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

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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

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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)²

*Cities of Tennessee*¹

- 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 ³



Ariel view of ETSU campus ⁴

TRANSFERS BY THE NUMBERS

BY THE

- Most transfer students come from regional community colleges
- Most East Tennessee community colleges are located in rural areas
- Many first-generation college students

31%

of all ETSU students have transferred from other institutions

71%

of ETSU transfer students are coming from community colleges



58%

transfer in 60 credit hours or more

77%

of transfers receive a scholarship/grant

18%

of transfers represent a diverse population

25%

of transfers graduate in 2 years

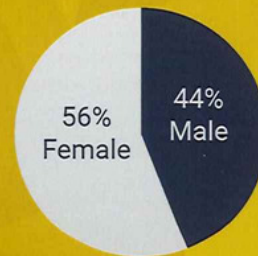
47%

of transfers graduate in 3 years

24

average age of transfer students

TRANSFER GENDER BREAKDOWN



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

ETSU is an AA/EEO employer. ETSU-891-17.14M



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY



A Peer-Mentoring Approach to Research Help?

WHAT IS A LIBRARY AMBASSADOR?

Li.brar.y Am.bas.sa.dor: (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.



WHY A PEER LEARNING MODEL?

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 anxiety⁶

Pilot Program Timeline

SPRING-SUMMER

2017



Plan

- How many ambassadors?
- What type of students?
- How much training?

FALL

2017



Hire & Train

- Hire Ambassadors
- Begin first semester of information literacy instruction

SPRING

2018



Train & Specialize

- 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

FALL

2018



Implement

- 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

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QUESTIONS

