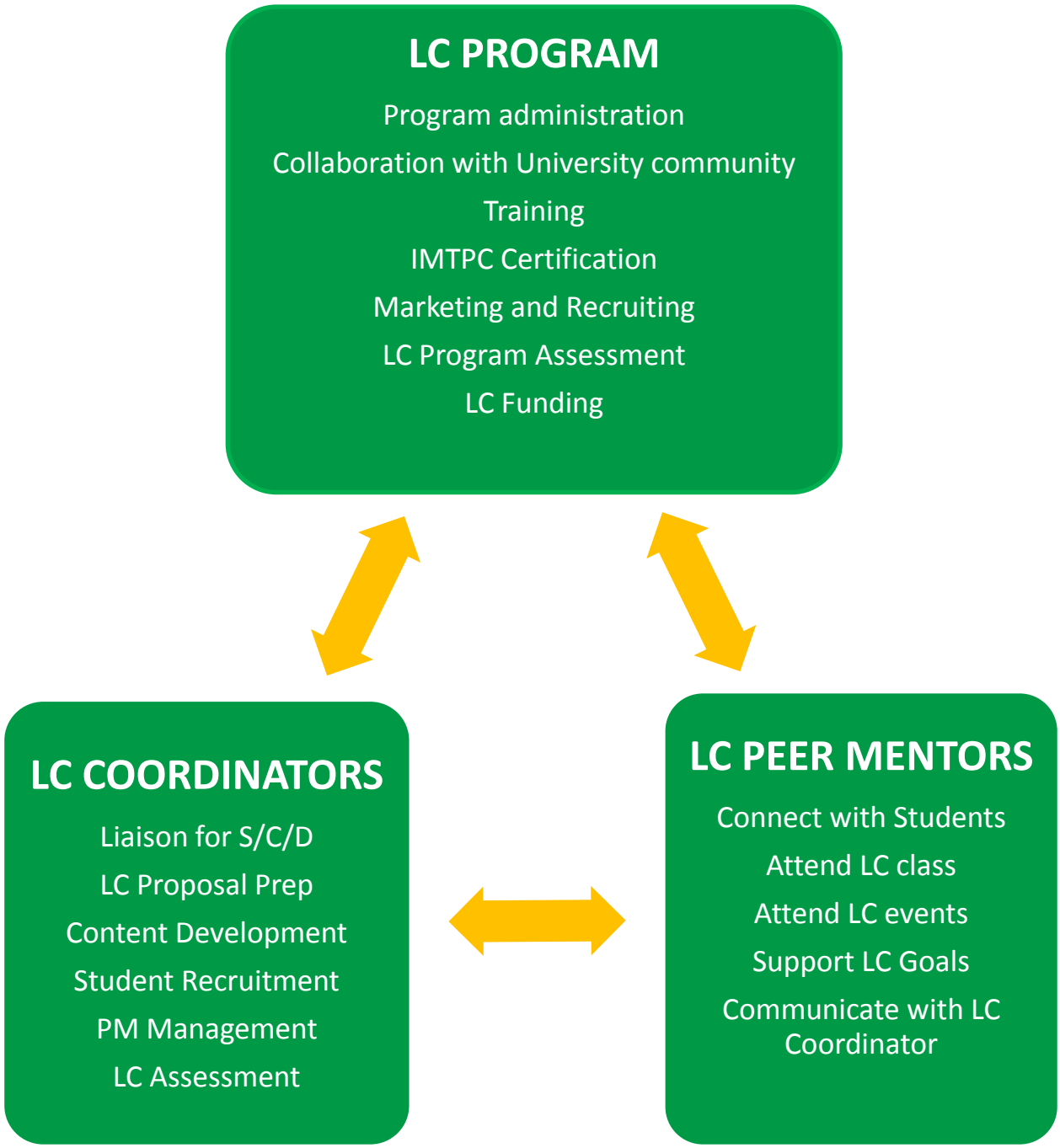
Here are eight characteristics of especially effective learning environments and how our Learning Communities specifically address them.

1. Performance expectations are at appropriately high levels.
    - Challenge is good for students – it interests and engages them – as long as the challenge is within reach. How can you, as peer mentor, encourage LC students to work hard to meet (or exceed) college-level expectations?
2. Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time.
    - Perhaps the LC might have a supplemental project that students work on together during the semester.
3. Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters.
    - How can you, as a peer mentor, help your students interact with faculty?
    - Are you open to deeper discussion about the subject matter? About being in college?
4. Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar.
    - A peer mentor might use icebreakers to help students get to know each other and the rich array of experiences and backgrounds among Learning Community members.
5. Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback.
    - Often LC peer mentors can provide feedback about students' learning more quickly than the instructor can.
6. Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning.
    - Reflecting on your own learning may make it easier to help students do so.
7. Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications.
    - Field trips, speakers, and many other LC activities can help make learning "real."
8. Public demonstration of competence.
    - LC sessions can be a great place for students to practice their class presentations, or to present and share learning even if they aren't asked to do so in class.

Roles and Responsibilities



Nuts and Bolts of Being a Peer Mentor

What to Expect from Supervisors

Working with your supervisor is key to your success as a Peer Mentor. Your supervisor will provide you with information about the program as well as expectations for your role. Listed below are some topics to discuss with your supervisor at the beginning of the semester. Some topics will be revisited regularly during your time as a mentor.

Program Goals/Outcomes

- What does your supervisor want you to accomplish in your role? (short term, semester, year)
- What should students gain from their participation in the program?
- How will your mentor responsibilities help students accomplish the program goals?

Expectations

- Do you have a copy of the job description?
- What are your supervisor's expectations of you?
- What are your expectations of your supervisor? What do you need from your supervisor in order to be effective?
- How will you know that you're being successful in your role? How and when will your supervisor provide you with feedback?

Providing Information

- Does your supervisor want you to keep track of the interactions you have with students? If so, how?
- Is there a form your supervisor would like you to use to report information?

