Peer Leaders in the Classroom

"Peer leaders are chosen and empowered to exert a positive influence upon their peers and to do so in a way that is less intimidating and more accessible to fellow undergraduates than would the actions of professional staff and faculty members" (Shook & Keup 2012).

Impact on Peer Leaders

A study by Keup (2016) found peer leaders experienced gains in:

- Development in communication and leadership skills

- Knowledge of campus resources

- Interaction with faculty, peers, and staff

- Critical thinking, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills

- Ability to work under pressure

- Interpersonal skills

- Awareness and appreciation of diversity

Keup, J. R. (2016). Peer leadership as an emerging high-impact practice: An exploratory study of the American experience. Journal of Student Affairs in Africa. 4(1), 33-52.
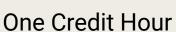
Impact on students being served

An overview of the literature on peer leaders by Shook and Keup (2012), found peer leaders have a positive impact on the students they serve, including:

- Stronger sense of community

- Greater social and academic integration
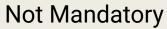
- Larger network of resource and referral agents

Keup, J. R. & Shook, J. L.b (2012) The Benefits of Peer Leader Programs: An Overview of the Literature. New Directions for Higher Education. Vol. 157 5-16.

Georgia Tech: GT 1000

One Credit Hour

Letter Graded

Not Mandatory

Volunteer Instructors
(Faculty & Staff)

Volunteer Peer Leaders
(Team Leaders)

Georgia Southern: FYE 1220

Two Credit Hours

Letter Graded

Required

Revising...

Volunteer Peer Leaders
(paid PL Supervisors)

The Team Leader Program at Georgia Tech

Student Support

- Build relationships with students in GT 1000 classes
- Introduce students to Georgia Tech resources
- Help familiarize students with campus culture

Instructor Support

- Communicate student needs
- Assist in classroom presentations
- Build community in the classroom
- Provide student perspective on class assignments, topics, and schedule

Links:
- Team Leaders: tiny.cc/gt-tl

The Peer Leader Program at Georgia Southern

Student Support

- Build relationships with students in FYE 1220 classes

- Introduce students to Georgia Southern resources

- Encourage students to engage with the campus and community

Instructor Support

- Communicate student needs to faculty

- Teach at least one lesson along with other agreed upon roles (attendance, grading, etc.)

- Build community in the classroom

- Provide student perspective on class assignments, topics, and schedule
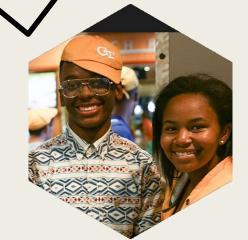
Links:
- Recruitment: tiny.cc/gs-peers
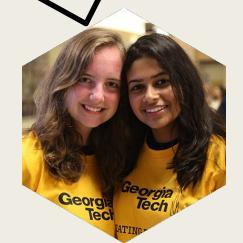- Faculty guide to peer leaders: tiny.cc/gs-peers-fac

The Team Leader Program at Georgia Tech

"I know that I couldn't have been the only freshman that experienced so much stress in their first semester, and I won't be the last, so I would love to be there for someone next year like my TL was for me."

"I care about the future that we are developing here at Tech, and I want to be an instrumental leader in helping mold those who will grow to lead the campus."

"I thought the TL was one of the coolest aspects of GT 1000 since it made the advice seem much more relatable when it came from someone who was recently in my shoes instead of a professor."

The Peer Leader Program at Georgia Southern

"In addition to peer leading being an awesome experience, serving in this role allows you to make connections with some wonderful faculty and staff. Most importantly, you never know what kind of impact you can have on your students."

– Sarah DeLoach

"The experience that I have had as a peer leader has changed me so much. I have become more of a leader and ready to truly help students when they need it."

- Riley Martinez

"I became a peer leader because I am a natural leader who loves to give back to his peers and school. I take pride in my leadership and I knew I could make a positive impact on students."

– Jalon Ross

Using Peer Leaders in the FYS

- Recruitment & selection of peer leader programs

- Training & development of peer leaders

- Assessing peer leader programs

- Challenges to implementing peer leader programs

- Roles & expectations of peer leaders in and out of the classroom

- Supervising peer leaders

THANK YOU!

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slides: tiny.cc/fys-peers