

Amy Hughes Giard  
Director, UO First-Year Interest Groups  
Division of Undergraduate Education and Student Success

## EMPOWERING PEER LEADERS

### Beginning: 5 mins

- Introductions – get to know you ice breaker
- Quick information on my background
  - UO Peer Leaders – FIG Assistants
- Agenda for the Workshop

### Workshop Part 1: 5mins

- Large group discussion – Role of Peer Leaders on a College Campus
  - How does your institution use peers?
  - What are the benefits of using peer leaders?
- Quick 1 minute reflection activity on handout

### Workshop Part 2: 15 mins

- Break into small groups (3-5)
  - Get to know each other
  - Record on poster types of peers at your institution
  - Discuss and record what works well
- Large group share out
  - What techniques do you use that helps your program's success?

### Workshop Part 3: 20 mins

- Find a poster with a topic/area you would like to improve in your peer leader program  
*Topics: Training and retaining peer leaders, developing 1:1 relationships between faculty and peer leaders, mentoring peers to train other peers, co-designing/building curriculum, access to research and professional development opportunities, or others*
  - Record on poster what needs improvement
  - List any institutional barriers
  - What is your wish list?
- Switch posters
  - Provide solutions to problems
  - Share out findings and suggestions

### Workshop Part 4: 15 mins

- Final discussions – Q&A

**What are the roles of Peer Leaders on your campus?**

- Orientation leaders and TY sems summer/fall
- 1<sup>st</sup> years lead comm. Workshops: required fall/yr long
- 1:1s with students
- Tutors/student mentor/sup. Instructions
- 2<sup>nd</sup> years: mentor 1<sup>st</sup> year student success leaders
- FIG RA: lives in residence hall
- TAs/Freshman Seminars (juniors and seniors only)
- TA: outside workshops, Career Ambassadors
- Peer mentors: transfer student mentoring new transfers
- Peer Academic Coaches

**What are the benefits of Peer Leaders on your campus?**

- Show empathy – why
- Bridge the gap
- Example/Role model on same level – student-to-student
- Professional development for peers
- Increase in retention for mentors
- Marketers for program
- Able to identify/assist students (what's effective training/workshops)
- Finger on pulse of student population/thinking
- Inspiring person!
- Scale
- Campus resource knowledge

**What's working with your program?**

- High-Five Friday-cheer on their peers
- Spotify playlist-builds community
- Affirmation wall
- Cross-training with other peer leaders
- Professional development as students
- Creating the best culture that encourages return
- Break up training-to keep in touch-frequent touch points
- Able to articulate their experiences
- Important to remember employees w/ feedback envelopes

## Training/Retaining Peer Leaders

Needs Improvement	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retaining/ recruiting males</li><li>• Diversity in applications/selections</li><li>• Convincing students of value</li><li>• Not enough training</li><li>• Move away from transactional training</li><li>• Engaged full-term</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timing/scheduling training</li><li>• Summer employment/pay budget</li><li>• Maintaining steam</li><li>• Buy-in from Exec. Admin.</li><li>• Importance of peer mentor</li><li>• Stigma of P.M.</li><li>• Working across differences</li></ul>

### Takeaways and Solutions:

- More value = more structure
- Peer/Faculty recommendation for recruiting
- Visibility in representation
- Training in Coursework/Family dinner

### **Developing One-on-One relationships: Faculty and Peer Leaders**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating program</li><li>• How can Peer Leaders help faculty?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not faculty responsibility</li><li>• “Enough on my plate” faculty</li><li>• How to encourage building relationship?</li></ul>
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### **Takeaways and Solutions:**

- Social(s) to allow faculty and student mentor to meet before term/semester
- Find faculty who want to do it. Acknowledge them and others will want to join
- Have faculty ask their Peer Leader what their goals are for the role/class/etc.
- Faculty host dinners with student mentors
- Teams (faculty, student and staff) plan FYS seminar together
- Given budget to plan “outings” in local community together