Meetings

- What is the intent of the meetings?
- What information should you be prepared to share at the meetings?
- When and where will you regularly meet?
- If there is more than one mentor for the program, should mentors plan to meet outside of regularly scheduled group meetings with the supervisor?

Resources

- What resources does your supervisor have that you may need access to (this may include a budget, professionals in the field/contacts, etc.)?

The most important thing to do is talk with your supervisor about what you need and what you should expect from him/her so that you can be successful as a Peer Mentor.

Tracking Student Information

It is very important to keep records of the interactions you have with your mentees. You will need to keep careful notes, including:

- Who attended sessions and events?
- What issues do individual students face that need attention of your supervisor?
- What general issues are you identifying that might need to be addressed?
- What ideas do you have to improve student learning and how your Learning Community is meeting its student learning outcome goals?

An easy way of remembering your interactions with your students is by writing them down. You don't need to record every interaction, as some interactions will be social, but when students come to you to discuss problems they're dealing with or something pertaining to your mentor role/relationship with them, it's a good idea to keep a record. There are many ways that this can be done; ask your supervisor about his/her expectations of tracking information or feel free to do whatever works best for you.

It is important to remember that, whichever way you choose to record interactions with your students, it must be kept confidential and put away so that only you have access to it. Check with your supervisor about what information he/she wants you to track.

Skills of Effective Mentors

Peer Mentors are **THE KEY** to a Learning Community's success! You are the liaison between the students in your Learning Community and the faculty and staff who run it. You provide support, guidance and connection for all of your Learning Community students. The LC coordinators look to you for feedback and will work with you to make your LC the best it can be.

Mentors must develop a variety of skills in order to perform and serve their students effectively. In most cases you will deal with issues related to academics, but as your relationship grows with your students, they may come to you with issues of a more personal nature – these issues will often have an impact on their success as a student. The most important thing to remember in any situation is that you're not a counselor. Know your limits – sometimes the best way you can help others is by referring them to someone else with more experience.

Keys to Success

- Listening
- Asking open-ended questions
- Attending and responding to both content and feeling
- Letting the student solve the problem
- Referring to the experienced and using your resources

Listening – fully participate in a conversation by being an *active listener* and utilizing some simple counseling skills such as reflecting, encouraging, and asking questions. Be aware of how your body language can affect communication.

Asking open-ended questions - Any question that elicits a "yes/no" answer won't be as helpful as a "what, when, how, who" question. "Why" questions may seem like they would get more information, but keep in mind that they can sometimes imply criticism and cause defensiveness (i.e., "Well, why didn't you go to all the study sessions?"). It is better to ask "What benefits do you see in attending all the study sessions?"

Attending and responding to both content and feeling - Often there are two things going on at once – there is an issue, and the person has some kind of feeling or reaction to that issue. You need to attend and respond to both. Consider this: "I'm so mad about my Chem. test!" What is the content? (performance on the Chem. test) What is the feeling? (anger) It's important to attend to both. You might say "I can tell that you are angry about your performance on the chemistry test. I remember my own feelings when I had a test that seemed unfair. Let's talk about how you can approach your next test." Remember that issues presented to you could have some underlying themes and might even be symptoms of a larger problem.

Letting the student solve the problem - It's easy to want to try to solve things for people, but that's not as helpful as it might seem. Usually, the student knows the answer or knows how to solve the problem but just needs someone to ask the right questions and encourage the right processing. By facilitating your students to solve their own problems, you are actually giving them skills they can use in future situations. Often, the best answer is to ask the right question.

Referring to/using your resources - You are not a trained counselor. Don't expect yourself to be. But know your resources (your Learning Community Coordinator, Dean of Students Office, etc.) and help people make use of those individuals and services. It's OK to say, "I don't know" as long as you get the information for the person. If you feel a student needs to be referred for additional help or counseling, let your coordinator know immediately. Appendix A includes a full list of Wayne State resources.

A NOTE ABOUT **Self-disclosure** – Try not to reinforce student stereotypes or negative perceptions. If you say things like "I was in that situation, too, and it sucked and no one helped me and blah, blah, blah," you aren't providing viable problem-solving alternatives. Instead, say something like "I was in a similar situation and I did this, which helped." This sort of self-disclosure is honest and helps your students to take responsibility for their own success.

Standards of Behavior for Peer Mentors

As a Peer Mentor, you have big responsibilities. You must always **stay professional** and **be a positive role model** in terms of integrity and ethical behavior. You also must **maintain appropriate boundaries** with those you mentor. You are not their friend, you are their Peer Mentor. Your relationship is always professional. That also requires also keeping information you learn about individual students *confidential*.

Confidentiality

The relationship between a mentor and his/her students is based on developing an open and caring *relationship* based on *trust*. As a Peer Mentor you will work with students who are often new to the idea of opening up to anyone. The importance of confidentiality and maintenance of trust is the basis for the development of the relationship.

Information shared between a mentor and student cannot always be confidential. In some specific instances, maintaining that bond of trust means that you need to share information with others. If a student discusses a situation that could result in self-harm or harm to others, it is your responsibility to report that information immediately to the appropriate persons (Learning Community Coordinator, Advisor, etc.). If the student has a condition that is beyond your ability to assist with (serious neurosis, alcohol/drug problems, or depression), it is in the student's best interest that you share that information as well.

The primary people with whom you should share specific information about an individual student are the staff and faculty who supervise your Learning Community. They are the first people you must contact. If there is the need for further intervention, and your supervisor passes the information along to relevant professional staff, you may be asked to discuss the situation. That is appropriate as long as it is done in a professional manner.

If you are contacted by a student's parent or guardian, refer them to your supervisor. There are strict guidelines that govern the sharing of student information, and your supervisor is trained to follow the laws for disclosure.

When you are "off duty," do not discuss confidential information about your mentees with your family, significant others, friends, or roommates. They do not have a right to know, and you do not have a right to disclose confidential information to them.

