

**DRAKE UNIVERSITY
PEER MENTOR/ACADEMIC CONSULTANT
(PMAC) PROGRAM**

Mission:

The mission of the PMAC program is to supplement and enrich a successful transition to college while emphasizing the development of academic, social, and professional skills to be used during a student's Drake experience and as a lifelong learner.

Program Description:

The Peer Mentor/Academic Consultant (PMAC) Program is designed to assist new students (direct-from-high school and transfer) during their transition to Drake with an emphasis on academic success and personal development.

Studies have concluded that the first six to eight weeks are critical for new students because they are determining "institutional fit" during this period of time. Research has identified peer-to-peer interactions as having a strong influence on student success. With this in mind, current Drake students have an opportunity to mentor new students through the PMAC program with communication beginning in the summer, intense interactions throughout Welcome Weekend, and continued contact during the fall semester.

PMACs are not paid. They demonstrate a commitment of "service to others" by helping new students feel comfortable and confident in their new environment. In addition, PMACs enhance your own professional skills with an emphasis on effective communication, conflict management, and an appreciation and respect for the importance of community and diversity. They work collaboratively with several departments on campus but receive direction and guidance from the Vice Provost Student Affairs and Academic Excellence and the Peer Advisory Board (PAB).

The five-member Peer Advisory Board (PAB) meets weekly with the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Academic Excellence and is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating program content beginning with communication prior to new students' arrival on campus in the fall. Members of PAB plan, coordinate, and evaluate activities during Welcome Weekend as well as the semester-long mentoring experience. The Board determines qualifications and characteristics preferred when identifying PMAC candidates, interviews and selects the PMACs, and develops and facilitates the PMAC professional development and training component.

Program Assessment:

The First Year Interest (FYI) Committee on Student Senate, in conjunction with PAB and the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Academic Excellence, administers an evaluation of Welcome Weekend, including first-year and transfer students, determining strengths and areas needing improvement. In addition to the FYI survey, there are several questions regarding PMACs and Welcome Weekend on the First Year Seminar (FYS) evaluation administered by the FYS coordinator at the end of the fall semester. PMACs are also asked to provide feedback about their experiences and those of the first-year and transfer students in their respective groups. Results of the multiple forms of feedback are used to make program changes or enhance existing

components deemed to be effective. For example: Continued involvement of FYS faculty at a dinner event during Welcome Weekend has been the result of strong support from first-year students for more faculty-student interaction. Incorporating Community Service as an integral part of Welcome Weekend has improved neighborhood relations and increased participation in community service projects throughout the academic year. Assigning PMACs to a FYS group has enhanced the relationships between PMACs and the respective FYS professors. In many instances, the PMACs have either had the FYS professor during their first year at Drake or they have worked with the professor in another class or research project. Eliminating or altering activities during Welcome Weekend and throughout the semester to better meet the needs of students reflects Drake's mission and explication, a document that provides the framework and curriculum for designing and evaluating all aspects of the PMAC program.

Wanda E. Everage, Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Academic Excellence
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