



## Offering Intentional Support Systems to Ease Out-of-State Students' Transition

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### What is OSSM?

- OSSM (pronounced "awesome") is the Out-of-State Student Mentoring Program at UCF.
- OSSM currently provides 56 out-of-state students with an upper-class, out-of-state, Peer Mentor that assists students in their transition to university life in a new state, and provides unique opportunities and experiences that help students get involved at UCF and connected to the Orlando community.
  - Peer Mentors contact their students during the semester via phone, Facebook or email
  - Sample programs include: Theme park trip, Halloween social, resume workshop, Olympic field day
- OSSM students have reserved seats in freshmen courses to take together
- OSSM students live on the same floor in a Living Learning Community (LLC), and are assigned a specific academic advisor, housed in their living community

### Why is this needed?

- Out-of-state (OOS) students make up only 7% of the incoming UCF freshman class.
- Many Florida residents go home during extended breaks, leaving OOS students with fewer peers to interact with, which can lead to feelings of isolation.
- Feelings of homesickness can arise more often with OOS students, and being around others who can relate eases the transition.

### What are Students Saying? (Fall 2014 and 2015 results)

- 94% Agreed that living in the OSSM LLC helped them have a smooth transition to UCF.
- 89% Agreed that living in the OSSM LLC helped them to feel connected to UCF.
- 58% reported that having upper-class, Peer Mentors available to plan programs and to ask questions of helped in their adjustment to UCF.

### By the Numbers

#### Upcoming Changes

	OSSM Cohort	OOS not in OSSM	General FTIC population
Fall 14 GPA	3.34	3.28	3.05
Fall 15 GPA	3.37	3.22	3.09
09/10 6 year grad rates	72.7%	61.6%	70.5%
11/12 4 year grad rates	49.5%	48.2%	40.4%

- ALL incoming, out-of-state freshmen will be assigned a Peer Mentor (increasing from 3 to 22, and serving close to 500 students vs. 56)
- We will have two floors in Housing, for 112 spaces
- Programming will be offered to ALL OOS students, not just those in the Living Learning Community

### Sources

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