Integrity

Integrity is the foundation for a solid and productive relationship with the mentees and with the respective Learning Community staff. A Peer Mentor must display a consistent and positive self-concept including strong values and a respect for the policies and procedures of the Learning Community.

A Peer Mentor must:

- Be vigilant of his/her role as a representative of the Learning Community.
- Be vigilant of his/her role as a representative of Wayne State University.
- Exhibit a level of professionalism while still maintaining a peer relationship with mentee.

Standards of integrity extend to developing relationships with students and Learning Community staff, and to the manner by which the mentor relates and reports to the staff.

It is imperative that:

- Any documentation of hours worked and time spent participating in Learning Community activities is reported accurately and in the best interest of the mentee and the University.
- Student mentors track their own time and report it as required.
- Mentors understand the importance of following the guidelines and maintaining the standards that the Learning Community seeks in its mentors.

Ethical Standards

As you perform your duties as a Peer Mentor, it is critical to understand and practice ethical behaviors. You were selected for this position because you possess the ability to establish strong rapport with students. The interpersonal skills that made you a prime candidate for the position also can place you in challenging situations. As you serve in your role, it is important to adhere to some guiding principles of the helping profession.

(Excerpted from *Students Helping Students*, Ender, S. and Newton, F., 2000, Jossey-Bass Publishers)

- Peer Mentors will have knowledge and act consistently with the standards that are appropriate to the agency in which they are employed.
- Peer Mentors will avoid acting beyond the scope of the service for which they were selected and trained and not attempt to offer professional services requiring more extensive qualifications and training.
- Consult with your supervisor when you face a situation that makes you uncomfortable or when you experience a conflict or dilemma.
- Act appropriately when working with persons you are attracted to. Establishing intimate or strongly personal relationships with your mentees is not appropriate and compromises your helping role.
- Remember that as a mentor you are a role model. You are obligated to maintain congruence between what you say to fellow students in your role and how you act in other facets of your life where you can be seen (or heard).
- Avoid over-familiarity with mentees by maintaining a degree of professional distance.

Issues and Challenges for Peer Mentors

Students in Wayne State University Learning Communities range from incoming freshman to doctoral students. The challenges that students face evolve as they progress through different stages of their educational experience. Even so, many of the issues students face in adapting to new learning situations, developing their skills as learners, relating to others in the educational setting, and the like, have common aspects.

Peer Mentors play a crucial role in student success, and that comes with a number of challenges as well. Many students need to adjust to college expectations, develop study skills, and become more motivated as learners. That makes the Peer Mentor job even harder.

Issues for Students

When assisting students with these issues, be sure that you utilize the resources available to you. Sometimes the most important pieces of information you can provide are the names/locations of others who are trained to assist students with these concerns.

Talk with your Learning Community coordinator about addressing issues such as these as well as other concerns you may encounter.

Academic issues

- Speaking up in class
- Communicating with professors
- Developing semester course schedules
- Seeking academic assistance when problems arise
- Balancing academics and social life
- Choosing or changing a major or minor
- Deciding on participation in internships, service learning, undergraduate research, or other similar opportunities

Interpersonal issues

- Connecting with a new friendship group
- Meeting new people (peers, mentors, professors, etc.)
- Managing conflict situations
- Learning to contribute effectively in groups
- Living with a roommate
- Facing new peer pressures (sex, drugs, alcohol, etc.)
- Dealing with personal relationships

Personal issues

- Moving to a new environment
- Leaving family/moving away from home
- Learning how to show emotions in appropriate ways
- Making personal decisions everyday

Transfer Students

Some of you will have the opportunity to work with transfer students. While transfer students are "new" to the university, they are not "new" to college. However, they may have some similar issues as first-year students in terms of transitioning to a new environment. Such issues as becoming familiar with Detroit and the Wayne State University campus, as well as adjusting to large classes may be challenges they face. In addition, many of their peers already have established their "friend groups." Finding where they fit may be something you'll discuss with them.

Challenges You May Encounter as a Mentor

There is no "standard" method to use to address the challenges you may encounter. Be sure to talk with your supervisor about challenges that you're facing in your Peer Mentor role. Other Peer Mentors also may be helpful to you as you address different issues. There are many resources available to assist you. Be sure to use them!

Motivation/encouragement challenges

- Getting students excited about school/activities
- Low participation at Learning Community events
- Trying to appease everyone
- Dealing with apathy
- Students not meeting expectations

Role perception challenges

- Not being viewed as a peer
- Not being seen as an authority figure
- Students expecting you to solve their problems

Personal challenges

- Giving advice without personal morals/values getting in the way
- Dealing with roommate issues
- Confrontation/assertiveness issues

Interpersonal challenges

- Programming/activities
- Breaking the ice
- Being inclusive
- Getting everyone involved

Addressing questions

- Helping others understand their major
- Not being able to answer certain questions
- Not giving too much advice but empowering the student
- Reaching out to those who need assistance but won't ask for it

Learning in Community
How to Get to Know Your Students

Ice-breakers, energizers, and team builders are a great way to start off any meeting in order to set the tone for the duration of the gathering. They allow participants to feel integrated within a group, break up already formed groups/cliques, and unify all individuals by participating in an activity that has a shared goal for the entire group.

Conversation Starter Ideas

As a mentor, you should be in constant communication with the students with whom you are working. Many times you will have specific reasons to approach them in conversation. Other times, you may need a "starter", especially if the student is shy and not likely to approach you.

The following are some ideas to use to start up conversations with students in your community:

- The most basic…introduce yourself as the Peer Mentor and let the student know what your role is and how you'll be available to them throughout the year.
- Ask about the classes they are taking, how they're going, etc. If you have a similar major, ask about their instructors – maybe you've had some of the same ones.
- See if they've gotten involved in any groups on campus. Learn about their interests so you can continue to ask them questions or pass on information related to the subjects they like.
- Take information you've heard from others (maybe about where a person is from or activities they enjoy) and talk to them about it – "I heard that you played basketball in high school. Have you heard about WSU's intramural program?" or "Someone told me you were from Chicago. I am too – what area are you from?"

