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**PEER
MENTOR
SURVEY
REPORT**



www.lc.iastate.edu
1084 Student Services Building
Iowa State University

PEER MENTORS at Iowa State University

Peer mentors are upper-division students from the major or program associated with their particular learning community. They serve as a vital resource to new students, providing transitional support and connecting them to campus and community resources. Peer mentors often organize study groups, social events, and out-of-class activities for learning community participants. Their experience, guidance, and leadership are invaluable to our students. Peer mentors are integral to the success of learning communities at Iowa State University.

84
LEARNING
COMMUNITIES

6,480



LEARNING
COMMUNITY
PARTICIPANTS

600 +



PEER
MENTORS

FALL 2022 LEARNING COMMUNITY STATS

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CARE AND CONCERN FOR STUDENTS

SURVEY Findings

A significant aspect of the peer mentor role is providing psychological and emotional support to mentees (Nora & Crisp, 2007). This involves listening, providing moral support, assisting in identifying problems, providing encouragement, and establishing a supportive relationship between student and mentor.

Respondents to the Peer Mentor Survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:


95% My peer mentor responds in a reasonable time when I express a concern

72% I have regular interactions with my peer mentor

82% My peer mentor has made an effort to get to know me

At Iowa State, learning community peer mentors provide care and concern for their mentees through individual and group meetings, making referrals to campus and community resources, facilitating academic and social events, and effective communication.

 Having an older person on campus who **cares** to get to know you and **helping you succeed** is phenomenal.

I have been able to reach out to her for help/support, **she answers quickly and with a supportive response**. Having a peer mentor has made me feel more comfortable with my classes and with ISU as a whole, **I feel like I have someone I can reach out to with anything.** 

ACADEMIC SUPPORT



Peer mentors often play the role of learning coach, with a significant benefit to mentees of greater academic achievement (Colvin & Ashman, 2010), Mentored students can experience higher GPAs and retention rates compared to those without a mentor (e.g., Campbell & Campbell, 1997).

Learning community peer mentors at Iowa State provide academic support through organizing and encouraging study groups, sharing effective study strategies, reaching out to students who might be struggling, and connecting students with resources such as the [Academic Success Center](#).



*My peer mentor has shown me how to use **resources to improve my academic learning experience** and helped me with any questions I have.*



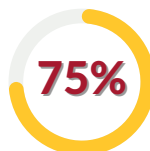
*She listened to my concerns regarding adjusting to ISU. She also **offered ways to study as well as resources to succeed in class.***



*[My peer mentor] has helped answer my **questions about academic success** and provided a helping hand when it came to **decisions about my major.***

SURVEY Findings


Respondents to the Peer Mentor Survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

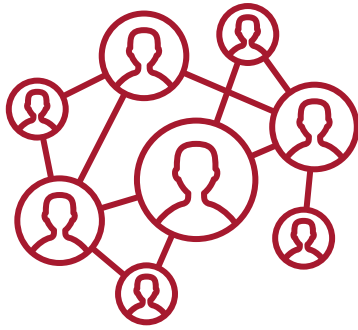


My peer mentor encourages learning community participants to study together



My peer mentor demonstrates concern about my academic success

*It's nice to know that someone who has been in my position before is willing and ready to **reach out and help with my academics.*** 




SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

SURVEY Findings

Respondents to the Peer Mentor Survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- 93%** My peer mentor facilitates interactions among learning community participants
- 61%** I have made an effort to get to know my peer mentor
- 92%** My peer mentor is skilled at facilitating discussions

 Having someone who gets you to **interact with your peers** makes it easier to feel included.

I've joined clubs and immediately **felt more comfortable seeing a familiar face** from the clubs they recommended. 

 [Having a peer mentor] helped me get to know some of the people in my major and **make connections in the community**.

She has been great at helping us to get to know each other as a group so we have more **connections with people in our major**. 

