Contact Name: Tia Crawford
Department(s): Student Activities
Email: tcrawford@stuact.tamu.edu

Name of HIP: Peer Leadership and Service Program
Approximate # of TAMU students involved in the HIP: 14

Please check the TAMU learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:

Bachelor’s:  ☐ Master the depth of knowledge required of a degree
             ☑ Demonstrate critical thinking
             ☑ Communicate effectively
             ☑ Practice personal and social responsibility
             ☑ Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence
             ☑ Prepare to engage in lifelong learning
             ☑ Work collaboratively

Master’s:   ☐ Master the degree program requirements
            ☐ Apply subject matter knowledge
            ☐ Communicate effectively
            ☐ Use appropriate technologies
            ☐ Develop clear research plans
            ☐ Choose ethical course of action

Doctoral:  ☐ Master the degree program requirements
           ☐ Apply a variety of strategies and tools
           ☐ Communicate effectively
           ☐ Develop clear research plans
           ☐ Use appropriate technologies
           ☐ Teach and explain the subject matter

Please check the QEP learning outcome(s) associated with this HIP:

☑ Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for lifelong learning — Curiosity, Initiative, Independence, Transfer, Reflection
☑ Improve student learning by developing habits and skills for integrative learning — Connections to experience, Connections to discipline, Transfer, Integrated communication, Reflection and self-assessment
Abstract

The Peer Leadership and Service Program (PLSP) is a peer education program for upper class students designed to promote integrative and lifelong learning and focuses on leadership, service, and engagement. There are 14 peer leaders involved in the program and they serve as an extension of the Leadership and Service Center and help to impact and enrich the campus and community through the support and advocacy of programs, services, and resources provided to their peers while at the same time seeking to enhance their personal knowledge and practice of leadership.

Description of the activity

a) Invest time and effort to purposeful tasks. Please describe the length of time of the experience.

Participants in this program invest a significant amount of time and effort through a variety of experiences. For instance, general functions and tasks associated with participation in this program include:

- The facilitation of workshops and team builders requested by students, faculty, and staff
- Conducting weekly office hours during which time they complete projects and tasks associated with the functions of the peer team and those needed by the Leadership and Service Center
- Coordinating, planning, and implementing programs to educate and advocate for service and social issues awareness (i.e. service forum)
- Conducting consultations with students who contact the Leadership and Service Center seeking to be connected with leadership and/or service opportunities on campus and in the community
- Supporting and marketing of programs associated with the Leadership and Service Center
- Engaging with community agencies through site visits to conduct needs assessments

Retreats - There is an initial orientation retreat following selection in April. There is also a spring and fall retreat to conduct training and plan and prepare for the respective semesters.

Executive Board Meetings – The executive board meets weekly to stay up-to-date on incoming requests, maintain and evaluate progress on program planning and the overall operations of the team.

Weekly Team Meetings – The entire team meets weekly for 2 hours to engage in on-going training and development and to conduct the everyday business of the team (i.e. area updates, communicating new requests for workshops, etc.)
Area Meetings – The peer team is divided into different areas. Each member on the team has a position and specific responsibilities associated with the team functions. Area meetings are conducted to discuss, plan, and implement tasks associated with each respective area.

Participation in the program requires a one year commitment, at minimum, with the potential to renew their commitment and continue their participation for additional years on the peer team.

b) **Interact with staff, advisors, and/or faculty about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time.**

Executive members meet weekly with the program coordinator to discuss the operations of the team, address issues, critically reflective on changes that need to be implemented, and feedback on performance.

All team members interact weekly with the program coordinator during weekly team meetings who is able to give guidance, support, and feedback on performance associated with the operations of the team.

Peer Leaders work weekly office hours in the Leadership and Service Center (LSC) and interact with the LSC staff members on a regular basis to collaborate and complete projects and tasks associated with the planning and implementing programs or the normal functions of the LSC.

c) **Interact with peers about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time.**

The peer leaders collaborate with their fellow team members to develop and implement programs. They engage in consultation with their peers to connect them to leadership and service opportunities. In addition, they facilitate workshops and team building activities for student organizations and programs as they are requested. All of these are surrounding topics associated with leadership, service, social issues awareness and the importance of actively engaging in the campus and community. Finally, these experiences take place throughout the duration of their year long experience.

d) **Experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves**

The nature and function of serving as liaisons for the Leadership and Service Center to campus and community partners, afford the peer leaders the opportunity to interact with students, staff, faculty, and community partners that are different than them in a variety ways.

Furthermore, through facilitating workshops, giving presentation, and helping with marketing efforts, peer leaders interact with different people and types of groups on a regular basis.
e) Receive frequent feedback about their performance – both formal and informal – in settings that allow them to respond to that feedback

Peer leaders have a leadership development plan which will include a learning contract and will allow them to identify goals associated with leadership and program learning outcomes. Each peer leader will meet with the program coordinator who will evaluate, guide support, and give feedback on the progress towards their developmental goals. Informal feedback will occur through weekly meetings with peer leaders.

f) Are provided opportunities to integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge gained from their classroom/discipline to their co-curricular experience and vice versa. Students are provided opportunities to discover the relevance of learning through application and practice in a range of contexts.

Through the leadership development plan, students have the opportunity to reflect, connect, and integrate their learning in the classroom through specific reflection questions that help them to make connections and then identify how they can utilize the knowledge and skills to help them reach their leadership development, personal development, and career goals.

g) Are provided opportunities to become aware of their values and beliefs and thus to better understand themselves in relation to others and the larger world.

Students are provided the opportunity to explore and solidify their values and beliefs through trainings that take place through the year, leadership moments that take place at general meetings, and through reflection through their leadership development plan as they continue to revisit it throughout the year.

Assessment

Both formal and informal evaluations and assessments are utilized. Leadership moments are conducted during general meetings. A leadership skills inventory was given at the beginning of the program and will be given at the end of the program. The peer teams’ leadership development plans will be reviewed and analyzed at the end of the program to identify both individual and team learning and growth and an instrument will be developed and administered to assess the learning and program outcomes.