Establishing Effective Study Groups

A large part of your job as a mentor is to maintain an environment that encourages academic success. The students involved in your Learning Community are in a wonderful situation where they can take advantage of the common academic goals of their peers. A great way to encourage the daily integration of academics into the lives of your students is by encouraging them to study together on a regular basis. The following is just a short list of the positive effects of study groups.

Study groups…

- Provide an opportunity for peers to teach each other by reinforcing and clarifying learning.
- Make learning more interesting and fun by providing a type of support group.
- Help students feel more comfortable with material so they can discuss it in the classroom environment.
- Motivate students to study because the success of the group depends on the participation of all members.

Things you can do as a mentor to help establish study groups:

- Create sign-up sheets that correspond to the classes you know your students are taking.
- Provide tips on how to study effectively – staying on subject, having an agenda, setting a start and stop time, etc. Check out the Academic Success Center for more ideas.
- Manage your resources to set study hours in a quiet location.

Why is Diversity Important?

- It gives students the opportunity to understand and accept people's differences.
- Decreased cultural prejudice and discrimination
- Development of creativity and critical thinking skills
- Improved cultural understanding and tolerance
- Preparation for challenges of the global society
- Stronger connection to the campus community

ASK (Joe Wittmer, author of *Valuing Diversity and Similarity*)

Awareness of self and others
Sensitivity through communication skills
Knowledge of cultural differences

Definitions

Culture: Refers to a set of values, behaviors, knowledge, attitudes, and habits shared by a group of people.

Ethnicity: refers to your association with a particular group based on race, nationality, tribe, religion, or language.

Biases: strong inclinations toward particular perspectives or opinions

Prejudice: is an adverse opinion formed without sufficient knowledge about a person or group of people

Ethnocentrism: the belief that your culture is superior to other cultures

Culture norms: your culture's standard of thinking, feeling and doing, which you consider "normal"

Assumed similarity: the assumption that most people are like you or want to be like you

Tolerance: the acceptance of people whose cultural beliefs are different than your own

Multiculturalism: the idea that people should preserve their cultures, allow different cultures to peacefully exist together, and encourage learning about different cultures.

Empathy: the ability to identify with and understand another's situation, feelings, and motives.

Stereotype: A commonly accepted generalization that is applied to, but does not accurately represent, individuals within the group

Stereotype Threat: students who face stereotype threat cannot escape negative stereotypes associated with their race or ethnic group; these stereotypes have become part of their social identity, and these students tend to perform poorly because expectations of themselves have been influenced by predominant stereotypes

Creating Inclusion

An inclusive environment is one in which members feel respected by, and connected to, one another and where members contribute to the formation of the group goals and to the realization of those goals. Inclusivity moves us away from simply the physical integration of people to the integration of a person's experiences, knowledge, and perspectives.

Opportunity to learn about ourselves and others. Opposing perspectives give us the opportunity to evaluate and more full understand our own opinions, perspectives and values. We also benefit by hearing multiple perspectives and learning about others' experiences to help us understand the world around us.

Increased satisfaction and retention of members. When group members feel respected by, and connected to, other members of the group, there is increased satisfaction in the group experience and greater retention of members. Each of us can probably think of a time when we did not feel included and how this impacted our interest in being part of the group.

Access to greater human resources and skills. In addition to retention, members who feel included are more likely to contribute their ideas, effort and time to the success of the group. When this happens, we all benefit.

Opportunity for synergy. When new ideas are encouraged and multiple perspectives are brought to the table, the result can be far greater than the sum of the parts. A creative energy is unleashed.

Downloaded from: www.leadershape.org

Suggestions for Programming/Activities

Identifying program activities/getting feedback

A good way to find out how things are going in your community is to ASK the people who are participating in it. This can be done in a number of ways.

- **Brainstorming**: ask students about their goals for the year and what kinds of activities they would like to see made available – both social and educational. Write down the ideas they give you. When you're looking for something to plan, go to that list. People like knowing that their comments matter.
- **Survey/Assess**: after an event, hand out a short survey asking what the participants thought about it – if the content was good, what they learned, what could've been done better, what was done really well, etc. You also can ask for verbal responses. Be sure to take these comments into consideration for future planning. Again, don't forget to use your resources (like your Learning Community Coordinator) to help you assess and evaluate your new data.
- **Talk with other mentors**: get together with other mentors and see what programs/activities they have tried, what has worked and what hasn't worked. Remember to take into consideration your Learning Community differences that might affect the outcome of a particular program.

Program planning checklist

As a mentor, there will be times when you need to plan programs and activities for your Learning Community. These may be educational/academic or social in nature. Ideas include:

Educational/Academic

- Bringing in guest speakers
- Organizing study groups
- Taking tours of companies/organizations related to the Learning Community major/theme
- Attending lectures on campus
- Portfolio and resume workshops
- Campus group presentations: Fitness Center, Writing Center, Academic Success Center, etc.
- Community service opportunities

Social

- Going out to dinner or dessert
- Hosting a pizza party or potluck
- Going bowling
- Throwing a "movie night"
- Birthday parties
- Putting together an intramural team
- Going to a WSU athletic game
- Attending a local festival
- Visiting a local museum or other cultural exhibit

Some things to take into consideration when planning include:

- What type of program/activity do I want to offer (social, educational, etc.)?
- Where will this program be/what facilities are available?
- What resources do I need to carry out this program? Do I need specific equipment and where can I obtain it if needed?
- What dates are possibilities for this program – how can I maximize attendance and avoid conflicts?
- Are there any costs involved in this program? Will I need monetary support?
- Do I need approval for this program?
- Does this program comply with university policies regulating activities?

Reserving meeting space on campus

At different times during the year you might find it useful to reserve meeting or activity space on campus. Reserve a room by calling the Dean of Students Office (DOSO) at 313-577-1010.

Handouts

men·tor

Noun: An adviser.

Verb: To advise or train (someone).

