5-2019

Making the Transition: Developing a Peer-Mentoring Program Targeting Transfer Students

Lydia C. Gwyn
*East Tennessee State University*, gwynlc@etsu.edu

Jonathan Wilson
*East Tennessee State University*, wilsonjr3@etsu.edu

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Making the Transition: Developing a Peer-Mentoring Program Targeting Transfer Students
Making the Transition: Developing a Peer-Mentoring Program Targeting Transfer Students

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY, SHERROD LIBRARY
JONATHAN WILSON | WILSONJR3@ETSU.EDU
LYDIA GWYN | GWYNLC@ETSU.EDU

Workshop for Instruction in Library Use 2019: Engaging Place and Practice
East Tennessee

Biggest cities:
Knoxville (~187,000)
Chattanooga (~179,000)
Johnson City (~66,000)

Mostly rural areas
Cherokee National Forest encompasses 655,598 acres of forest land
East Tennessee State University

- Located in Johnson City, TN, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains
- 14,500 undergraduate, graduate, & professional students
- Offers 81 graduate degree programs
- Popular majors: bluegrass, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, education, allied health, criminal justice
Most transfer students come from regional community colleges.

Most East Tennessee community colleges are located in rural areas.

Many first-generation college students.

**Transfers by the Numbers**

- 31% of all ETSU students have transferred from other institutions.
- 71% of ETSU transfer students are coming from community colleges.
- 58% of transfers graduate in 2 years.
- 47% of transfers graduate in 3 years.
- 24 average age of transfer students.
- 25% of transfers represent a diverse population.
- 77% of transfers receive a scholarship/grant.

**Top Transfer Institutions**

- Northeast State Community College
- Walters State Community College
- Virginia Highlands Community College
- Pellissippi State Community College

**Top Majors/Departments**

- Management & Marketing
- Nursing
- Allied Health Science
- Engineering Technology

Based on Fall 2017 Data.
A Peer-Mentoring Approach to Research Help?
WHAT IS A LIBRARY AMBASSADOR?

Librару Am.бас.sа.dоr: (noun)
an undergraduate student hired by the library who has received two semesters of information literacy and research skills instruction and spends their subsequent semesters deployed in academic buildings and computer labs across campus helping students with their research.
Peer learning programs have proven successful in tutoring centers & elsewhere in the university. People from similar social groups, not professionals, help each other to learn and in turn help themselves.

Trained undergraduates are ideal for delivering general reference and information literacy instruction.

Student engagement, library use, and library instruction all have positive impacts on retention; peer learning addresses each of these areas.

The advantages of peer learning also include opportunities for empathy, bonding, and lowered anxiety.
## Pilot Program Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPRING-SUMMER 2017</th>
<th>FALL 2017</th>
<th>SPRING 2018</th>
<th>FALL 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hire &amp; Train</strong></td>
<td><strong>Train &amp; Specialize</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implement</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • How many ambassadors? | • Hire Ambassadors  
• Begin first semester of information literacy instruction | • Last semester of information literacy instruction  
• Ambassadors begin to specialize in the databases of their respective majors  
• Reach out to academic departments for deployment  
• Reach out to satellite campuses for deployment | • Ambassadors deployed across campus to help students with research  
• Hire 25 new ambassadors for main campus, hire ambassadors at satellite campuses & begin first semester of information literacy instruction |
Why Target Transfers?

- Transferring from a small campus to a larger one can be daunting; this program eases that transition.
- The library ambassadors are a close-knit community of students with similar backgrounds.
- Ambassadors engage with the campus in a way that most students don't.
WHAT ARE THEY LEARNING?

- Develop research questions & identify keywords/search terms
- Use OneSearch, databases, Google Scholar, and the Web to find quality sources of information
- Evaluate sources of information
- Differentiate between popular, scholarly, trade sources & primary, secondary, & tertiary sources
- Specialize in the databases of their field
Partnerships

- Adult Commuter Transfer Services (ACTS)
- Scholarship Office
- ETSU-Kingsport
- Northeast State Community College
Our Vision

- Continue to hire mostly transfer students
- Collaborate with area community colleges to hire & train transfer students before they come to ETSU
- Ambassadors stationed in most academic building, residence hall, and computer lab
- Ambassador programs at all satellite campuses
- Target students on academic probation: hire them as ambassadors
References


QUESTIONS