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Western Illinois  
University!***



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# Preparing Peer Mentors for Success

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# Western Illinois University

- Two Campuses
  - Traditional residential campus
    - Opening year was 1902
    - Rural location (Macomb, IL)
    - Approximately 10,000 students (2000 freshmen)
    - Freshmen and sophomores live in residence halls
    - Student to faculty ratio is 17 to 1
  - Metropolitan commuter campus (no freshmen)

# Key FYE Components

- Residence Halls Seminars (similar to traditional FYE class seminars)
- Common Reading
- FYE Courses

# FYE Courses

- All freshmen are required to enroll in two FYE courses, one each of first two semesters
- Are “regular” academic courses, e.g., Psychology, Biology, Literature
  - Approximately 40 different courses offered by 20 different departments

# FYE courses:

- Are limited in enrollment to 20 students, freshmen only
- Are taught by the “best” faculty
- Require students to participate in at least three co-curricular activities
- Include a peer mentor who works with the faculty member

# Who Are Peer Mentors?

- Upper level undergraduate students
- Usually majors, but may be someone who has taken course previously
- Resource for first year students in content classes



# Peer Mentor Expectations

- Primary expectations are developed in conjunction with faculty member
  - Attend FYE classes occasionally
  - Help with (and/or lead) 3 co-curricular activities
  - Lead discussions; hold study sessions
- Additional expectations from Provost office include:
  - Attend mandatory training sessions
  - Document work completed

# Managing the PM Program – Honorary Payments

- Compile and manage database of peer mentor info after mentors are selected
- Facilitating paperwork: agreement, I-9, W-4, ethics
- Tracking fulfillment of responsibilities/requirements so honorarium can be awarded
- Liaison between student employment and payroll

# Managing the PM Program – Co-curricular Activities Support

- Advise on use of class funds
- Assist in arranging transportation, purchasing supplies
- Manage FYE budget, tracking use of class funds, paying invoices, processing reimbursements

# Peer Mentor Testimonial

- Adam J Busard, Senior, Music Business Major, Prospective Student Affairs Professional
  - The Making of a Peer Mentor
  - Experiences in the Classroom
  - The Building of a Partnership
  - Peer Mentor Training Committee
  - Looking to the Future

# Background Information

Ronald Pettigrew

PM Coordinator, FYE Grad Assistant

MS Ed in College Student Personnel

- Student Affairs Professional
- Prior experiences
  - Different Universities
  - Western

# Preparing for the Training

- Fall 2008 Training
  - Literature review of high quality FYE programs
  - Survey of incoming Peer Mentors

# Goals of Training

- Expose PM to a variety of campus resources
- Create an active experience
- Encourage reflection on how resources will benefit first year students
- Promote dialogue, engagement, development, and ownership within & among PM for training

# Training Components

- Fall 2008
  - Took & discussed learning styles inventory
  - Ideas for & participation in ice breakers
  - Residence hall programming
  - Information about student groups on campus
  - Discussion of what it means to be a mentor
  - Lunch – snacks – pen & planner



# Training Components

- Spring 2009
  - Discussion & interactive activity held on diversity and inclusion
  - Presentation by Directors from all Campus Centers and Volunteer Services
  - Presentation by Academic Advising (including an interactive activity)
  - Snacks & Special Luncheon provided by Career Services.

# Preparing for the Training - Revisited

- Spring 2009 Training
  - Feedback from Fall 08 training
  - Peer mentor training committee
- Fall 2009 Training
  - Request for Feedback
  - New recruitment for Peer mentor training committee, Peer Mentor Coordinator, and other committees

# Future Goals and Desires

- Getting peer mentors invested in their role
  - Course credit option for interested mentors
- Identifying the developmental needs of mentors & then providing training needed
- Getting all peer mentors identified in a timely manner
- Getting faculty to utilize peer mentors more

# Questions?

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