A mentor is an experienced person who provides information, advice, support, and encouragement to a less experienced person, often leading and guiding by example of his/her success in an area.

Advice from past Peer Mentors:

- I wish I had been honest about how much I know (or don't know)
- I should have asked for help (no question is stupid)
- You are here for yourself, not to impress anyone in class, etc.
- Take more initiative, establish rapport with professor
- I wish I had managed my time better
- How you approach studying is as equally important as the content
- Motivate others to work hard, realize motivations
- Be proactive; it's easier to get things done ahead of time
- Ask for (and provide) honest feedback to help you move forward
- Give students tools to solve problems, make decisions, learn the value of working through issues for themselves
- Create a trusting relationship between mentor and student, build rapport
- Follow up quickly (shows that you care, that you are organized, that they are a priority of yours)
- Consistency is important
- Get a calendar, budget your time
- You are a role model; model successful strategies
- Offer encouragement; YOU CAN overcome and persevere
- Use technology to reach out to students (FB page, Skype, etc.) to feel connected
- Pay attention to find out what is important to students, build connections

Becoming an Active Listener

There are five key elements of active listening. They all help you ensure that you hear the other person, and that the other person knows you are listening to what they say.

1. Pay attention.
Give the speaker your undivided attention, and acknowledge the message. Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.

- Look at the speaker directly.
- Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors.
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
- Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

2. Show that you are listening.
Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.

- Nod occasionally.
- Smile and use other facial expressions.
- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes and uh huh.

3. Provide feedback.
Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.

- Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is" and "Sounds like you are saying" are great ways to reflect back.
- Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say", "Is this what you mean?"
- Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.

***Tip:** If you find yourself responding emotionally to what someone said, say so, and ask for more information: "I may not be understanding you correctly, and I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XXX; is that what you meant?"*

4. Defer judgment.
Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.

- Allow the speaker to finish.
- Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

5. Respond Appropriately.
Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.

- Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Treat the other person as s/he would want to be treated.

Reference: **www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/ActiveListening.htm**

The 3 Things All Humans Crave--And How To Motivate Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere

As you probably know, once we have food and shelter, but before we can seek self-actualization—the Smart State—we must feel safety, belonging and mattering. Without these three essential keys a person cannot get in their Smart State—they cannot perform, innovate, feel emotionally engaged, agree, move forward.

Image Credit: Christine Comaford Associates LLC 2013

What You Crave

Safety, belonging, and mattering are essential to your brain and your ability to perform at work, at home, and in life overall. The greater the feeling of safety, both emotional and physical so we can take risks, the greater the feeling of connection with others, or the feeling that we're in this together and we belong together. The greater the feeling that we personally matter and make a difference and are contributing to the greater good, then the greater the success of the company, the relationship, the family, the team, the individual.

In every communication, in every conflict, we are subconsciously either reinforcing *or begging* for safety, belonging, mattering or a combination.

It's neurological… it's primal… there is nothing you can do to override or change this subterranean subconscious programming as much as you may try.

Safety means creating an environment where we can take risks and stretch and grow. Is it safe to take risks with your group?

Belonging means creating an environment where we all feel like a tight-knit tribe, we're all equal and we're rowing in the same direction to reach our goals. Think about gangs—where people will literally kill to stay in the tribe. That's how powerful this stuff is.

Mattering means each of us contributes individually in a unique way. We all make a difference. We're appreciated and publicly acknowledged. Does your group culture work this way?

As a leader, and as a human, you must identify whether it is safety and or belonging and or mattering that is most important to the people in your life… and then do *everything* you can to satisfy that subterranean subconscious need.

Safety + belonging + mattering = TRUST.

Christine Comaford is a global thought leader on corporate culture and performance optimization. She uses the latest neuroscience techniques to help leaders and teams create reliable revenue, deep emotional engagement, and profitable growth. Comaford, C. Smart Tribes: how teams become brilliant together. 2013 Portfolio Publishing. ***www.SmartTribesBook.com****.*

This means leaders must behave in ways that make group members feel that they are safe, that they belong, and that they matter. Doing so will help shift them out of their fear-driven Critter State (where all decisions are based on what they perceive will help them survive) and into their Smart State (where they can innovate, collaborate, feel emotionally engaged, and move the group forward).

At our emotional core, we *all* want safety, belonging and mattering. To influence anyone, we must influence emotionally.

The art (and science) of influence is more complex than can be fully explained here. However, I can share a few insights that may help you better open people up to their Smart State.

How to Get It

How do you boost the experience of safety, belonging, mattering within your group? Deliver safety, belonging, mattering through your behavior and communication. Here are behavior examples:

- Engaging Mission, Vision, Values – draws people together for a greater cause, helps us see where we're headed together, sets our "code of conduct" as a tribe
- Individual Development Plans – shows how we matter and belong here, how our company sees us as a long term investment (we're safe)
- Cultural Rituals: Rock Star, High Fives, Shout Outs, Public Appreciation – reinforces mattering and tribal customs (safety, belonging)
- Transparency: Accountability Structures, Open Communication, Fairness – we're safe, belong, matter since we know where the performance "bar" is and how to jump over it

Here are communication examples. These are especially helpful when a person is in their Critter State and we want to help them feel safe enough to shift out of it. For this we use three influencing phrases:

1. "What if"**:** When you use this preface to an idea/suggestion, you remove ego and reduce emotion. You're curious—not forcing a position, but scratching your head and pondering. This enables someone to brainstorm more easily with you.

2. "I need your help**":** We call this a dom-sub swap, because when the dominant person uses it, they are enrolling the subordinate person and asking them to rise up and swap roles. This is an especially effective phrase when you want a person to change their behavior or take on more responsibility.

3. "Would it be helpful if"**:** When someone is stuck in their Critter State and spinning or unable to move forward, offering up a solution will help them see a possible course of action or positive outcome.

Do you see how all three reinforce safety, belonging, mattering?

Every group member can be happier and more effective if you simply identify which of these three needs are programmed into their subconscious so powerfully that they literally crave them. Which do you crave? Which do the most important people in your life crave?

