

Peer Assistant Job Description
Academic Development Program Summer Session
Academic Development Program & Office of Residence Life and Housing Services
West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Peer Assistants are paraprofessional undergraduate or graduate student staff members of the Academic Development Program (ADP) and the Office of Residence Life and Housing Services.

The Academic Development Program is designed to provide an opportunity for a college education to those students who do not meet the current university admission requirements, but show potential for success in college. Students in the program benefit from special services designed to help them successfully adjust, academically and socially, to college life. ADP students are required to attend a summer session during which the Peer Assistant (PA) plays a significant role.

Peer Assistants serve as mentors to students and form links between the students, the Academic Development Program, and other resources within the University. ADP students often do not seek support services. Thus, instead of waiting for “referred” or self-referred students, the Peer Assistants reach out to students in individual and small group settings to provide direct support and to inform students of university services and procedures.

Peer Assistants also foster an environment that is conducive to the enhancement of academic, social, and personal development of students, as well as encourage a sense of community in the residence hall. It is also expected that Peer Assistants will promote an atmosphere of civility where students value each individual’s worth and dignity and treat one another with respect and courtesy.

This leadership position provides Peer Assistants with unique opportunities to further develop personal awareness and interpersonal communication skills vital for success in all facets of life. This leadership experience is particularly beneficial to students who plan careers in counseling, education, psychology, social work, communications, and business.

COMPENSATION:

Stipend = \$1,100, paid on a bi-weekly schedule over the duration of the program.

Waiver for a double room and air conditioner for the duration of the program.

Meal Plan 10 meals per week for the duration of the program.

STAFF FUNCTIONS:

1. Establish and maintain a close relationship with each student in the Peer Assistant's group and floor/wing. Advise students within the limits of the Peer Assistant's capabilities on academic, social and personal matters. Be aware of student problems and concerns including adjustment, homesickness, roommate conflicts, etc., and be interested in student goals and values. Be sensitive enough to students to recognize concerns and to work with them.
2. Work to create an atmosphere that is conducive to studying.
3. Be knowledgeable and provide information about campus and community resources and services. Refer students who need assistance to the appropriate campus agencies.
4. Be familiar with University and departmental policies and regulations, and be able to communicate them to students. Make students aware of the potential consequences of behavior that violates University policies, procedures, rules, or regulations. Enforce policies and provide proper documentation and follow-up, as prescribed by the Office of Judicial Affairs and Community Development.
5. Provide an atmosphere of openness and acceptance for students to raise academic, personal and social issues in an informal manner with an empathetic fellow student.
6. Encourage students to set goals and find the motivation to work toward academic success and achieve academic excellence.
7. Prepare necessary reports, logs and evaluations. This includes assisting with the maintenance of accurate student room inventory and damage records. Peer Assistants are also responsible incident reports and weekly Peer Group reports.
8. Meet individually with each student assigned to the Peer Assistant's peer group to discuss adjustment issues, good study habits, and/or any issues of interest or concern to the student.
9. Conduct weekly peer group meetings for the purpose of group bonding and development and to discuss issues of adjusting to college, topics related to Program events and activities, and any issues or concerns significant to the group.
10. Meet with assigned students regarding specific concerns of the student or of ADP staff, Residence Life staff, tutors, advisors or counselors, as needed.
11. Attend weekly Peer Assistant staff meetings with supervisors.
12. Assist with special projects/events including summer orientation, educational and social activities, and off-campus trips.
13. Actively participate in the planning, execution, and evaluation of educational and social residence hall programs as designated during the summer ADP under the supervision of the supervisors.
14. Perform other duties as assigned by supervisors.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

1. Peer Assistants are **REQUIRED** to attend all training sessions and scheduled meetings.
2. Peer Assistants are responsible to and receive direct supervision from the Resident Directors and the ADP Mentoring Coordinator.
3. Peer Assistants' duties and responsibilities are expected to be their first priority during the program. Any outside part-time employment must be approved in advance by the supervisors, and must be during the hours between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. only. Peer Assistants are permitted to take one course during the program, and it must be between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.
4. Attendance at all weekly staff meetings, workshops, and/or training programs as specified by the supervisors, the Director of Residence Life, and the Director of the Academic Development Program are mandatory.
6. Peer Assistants, through individual and team effort, are responsible for the overall well-being of their assigned students as well as their wing/floor, and are expected to make a contribution to the entire program and building. Peer Assistants are expected to be available to students during a majority of evening hours.
7. Peer Assistants are required to work the residence hall front desk during the summer program, and will be directly supervised by the Resident Directors. Each Peer Assistant is responsible for reading the Desk Assistant Manual and following all procedures and policies outlined in the manual.
8. Each Peer Assistant will be "on duty" in the residence hall on assigned evenings from 8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Duty will consist of checking each floor and all aspects of the building to insure that the environment is safe and conducive to studying, and assuring that all students abide by the policies and guidelines within the building. The Peer Assistant must remain in the building and be ready to respond to any emergency situation that may arise, and follow emergency procedures covered during training, as needed. **When on duty, personnel at the front desk should be aware of the PA's location at all times in case of an emergency.**
9. Peer Assistants are required to reside in the Program's assigned residence hall and should sleep in their assigned rooms unless given prior approval from the supervisors. **All Peer Assistants must abide by the guest policy regardless of a single room.**
10. Peer Assistants are permitted to be away from campus for the weekend when they are not on duty and have been scheduled to be away. Otherwise, all Peer Assistants are expected to be available to students during the majority of afternoon and evening hours for the duration of the summer session.

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Academic Development Program Summer Session, 2012

Dates to Remember:

Friday, June 22	10 am – 12 pm or 4 pm – 6 pm	PAs move into McCarthy Hall (by appt.)
Saturday, June 23	9 am – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Sunday, June 24	12 pm – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Monday, June 25	9 am – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Tuesday, June 26	9 am – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Wednesday, June 27	9 am – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Thursday, June 28	9 am – 6 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Friday, June 29	9 am – 5 pm (approx.)	PA Training
Saturday, June 30	10 am – 12 noon (approx.)	PA Training
Sunday, July 1	7 am- 9 pm	Move-in day for ADP Students & Orientation Activities
Monday, July 2		First day of Classes for ADP Students
Friday, August 3	3 pm – 9 pm	Closing Ceremony Students move out of McCarthy Hall
Saturday, August 4	8:30 am- 12 noon	PAs complete closing tasks and move out of McCarthy Hall

[Note: Additional dates/times for ADP activities during the program are TBA]