## Mentoring Peer Leaders to mentor other Peer Leaders

Needs Improvement	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not formalized</li><li>• Attempted but not successfully implemented</li><li>• Have need but no process</li><li>• Mentors wouldn't attend the trainings set up by exp. Mentors (monthly mtg set up but poor attendance)</li><li>• Accountability</li><li>• CLRA set-up</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scheduling/ class conflicts</li><li>• Not engaging trainings</li></ul>

### Takeaways and Solutions:

- Weekly meetings with leaders where they voice their concerns together and talk about creative solutions
- Peer mentors lead monthly workshops for the 1<sup>st</sup> year mentors, then in spring, 1<sup>st</sup> year mentors lead workshops for students
- Have clear expectations and boundaries for both roles

## Co-Designing/ Building Curriculum

Needs Improvement	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First time doing it</li><li>• Co-teach advisors train much longer- students get two days-lack confidence</li><li>• Training doesn't give them confidence</li><li>• Using cohorts</li><li>• Some designed by program of study, not universal</li><li>• Need more time for<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaboration</li><li>- Planning for semester</li><li>- Don't always get back together</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can't pair early as advisors may change jobs</li><li>• Time</li><li>• Possessiveness of some faculty on content and not willing to share with students</li></ul>

### Takeaways and Solutions:

- Course Coordinator position
- Faculty and student partnership guided by Course Coordinator
- Practice and test ideas before implementing
- Lean on Peer Leaders for identified student-centered topics

**Write Your Own Topic: Creating a community between four student leaders with different supervisors, hours and responsibilities**

**Takeaways and Solutions:**

- Set up a monthly lunch or dinner w/good food depending on schedules

# FD142 - Empowering Peer Leaders

## Session Summary:

First-year students benefit from having a peer mentor in the first year of college, however peer mentors also benefit from the same high impact experience. Students who are mentors report improved academic performance, stronger connections to faculty, improved communications skills, and personal growth. What are the most effective ways to empower peer mentors? In this interactive session, discuss best practices in developing strong peer leaders, programmatic areas that need improvement, and new ideas, strategies, and techniques to implement change. Possible topics include training and retaining peer leaders, building 1:1 faculty relationships, curriculum/program development, and other issues identified by participants.

## Agenda

- Large Discussion of Peer Leader Roles
- Interactive Workshop – Small Groups
- Final Large Group Discussion – Q&A

**Part 1 Reflection:** What are you hoping to learn from this session about empowering peer leaders?



## Amy Hughes Giard

## Director

## First-Year Interest Groups

University of Oregon

## Division of Undergraduate Education and Student Success

## Contact

agiard@uoregon.edu

## Biographical Sketch

Amy Hughes-Giard is the Director of First-Year Interest Groups at the University of Oregon. Among her responsibilities include building 50-55 First-Year Interest Groups and 8 Global Bridge International FIGs, recruiting and training faculty instructors, and training and mentoring over 60 undergraduate peer mentors annually. She has given conference presentations on living learning communities, recruiting faculty and peer leaders, and on marketing programs to prospective students. She also has conducted workshops for new first-year students on designing their own college experience.

**Part 2 Reflection:** What new techniques did you learn about that will help you build your peer leader program?

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**Part 3 Reflection:** What new ideas would you like to try at your institution?

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What barriers might you encounter and are there possible solutions/alternatives to work around them?

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Please remember to submit your evaluation on Guidebook!

<https://guidebook.com/g/fye19/>

## UO Peer Leaders

### FIG Assistants (FA)

The FA position offers exceptional undergraduate students the opportunity to be leaders and mentors to first-year students participating in a FIG. FAs assist College Connections faculty in the development, planning and instruction of the course. FAs organize educational and social activities to better acquaint their students with each other, faculty members, and the University. These activities may include library orientation, study groups, lunch with a professor, field trips, and more.

### Qualifications

Second-Year Standing  
Minimum 3.2 GPA  
"B" letter grade in the lecture classes offered in the FIG package

### Positions

1<sup>st</sup> year FAs  
2<sup>nd</sup> year FAs\* – mentor 1<sup>st</sup> years  
3<sup>rd</sup> year FAs\* – train FAs  
\*(50% return rate of all FAs)

### Training

9 week spring training – **new**  
2-day intensive fall training before school – **all**  
Fall weekly meetings - **all**