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Issues and Challenges/Scenarios

You notice that one of your mentees has been acting differently lately. He has been isolating from the group and alienating himself by saying hostile things to his peers. He's been very sarcastic with you lately and seems disinterested in being part of the mentoring process. You decide to talk to him about the situation. What do you say? How do you handle things from there?

Your mentee complains that she is struggling horribly with Calculus class and that the professor is a terrible teacher and half the class is failing and that the teacher is not competent. How do you respond?

Your LC students are supposed to communicate with you at least once a week, and attend one LC event per month. 5 of your 15 LC students are not participating. How do you reach out to them and get them to start participating?

You are out at a local club having a great time. You have been really stressed out lately, working really hard to meet all of your obligations and you need to blow off some steam. You look over and see some of your mentees. You realize that you're supposed to serve as a role model for them, you're pretty drunk. How do you handle the situation? What do you say to them the next day when you see them?

It is the middle of the semester. You and all of your mentees are really stressed out. Everyone has been working hard, and you know how weighed down they are by all of their commitments. In fact, almost everyone you know has a cold, including you. You notice that everyone seems out of balance. How do you help refocus your mentees to get motivated and prevent them from blowing their term academically?

Appendices

Academic Programs – WSU Schools and Colleges	Building Address	Dean's Office	Website	Dean's Office Phone Number
School of Business	5201 Cass Avenue	226 Prentis Building	business.wayne.edu	313-577-4501
College of Education	5425 Gullen Mall	441 Education Building	coe.wayne.edu	313-577-1620
College of Engineering	5050 Anthony Wayne Drive	1150 Engineering Building	engineering.wayne.edu	313-577-3780
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts (CFPCA)	5104 Gullen Mall	The Linsell House	www.cfpca.wayne.edu	313-577-5342
Graduate School	5057 Woodward	Suite 6305	wayne.edu/gradschool	313-577-2170
Irvin D. Reid Honors College	5155 Gullen Mall	2100 Undergraduate Library	honors.wayne.edu	313-577-3030
Law School	471 W. Palmer	3315 Law School	law.wayne.edu	313-577-3933
College of Liberal Arts and Science (CLAS)	4841 Cass Avenue	2155 Old Main	clas.wayne.edu	313-577-2515
School of Medicine	540 E Canfield	1241 Scott Hall	med.wayne.edu	313-577-1335
College of Nursing	5557 Cass Avenue	112 Cohn Building	nursing.wayne.edu	313-577-4070
Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (EACPHS)	259 Mack Avenue	2620 EACPHS	cphs.wayne.edu	313-577-1716
School of Social Work	4756 Cass Avenue	200 Thompson Home	socialwork.wayne.edu	313-577-4409
School of Library and Information Science	5265 Gullen Mall	3100 Undergraduate Library	slis.wayne.edu	313-577-1825

Academic Resources	Building Address	Office/Suite	Website	Office Phone Number
Academic Success Center (ASC) Study Skills Counseling Supplemental Instruction Tutoring and Workshops	5155 Gullen Mall	1600 Undergraduate Library (UGL)	success.wayne.edu	313-577-3165
Advising (University Advising Center - UAC) for exploratory and pre-professional students	5155 Gullen Mall	1600 Undergraduate Library (UGL)	advising.wayne.edu	313-577-2680
Bulletin (Undergraduate and Graduate)	5057 Woodward	Suite 5121	bulletins.wayne.edu	313-577-2028
Foreign Language Technology Center	906 West Warren	385 Manoogian Hall	langlab.wayne.edu	313-577-3022

Learning Communities learningcommunities@wayne.edu	656 W. Kirby	4009 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	lc.wayne.edu	313-577-2254
Libraries: Law Library - Neef	474 Gilmour Mall	Law Library	www.lib.wayne.edu/neef	313-577-3925
Medical Library - Shiffman	320 E. Canfield St.	Mazurek Medical Education Commons	www.lib.wayne.edu/shiffman	313-577-1088
Purdy-Kresge Library - P/K	5265 Cass Aveune	Purdy-Kresge Library	www.lib.wayne.edu/pk	313-577-4042
Undergraduate Library - UGL	5155 Gullen Mall	Undergraduate Library	www.lib.wayne.edu/ugl	313-577-5121
Math Resource Center	656 W. Kirby	1198 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	clasweb.clas.wayne.edu/math/mrc	313-577-3195
Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)	42 W. Warren	416 Welcome Center	oiss.wayne.edu	313-577-3422
Ombudsperson	5221 Gullen Mall	798 Student Center Building	wayne.edu/ombuds	313-577-3487
Office of the Provost	656 W. Kirby	4092 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	provost.wayne.edu	313-577-2200
Pre-Med and Health Science Center	5155 Gullen Mall	1600 UGL	Wayne.edu/advising/prehealth	313-577-2680
Registrar - Records and Registration: Schedule of Classes STARS for Degree Audit Transfer Credit	5057 Woodward	Suite 4000	reg.wayne.edu classschedule.wayne.edu stars.wayne.edu transfercredit.wayne.edu	313-577-3550
Student Disability Services (SDS)	5155 Gullen Mall	1600 Undergraduate Library (UGL)	studentdisability.wayne.edu	313-577-1851 videophone: 313-202-4216
Study Abroad and Global Programs	906 West Warren	131 Manoogian Hall	studyabroad.wayne.edu	313-577-3207
Technology Resource Center Blackboard Office for Teaching and Learning	5265 Cass Avenue	First floor, Purdy-Kresge Library	trc.wayne.edu blackboard.wayne.edu otl.wayne.edu	313-577-1980
Testing, Evaluation and Research Services	5221 Gullen Mall	686 Student Center Building	testing.wayne.edu	313-577-3400
Undergraduate Affairs Academic Policies General Education	656 W. Kirby	4092 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	undergrad.wayne.edu	313-577-2200
Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)	656 W. Kirby	4007 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	urop.wayne.edu	313-577-9226
Writing Research and Technology Zone	5155 Gullen Mall	2310 Undergraduate Library	clas.wayne.edu/writing	313-577-2544

