

PEER MENTOR 2023

What is a Peer Mentor?

Peer mentors are integral to the First-Year Experience, serving as role models and resources, as they help new students integrate into the college community. These more advanced students are selected for their academic engagement, their integrity*, and their positive and helpful attitude. Their job is to model creative, intellectual inquiry and to steer first-year students in appropriate directions when they need help navigating curricular and co-curricular challenges and opportunities.

Peer mentors support both the younger students in their seminars and the faculty member who is teaching. They may be sophomores, juniors, or seniors, and they may live in the residence halls, elsewhere on campus, or in downtown Saratoga Springs. Wherever they reside, they will make themselves available to new students regularly throughout the semester.

What is required of Peer Mentors? All Peer Mentors must:

- Return to campus on Sunday, August 27, 2023 before 4:00 p.m. for Peer Mentor training.
- Attend all Peer Mentor Training Sessions which run 10:00 am through 4:00 pm, Monday, August 28 through Friday, September 1. (Peer Mentors cannot participate in Pre-Orientation programs or any other activities scheduled during these days and times).
- Participate in New Student Orientation which will run from the morning of Sunday, September 3 through the evening of Tuesday, September 5.
- Attend the *Scribner Seminar* (ID 202). You will earn two academic credits for attending and participating in all class meetings of your Scribner Seminar.
- Attend all sessions of the one-credit *Peer Mentoring Workshop* (ID 201) which prepares you to address issues related to life in college for first-year mentees. It meets on Fridays from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm throughout the fall semester.

What does a peer mentor receive for these efforts?

- One credit and a grade for ID 201.
- Two credits and a grade for your work with/in the Scribner Seminar (coded as ID 202).
- \$12.75/hour for a maximum of three hours/week in the fall.
- \$12.75/hour for a maximum of ten hours over the course of the spring.
- London Peer Mentors work a maximum of 10 hours in the fall and a maximum of three hours/week in the spring.
- \$250 stipend for participating in all required New Student Orientation activities. This is taxable income. Peer mentors who fail to attend all of the New Student Orientation activities as required will forfeit this stipend and will jeopardize their positions as peer mentor.

How are Peer Mentors Selected?

The choice of the peer mentor is up to the faculty member teaching the seminar. There are two avenues for selection. *Most often*, the faculty member will invite a student whom they know and are comfortable with. If the student is interested, they must pass a full integrity check and be sure they can meet all requirements. No formal paperwork is needed.

The FYE Office will check your status; any student with a violation within the past year is disqualified. Students with violations prior to that time will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Sometimes, however, a faculty member does not have an individual student in mind, and/or an invited student is unavailable due to scheduling issues, study abroad, etc. In that case the faculty member may request, from the FYE Office, the files of any students who have applied independently. Students applying independently must submit an application (<http://www.skidmore.edu/fye/mentors/apply.php>) and are also subject to integrity checks; if the student is approved, the FYE Office will retain that student's materials on file for any faculty member who is looking for a peer mentor and would like to interview potential candidates. Please note that all applicants who apply independently are required to have a recommendation from a faculty member. The faculty recommendation sheet is here: http://www.skidmore.edu/fye/faculty/peer_recommendation.php

Peer Mentor Training Attendance Policy

Peer Mentors are often in a better position than anyone to spot signs of trouble and intervene or advocate for first-year students in crisis (especially in the first few weeks of class). This being true, the welfare of first-year students often rests heavily on Peer Mentors, and they need to be prepared. It is with this set of facts in mind that we require all Peer Mentors to attend a 5-day training during the week prior to New Student Orientation, and we pay them to do so. The training is meant to prepare Peer Mentors to deal with first-year students in distress or crisis and to lead difficult discussions in the classroom setting. It is indispensable pedagogical training that requires active participation and is only offered during that week. For these reasons, we cannot be flexible on our attendance policy.

That said, we recognize that students who are chosen to serve as Peer Mentors are sometimes involved in other campus organizations and activities that are active during the Peer Mentor training week, and we do not want to exclude such students from the Peer Mentoring opportunity. For this reason, we generally follow a 10:00 am to 4:00 pm Peer Mentor Training schedule, which leaves ample time for meetings, training sessions, and other activities.

IMPORTANT:

- Peer Mentors must be available to attend every session of the August training (10:00 am-4:00 pm, Monday, August 28 through Friday, September 1).
- Applications for those applying independently are due March 15, 2023. (Those directly invited by a faculty member do not require applications.)
- London Peer Mentors have a separate application process. These deadlines will be set separately by the FYE Director.
- Peer Mentors cannot serve simultaneously as Resident Assistants without approval from the Office of the First-Year Experience AND the Office of Residential Life.

If you have further questions, their answers may be found on the FYE Peer Mentors website (<https://www.skidmore.edu/fye/mentors/index.php>) and you can always contact the Office of the First-Year Experience (fye@skidmore.edu).