

Students Helping Students: Second Edition

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Transition Guide

Major Changes to the Second Edition

- Updated current literature on theory, research demonstrating theory to practice
- Enhanced with more figures, graphs and tables to provide concept maps and visual aids
- Added real life case studies and first person vignettes to illustrate peer educators' experience
- Included brief summaries called *tips* with practice suggestions for peer educators
- Expanded applications to utilize examples of latest communication technologies
- Consistently referenced the *reflection model* emphasizing the progression of a concept from theory to personal application
- Personalized the concept of intercultural competence to reflect cultural identity as a basis of communication
- Revised the chapter on academic learning to focus on illustrating strategies to help students succeed in college
- Provided a new chapter giving examples on a variety of peer educator applications
- Included a glossary of terms

Foreword

John Gardener, founder of the Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, writes, “I can safely posit that I believe the most important generic strategy that colleges and universities can adopt to increase student success is one that greatly increases intentional efforts for *students helping students*. Decades of good research have determined that the single greatest influence on college student decision making during the college years is the influence of other students. We can’t beat it. Why not join it? This is to say, once you recognize the enormous influence of students on students the logical conclusion should be we need to try to influence this by putting the students we want to influence other students into the positions of influence to do just that.”

Preface

The preface notes that much has changed in the 10 years that followed the publication of the first edition of *Students Helping Students*. These changes include: a greater proliferation in the use of peer educators into a wide range of service duties on campus, the expansion of service delivery toward on-line social networking and interactive websites, and greater involvement of organized student leadership toward social consciousness movements from green ecology to responsible community.

The purpose of *Students Helping Students* is to serve as a training manual and resource guide for the pre-service or in-service preparation of peer mentors in a variety of service functions. The goal of this book is to cover the fundamentals of effective practice as a

peer educator. It is recognized that informational content for the preparation of any specific service area will be provided within the context of these specializations.

Chapter 1: Peer Educators on the College Campus

This chapter provides a foundation for the peer educator training process. The overview includes definitions and background history on the helping role of peer educators on campus. This edition updates the research on peer effectiveness based upon recent studies from the literature. New to this chapter is a section that addresses how the act of helping will be a significant personal learning experience for the peer educator. This is addressed through both anecdotes from those who have served as peer educators and by reflection activities within the chapter. A context for training includes principles for the training community and tips for becoming an effective peer educator. The process of training becomes a prototype of the helping model.

Chapter 2: Student Maturation and the Impact upon Peers

In this chapter student development is conceptualized from the models of theorists such as Arthur Chickering and Carol Gilligan and from the research of Alexander Astin, Ernest Pascarella, Patrick Terenzini, George Kuh, Richard Light, and many others. Additions to this chapter include anecdotal stories discussed as examples from the personal changes and challenges faced by students in everyday college situations. Included are examples for non-traditional adult students.

Chapter 3: Enhancing Cultural Proficiency

This chapter is a complete revision from the 1st edition where the impact of cultural diversity as important to the helping interaction was first emphasized. The revision starts with the assumption that we are all products of our cultural context. As a result of living in a world that is now connected with multiple cultural identities, we must understand ourselves as cultural beings before we can understand and respect the many issues of diversity. Advancing personal awareness leads to cultural proficiency and reduction of the pitfalls of prejudice, stereotyping and bias. The instructional strategies of this chapter include a series of illustrations providing examples encountered on a campus and reflective activities to help the reader encounter these issues in his or her own life.

Chapter 4: Interpersonal Communication Skills: Creating the Helping Interaction

This chapter explores the facilitative communication dimension included in attending, listening and responding. Differentiation is made between advice giving and the more interpersonal process that facilitates the self-exploration and personal responsibility for change.

Chapter 5: Problem Solving with Individuals

Chapter 5 follows up the development of communication as a helping interaction to move toward actual processes for assisting students through problem solving strategies. The importance of using systematic assessment methods and making accurate analysis is emphasized. Strategies in this chapter include both logical problem sequence approaches such as force field analysis and creative approaches including metaphors and mind-mapping. The practice of applying these strategies is demonstrated by exercises having

the peer educator follow each step of the problem solving method by the use of personal illustrations.

Chapter 6: Understanding Group Process

Peer educators are asked to perform much of their service by working in a classroom, seminar, within an identified organization, or some other collection of students who are in face to face interaction. The goal of this chapter is to explain how group dynamics have an important impact on how a group functions. More importantly, the awareness of group dynamics can lead to strategies that enhance the group productivity.

Chapter 7: Leading Groups Effectively

The companion to Chapter 6 is this chapter with an emphasis on the skills and strategies of leadership. New to this chapter is a review of the most recent theories on leadership in the millennium. The chapter goes on to provide practical tips for dealing with the specific situations that may come up when working in groups.

Chapter 8: Strategies for Academic Success

This chapter has been completely revised from the first edition of the book. This is the only chapter that outlines an in-depth application of how peers may offer a service intervention to reach a specific outcome. The goal of academic success has been chosen because it represents a universal objective for achievement in higher education. A model for identifying the factors important to academic success is described and then the strategies important to enact this process are outlined step by step.

Chapter 9: Using Campus Resources and Referral Techniques

This chapter overviews the process of helping students locate resources on the campus or in the community. The chapter also discusses the ways that a peer educator can make appropriate referrals. A section on Internet and electronic resources has been added to this chapter including a discussion on the rich access of the “information highway” as well as the “caveats” needed to determine the validity of on-line sources.

Chapter 10: Ethics and Strategies for Good Practice

This chapter includes a statement on the standards of conduct and principles for good practice that are important to a code of ethics. An important inclusion in this chapter is an exercise that provides vignettes of “real life” situations that the peer educator can use to discuss situational issues and the need to make choices while considering personal conduct and consequences.

Chapter 11: Examples of Peer Educator Programs in Higher Education

This is a new chapter which provides demonstrations of peer educator programs in five categories of service: (1) Rich learning including study abroad and service learning; (2) Character development and academic integrity; (3) Health and wellness practices; (4) Promotion of environments of safety and non-violence; and (5) Living well together. Information about programs in each of these areas is a result of interviews with program coordinators and is meant to illustrate the kinds of activities, training and resources utilized.

Glossary:

A list of over 100 terms is included, defined within the context of meaning provided in the chapters of this book.