Other Student Resources				
Admissions (Undergraduate)	42 W. Warren	First floor, Welcome Center	wayne.edu/admissions/undergrad	313-577-2100
Scholarships	42 W. Warren	First floor, Welcome Center	wayne.edu/scholarships	313-577-2100
Athletics	5101 John C. Lodge Service Dr	101 Matthaei Athletics Complex	wsuathletics.com	313-577-4280
Bookstore – Wayne State Bookstore	82 West Warren Avenue		wayne.bncollege.com	313-577-2436
Bursar, Office of the - Fiscal Operations	42 W. Warren	401 Welcome Center	fisops.wayne.edu/bursar	313-577-3653
Cashier's Office	42 W. Warren	217 Welcome Center	fisops.wayne.edu/bursar/ cashier	313-577-3650
Student Accounts Receivable (loans, refunds, e-bills)	42 W. Warren	401 Welcome Center	fisops.wayne.edu/bursar/ accounts-receivable	313-577-3653
Campus Health Center	5200 Anthony Wayne Drive	115 DeRoy Apartment Building	health.wayne.edu	313-577-5041
Career Services	656 W. Kirby	1001 Faculty Administration Building - FAB	careerservices.wayne.edu	313-577-3390
C&IT Help Desk, helpdesk@wayne.edu	5221 Gullen Mall	211 Student Center Building	computing.wayne.edu/ helpdesk	313-577-4778 or 313-577-HELP
CommunityEngagement@Wayne	5155 Gullen Mall	2100 Undergraduate Library (UGL)	communityengagement.wayne.edu	313-577-9216
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	5221 Gullen Mall	552 Student Center Building	caps.wayne.edu	313-577-3398
Dean of Students Office (DOSO) Judicial / Code of Conduct Student Orgs Student Senate	5221 Gullen Mall	3rd floor, Student Center Building	doso.wayne.edu	313-577-1010
Equal Opportunity, Office of	656 W. Kirby	4324 Faculty/Administration Building (FAB)	oeo.wayne.edu	313-577-2100
Financial Aid, Office of Student (OSFA)	42 W. Warren	First floor, Welcome Center	wayne.edu/financial-aid	313-577-3378
Free Legal Aid Clinic	5425 Woodward	Free Legal Aid Clinic	detroitflac.com	313-833-0058
Housing and Residential Life	5221 Gullen Mall	598 Student Center Building	housing.wayne.edu	313-577-2116
Dining – Aramark		Moving to Student Center fall, 2015	dining.wayne.edu	313-577-9941

FedEx Office	5266 Anthony Wayne Dr	First floor, Towers Residential Suites	psg.kinkos.com/waynestate	313-833-3876
Mort Harris Recreation and Fitness Center (RFC)	5210 Gullen Mall	Mort Harris Recreation and Fitness Center	rfc.wayne.edu	313-577-2348
OneCard Service Center	42 W. Warren	257 Welcome Center	onecard.wayne.edu	313-577-2273
Parking and Transportation Services	42 W. Warren	257 Welcome Center	parking.wayne.edu	313-577-7275
PC Clinic	5221 Gullen Mall	799 Student Center (temp)	pcclinic@wayne.edu	313-577-5056
Police Department	6050 Cass Avenue		police.wayne.edu Emergency	313-577-2222
			Non-emergency	313-577-6057
Student Center Administration Campus Information and Service Center Reservations	5221 Gullen Mall	135 Student Center Building	studentcenter.wayne.edu studentcenter.wayne.edu/reservations.php	313-577-4585
Student Service Center (SSC) Accounts receivable Admissions Financial Aid Registrar	42 W. Warren	First floor, Welcome Center	wayne.edu/studentservice	313-577-2100
University Pharmacy/Post Office	5254 Anthony Wayne Drive	Towers Residential Suites	universityrx.wayne.edu	313-831-2008
Office of Military and Veterans Academic Excellence	5155 Gullen Mall	1600 Undergraduate Library	omvae.wayne.edu	313-577-9180
Student Veterans Resource Center	5221 Gullen Mall	687 Student Center Building	omvae.wayne.edu/student-vet-resource-center.php	313-577-4753

