

Providing a High-Impact and Transformative Peer Leader Experience

Facilitated Discussion

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Overview: *Recent research on peer leadership, including the 2013 National Survey of Peer Leaders, points to peer leadership as an emerging high-impact practice (HIP). Intentionally designed peer leadership experiences align with the characteristics of other well-known HIPs described by George Kuh (2008, 2010). This facilitated discussion is intended to provide a forum for dialogue around the high-impact potential of the peer leadership experience, best practices for fostering meaningful learning outcomes among peer leaders, and identifying future directions for research and dialogue around this emerging issue.*

Small Group Discussion Guide

Benefits to Peer Leaders

- What benefits, gains, or learning outcomes have you observed among the peer leaders (PLs) you have worked with? What changes/growth do you see in your PLs from the beginning of your program/training to the time they leave?
- What (high-impact) benefits would you like your peer educators to have as a result of engaging in your program?
- When have you seen the peer leadership experience have a transformative impact upon PLs on your campus? What seemed to make the difference for these students?
- How do you know that students have gained benefits?

Characteristics of High-Impact and Transformative Peer Leadership Experiences

- In your experience, what are the key components of a high-impact PL experience?

- What are some of the “best practices” you have implemented on your campus (or seen on other campuses) that seem to facilitate a high-impact PL experience?

- How are you structuring your peer educator program to provide a high-impact educational experience?

Developing High-Impact and Transformative Peer Leadership Experiences

Use the following table to identify where characteristics of high-impact practice are being used and in what ways you might improve on them.

High-Impact Characteristic	Current Status	Opportunities to Improve
Creates an investment of time and energy		
High expectations		
Demands reflection and integrated learning		
Includes frequent feedback		
Accountability		
Exposure to diverse perspectives		
Includes interaction with faculty and peers about substantive matters		
Real-world applications		

Assessing High-Impact and Transformative Peer Leadership Experiences

- How do you know that students have had a high-impact PL experience?
- How can you assess the degree to which the PL experience on your campus is leading to high-impact outcomes?
- How can you assess your program's effectiveness at delivering this element?
- To what degree are you providing a high-impact PL experience to a diversity of students on your campus?