Peer mentors are valuable contributors to students' social support (Rieske & Benjamin, 2015) and they support mentees' sense of belonging at the university (Jacobi, 1991; Hill & Reddy, 2007; Nora & Crisp, 2007). Students who do not connect to a peer group are more likely to leave the university (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Tinto, 1975).

Peer mentors working with Iowa State's learning community program help students connect with faculty, staff, and peers by sharing involvement opportunities on campus, planning activities and events, leading group discussions, and sharing their classroom and research experiences.

CAMPUS RESOURCES




Peer mentors are a connecting link between students at the university and serve as a student advocate (Colvin & Ashman, 2010). They connect their mentees to key resources, help them navigate the university, and can act as liaisons to faculty and staff (Lundsford, Crisp, Dolan, & Wuetherick, 2017).

Learning community peer mentors at Iowa State receive training and information about campus and community resources, involvement opportunities, active and empathetic listening strategies, and how to make effective referrals.

SURVEY Findings

Respondents to the Peer Mentor Survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement:



 [My peer mentor] has shown me **beneficial resources, clubs, studying opportunities**, you name it here at Iowa State. And how to find them, not just informing us of the available resources.

Having a peer mentor was beneficial because they are also students, so they have been in the same situation as me and **they know what the best resources for students are based on experience.** 

 [My peer mentor] helps me **discover new resources** and **shows me how to use them.**

He makes an effort to **get us involved** in ways that can help us succeed. He is knowledgeable in things **we should know about our community and resources.** 

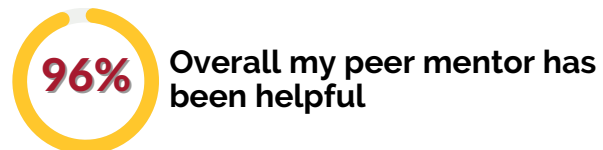
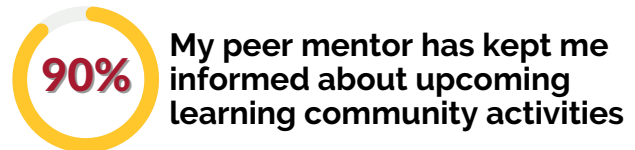
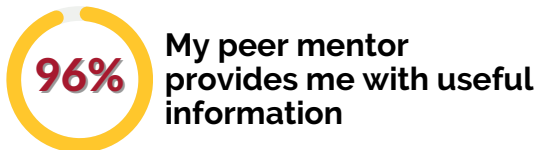


GENERAL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

SURVEY Findings

In addition to specific academic and social support, peer mentors serve as a sounding board for ideas, provide advice based on their experience, and share helpful feedback to students (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Dziczkowski, 2013). They keep mentees informed about requirements, deadlines, and activities both inside and outside their learning community.

Respondents to the Peer Mentor Survey either agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:



*It's helpful to have **someone who knows their way and can guide you** through college.*

*[My peer mentor] has been a great guide to help **adjusting to college life** and has been an easy **role model** to relate to.*

*I know I have someone who is willing to **support me** and **provide guidance and assistance** when needed.*

*My peer mentor guides me to **keep me on the right track** and provides me with **useful information to contribute to my success**.*

The Peer Mentor Survey takes place during weeks six through eight of the fall semester. This survey is designed to gather feedback from learning community (LC) participants about their interactions with peer mentors during the first half of the semester. LC coordinators, the faculty and staff who coordinate the individual LCs, are provided with a unique report link to review responses for their LC(s). They are encouraged to share this feedback with their peer mentors individually in order to identify positive attributes and potential areas for improvement for the remainder of the semester.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

This report contains responses from the Peer Mentor Survey run during the fall 2022 semester. The survey is administered through the Qualtrics survey platform via anonymous response link. Item responses ranged from **3,156** to **3,163** (+167 from fall 2021). Respondents were encouraged to complete the survey as many times as necessary to provide feedback for each peer mentor with whom they interacted within the LC. Since responses were anonymous, no demographic data was captured.

A full version of the survey items can be found on the [Iowa State Learning Communities website](#).

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