Notes

Academic Calendar 2015-16

Fall 2015

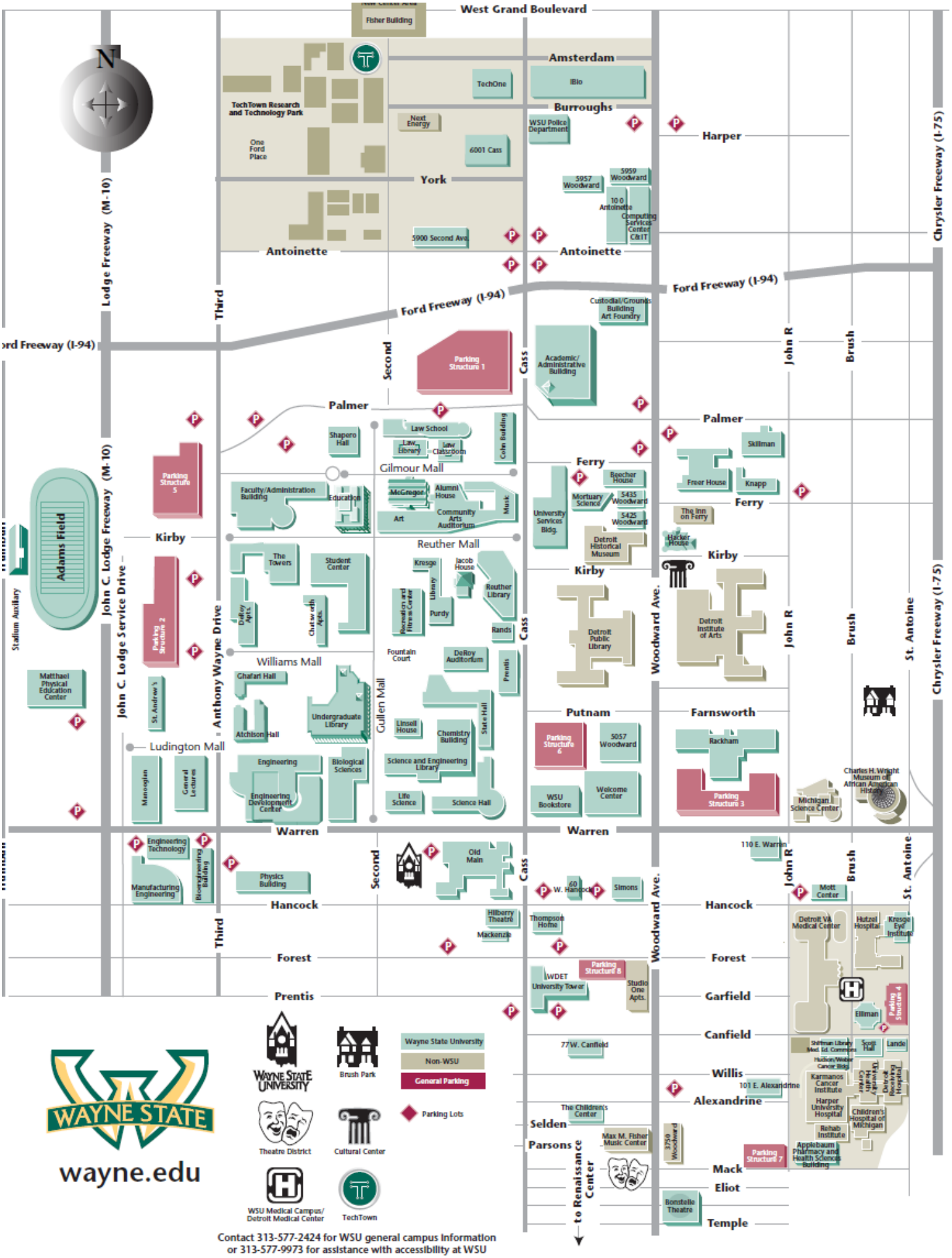
University Year Appointments Begin	Wed Aug 19
Priority Registration	Mon Mar 30 - Sun Aug 23
Term Begins	Sun Aug 30
Open Registration	Mon Aug 18 - Tue Aug 26
Classes Begin	Wed Sep 2
Late Registration, Late Adds	Wed Sep 2- Wed Sep 9
Holiday - University Closed	Mon Sep 7
Last Day to Drop w/ Tuition Cancellation (Full-term classes)	Wed Sep 16
Census Date	Wed Sep 16
Early Academic Assessment (Mid-Term Grading)	Wed Sep 16 - Tue Oct 20
Degree Applications Due	Fri Oct 2
Last Day to Withdraw	Sun Nov 15
Holiday - No Classes	Wed Nov 25
Holiday - University Closed	Thu Nov 26 - Sat Nov 28
Classes End	Mon Dec 14
Study Day	Tue Dec 15
Final Exams	Wed Dec 16 - Tue Dec 22
Commencement	Tentative: Sat Dec 12
Holiday - University Closed	Fri Dec 25 - Fri Jan 1
Term Ends	Thu Dec 31

Winter 2016

Schedule of Classes Online	Mon Oct 12
Priority Registration	Mon Nov 2 - Sun Jan 3
Term Begins	Fri Jan 1
Open Registration	Mon Jan 4 - Sun Jan 10
Classes Begin	Mon Jan 11
Late Registration, Late Adds	Mon Jan 11 - Sun Jan 17
Last Day to Drop w/ Tuition Cancellation	Mon Jan 25
Census Date	Mon Jan 25
Holiday - University Closed	Mon Jan 18
Early Academic Assessment (Mid-Term Grading)	Mon Jan 25 - Mon Feb 29
Degree Applications Due	Fri Feb 12
Spring Break - No Classes	Mon Mar 14 - Sat Mar 19

Last Day to Withdraw			Sun Mar 27
Classes End			Mon Apr 25
Study Day			Tue Apr 26
Final Exams			Wed Apr 27 - Tue May 3
Term Ends			Tue May 3
Commencement			TBD

Spring/Summer 2016	Spring/Summer	Spring	Summer
Schedule of Classes Online	Tue Jan 25	Tue Jan 25	Tue Jan 25
Term Begins	Wed May 4	Wed May 4	Wed May 4
Priority Registration	Mon Feb 8 - Sun May 8	Mon Feb 8 - Sun May 8	Mon Feb 8 - Sun May 8
Classes Begin	Mon May 9	Mon May 9	Wed Jun 29
Late Registration, Late Adds	Mon May 9 - Sun May 22	Mon May 9 – Sun May 15	Wed Jun 29 - Wed Jul 6
Last Day to Drop w/ Tuition Cancellation	Sun May 22	Sun May 15	Wed Jul 6
Holiday - University Closed	Mon May 30	Mon May 30	
Day Scheduled as a Monday	Fri May 27 & Fri Jul 1	Fri May 27	Fri Jul 1
Degree Applications Due	Fri Jun 10	Fri Jun 10	Fri Jun 10
Census Date	Wed Jul 6	Wed Jul 6	Wed Jul 6
Holiday - University Closed	Fri Jul 4		Fri Jul 4
Last Day to Withdraw	Sun Jul 17	Sun Jun 12	Wed Aug 3
Classes End	Fri Jul 29	Fri Jun 24	Tue Aug 16
Study Day	Sat Jul 30	Sat Jun 25	Wed Aug 17
Final Exams	Mon Aug 1 - Thu Aug 4	Mon Jun 27 - Tue Jun 28	Thu Aug 18 - Fri Aug 19
Term Ends	Sat Aug 27	Sat Aug 27	Sat Aug 27



Contact 313-577-2424 for WSU general campus information
or 313-577-9973 for assistance with accessibility at WSU