Student Success Centre and Writing Symbols Lodge
First in Family Peer Mentor Volunteer

Faculty/Degree/Major: All Faculties

Duration: September 6th, 2022 – April 30th, 2023
Start Date: September 6th, 2022
Title: First in Family Peer Mentor
Reports to: Academic Development Specialist, Student Success Centre and Writing Symbols Lodge

Description:

Student Success Centre and Writing Symbols Lodge collaborate to provide culturally appropriate supports that encourage the success of First In Family students in their pursuit of knowledge and higher education. Student Success Centre and Writing Symbols Lodge offer a welcoming and supportive learning environment for the whole campus community while providing academic, personal, cultural support services to prospective and current First in Family students and allies.

In fall 2021, Writing Symbols Lodge and the Student Success Centre asked students who identified as the first in their family to attend university to share their feedback and ideas on what they would have found most helpful while transitioning to the University of Calgary community. One of the primary supports students identified in their feedback was mentorship. Peer mentorship has also been shown to be one of the most beneficial supports to new students positively impacting student retention and success. In response, WSL and SSC are launching the First in Family Peer Mentorship Program with the aim to support incoming first in family students through the creation of peer-to-peer relationships.

First In Family is currently recruiting for volunteers to take on the role of First In Family Peer Mentor. First In Family Peer Mentors are scheduled to meet with their student for a minimum of 1 hour per week for the fall and winter semesters. First In Family Peer Mentors are encouraged to participate in the program for both semesters. All volunteers will be required to attend a 2-day mandatory mentorship training prior to volunteering. Training may be offered before the September 6th start date.

Duties & Responsibilities may include:

- Commit to a minimum of but not limited to 1 hour per week of time spent with your mentee.
- Commit to volunteer for 2 semesters (fall/winter terms preferably)
• Volunteer in other capacities within the WSL or SSC for a minimum of one hour but not limited to. Examples; Answering phone, manning front desk, offering mini workshops, setting up a community event, supporting WSL events.
• Attend mandatory training and scheduled workshops.
• Expect to attend meetings on campus with First In Family Peer Mentors, First In Family Academic Development Specialist and other supervisory staff at scheduled meetings.
• Complete monthly mandatory check-in with Academic Development Specialist.
• Communicate openly and regularly with the Academic Development Specialist to discuss match progress, development, and success.
• You are using your time with your mentee in a positive way that supports mentees development, wellness, and overall success.
• Be consistent and dependable and maintain a steady, positive presence in your mentee's life.
• Ensure that healthy boundaries are maintained, and the mentees safety is prioritised.
• Involve your mentee when deciding how you are to split up your weekly time together.
• Use available resources, including the guidance and advice of the program staff.
• If a problem arises, ensure you understand the necessary measures to take.
• Keep everyone informed of life/schedule changes that may impact the match.
• Listen to, respect the thoughts and viewpoints of your mentee, and focus on building their strengths and confidence.
• Have realistic expectations and be prepared for any issues that may arise.
• Other duties as required.

Qualifications:

• Pursuing an undergraduate degree in good academic standing as defined by the University of Calgary.
• Completed at least one academic year.
• Consistent and reliable, can maintain a dependable and positive attitude.
• Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
• Compassionate, kind, and empathetic.
• Demonstrates professionalism, leadership, and good judgement.
• Ability to prioritize workload, tasks, and responsibilities.
• Engaged in community, including volunteerism, mentorship, leadership, coaching, cultural involvement, etc.
• Interested in working with First In Family students, staff, faculty, and community members
• Ability to effectively maintain and set healthy boundaries.
• Dedicated to supporting student success.
- Be able to form a developmental relationship. Express care, challenge growth, provide support, share power, and expand possibilities.
- Good listener and respectful to the needs of others.
- Preference will be given to candidates that are previous First In Family students, students with lived experience as First In Family.

**Mentor Benefits and Incentives:**

- **Reference Letters:** Peer Mentors will receive reference letters from the Academic Development Specialist upon the completion of the program. Students must have volunteered for a minimum of 1 semester before they can request a reference letter and satisfy their mandatory workshop and volunteer hours requirement.
- **Mentor of the Month:** Students are invited to complete monthly nominations to highlight the good work of the mentors. The mentor chosen will be highlighted on the SSC/WSL wall and/or other forms of social media (if they are comfortable).
- **Professional Development:** Students will be given the opportunity to improve their professional development through workshops, certifications, and training. Professional development opportunities will be woven into the weekly time commitment the mentors will be making whether it be through workshops, volunteering, making connections, student leadership training, etc.
- **Certification:** Peer Mentors will receive certificates upon the completion of the program, this will reflect the student’s leadership and dedication to student development. Students must attend the mandatory workshops and fulfill their volunteer commitment to receive this certificate. Additionally, students will receive a certificate upon the completion of their initial program training.
- **Leadership and Facilitation Development:** The Peer Mentorship Program helps students develop valuable skills they can utilize throughout their degree and future career.
- **Incentives:** Small incentives will be given out at the discretion of the Academic Development Specialist to students who have shown exceptional leadership and dedication to their role in the program.
- **Better Impact:** Volunteers will be able to keep detailed track of the hours they spend in the program through Better Impact for future reference.

**Contact Us:**

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact Valerie McDougall at the Student Success Centre or Writing Symbols Lodge. You can reach Valerie McDougall by email at valerie.mcdougall@ucalgary.ca.
Conduct Standing:

This position requires students to be in good conduct standing for non-academic misconduct. Students who are not in good conduct standing have an active sanction of “Probation for Non-Academic Misconduct” that has been assigned through formal conduct proceedings per the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy. Students are informed in writing of the sanction by the Student Conduct Office. Note: Involvement in the Non-Academic Misconduct process does not automatically mean a student is not in good conduct standing; this applies only to those students who have been assigned the sanction of Probation for Non-Academic Misconduct. If you have been found responsible of a violation of the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and you are unsure if you have received this sanction, please contact conduct@ucalgary.ca. Please note that in submitting your application, you are verifying that you are in good conduct standing and consent to this being verified by the Student Conduct Office. Note that details of non-academic misconduct cases are not shared through this process.