Health Promotion
Peer Education Program Handbook

Student Health Service
North Dakota State University

Purpose

The Health Promotion Peer Education Program empowers students to positively influence the health, well-being, and success of the NDSU student community. Through peer-to-peer education, outreach, advocacy, and leadership, Peer Educators help create a campus culture where students feel connected, supported, and equipped to make informed decisions that enhance their personal, academic, and social lives.

Grounded in the belief that students learn best from one another, the program trains Peer Educators to serve as trusted leaders, educators, and advocates who promote healthy behaviors, increase awareness of campus resources, challenge misconceptions, and foster meaningful connections among students. Through these efforts, Peer Educators contribute to a healthier, safer, and more inclusive campus environment while developing transferable leadership, communication, and professional skills that prepare them for success beyond graduation.

The Health Promotion Peer Education Program seeks to:

- Promote a culture of health, well-being, and student success at NDSU.
- Increase student awareness and utilization of campus resources.
- Foster positive social norms and healthy decision-making.
- Build students' leadership, communication, and advocacy skills.
- Strengthen students' sense of belonging and community connection.
- Support evidence-informed health promotion and prevention efforts.
- Enhance student learning through experiential and co-curricular engagement.

Peer Educators as Leaders, Educators, and Advocates

Health Promotion Peer Educators serve as leaders, educators, and advocates within the NDSU community. As **leaders**, they model healthy behaviors, foster positive social norms, and contribute to a campus culture that values well-being and belonging. As **educators**, they facilitate programs, lead conversations, share evidence-based information, and increase awareness of campus resources. As **advocates**, they help students navigate support systems and build meaningful relationships that strengthen both individual and community well-being.

Through these roles, Peer Educators develop skills in leadership, communication, teamwork, critical thinking, program planning, and advocacy while creating positive change across campus.

Peer Education Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Peer Education Program, students will be able to:

1. Communicate accurate health and well-being information to diverse audiences.
2. Demonstrate leadership through positive role modeling and decision-making.
3. Connect students with appropriate campus resources.

4. Design and implement educational programs and outreach initiatives that address student needs.
5. Collaborate effectively with peers, faculty, staff, and campus partners.
6. Reflect on personal growth and articulate transferable career-ready skills.

Professional Skill Development

Participation in the Health Promotion Peer Education Program provides students with opportunities to develop and strengthen professional competencies that are highly valued by employers, graduate programs, and community organizations. Through training, outreach, program implementation, and collaboration, Peer Educators gain practical experience that prepares them for success both during and after their time at NDSU.

- **Leadership**
  Peer Educators develop leadership skills by serving as role models, advocates, and influencers within the campus community. They learn how to motivate others, take initiative, facilitate positive change, and contribute to a shared vision of health and well-being. Through planning and leading programs, Peer Educators gain confidence in their ability to lead teams, navigate challenges, and make informed decisions.

- **Communication**
  Effective communication is central to the role of a Peer Educator. Participants learn how to communicate clearly and professionally through presentations, outreach activities, marketing efforts, and group facilitation. They develop the ability to tailor messages to diverse audiences, listen actively, engage in meaningful conversations, and share information in ways that are accurate, approachable, and impactful.

- **Teamwork and Collaboration**
  Peer Educators work closely with fellow students, staff, faculty, and campus partners to achieve shared goals. Through collaborative projects and programming efforts, they learn how to contribute effectively to teams, value diverse perspectives, resolve conflicts constructively, and support the success of others. These experiences help participants build strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills.

- **Critical Thinking**
  Health and well-being issues are often complex and require thoughtful analysis. Peer Educators develop critical thinking skills by assessing student needs, evaluating health information, considering multiple perspectives, and making evidence-informed decisions. This ability to analyze information and apply knowledge to real-world situations is an essential skill for both professional and personal success.

- **Problem Solving**
  Throughout the program, Peer Educators encounter situations that require creativity, adaptability, and resourcefulness. Whether addressing student concerns, overcoming event-planning challenges, or identifying new approaches to engagement, Peer Educators learn to evaluate options, develop solutions, and respond effectively to changing circumstances.

- **Program Planning and Project Management**
  Peer Educators gain hands-on experience in developing and implementing health promotion initiatives from start to finish. They learn how to establish goals, create action plans, manage logistics, coordinate resources, meet deadlines, and evaluate outcomes. These project management skills are transferable to virtually every profession and provide valuable experience in organizing and executing successful initiatives.

- **Public Speaking and Presentation Skills**
  Through workshops, educational programs, tabling events, and outreach activities, Peer Educators gain experience presenting information in front of groups of varying sizes. Participants build confidence in their speaking abilities while learning techniques for audience engagement, presentation design, facilitation, and responding to questions effectively.

- **Cultural Awareness and Inclusive Practice**
  Peer Educators work with students from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Through training and direct interaction with diverse populations, they develop cultural awareness, empathy, and an understanding of how individual experiences influence health and well-being. These skills help participants build environments where all students feel respected, valued, and supported.

- **Advocacy**
  Peer Educators serve as advocates for student well-being and positive campus change. They learn how to identify student needs, raise awareness of important issues, promote supportive resources, and encourage healthy behaviors. Advocacy experiences help students develop confidence in using their voice to influence their communities and support causes that improve quality of life for others.

- **Professionalism**
  The program provides opportunities to practice professional behaviors that are essential in the workplace. Peer Educators learn to manage responsibilities, meet expectations, communicate professionally, maintain accountability, work ethically, and represent themselves and their organization positively. These experiences help prepare students for internships, employment, graduate school, and future leadership roles.

- **Self-Awareness and Reflection**
  An often-overlooked professional skill is the ability to reflect on personal strengths, challenges, values, and experiences. Peer Educators engage in ongoing reflection that helps them increase self-awareness, recognize personal growth, and identify areas for continued development. This practice supports lifelong learning and helps students articulate the skills and experiences they gain through the program.

- **Career Readiness**
  Through the combination of leadership development, communication, teamwork, project management, and professional experience, Peer Educators build competencies that align with workforce expectations across many industries. By the completion of the program, participants will be better prepared to communicate their skills, demonstrate leadership experiences, and showcase meaningful accomplishments to future employers and graduate programs.

Peer Educator Assessment and Reflection

The Health Promotion Peer Education Program is committed to providing a meaningful learning experience that supports student growth both personally and professionally. Assessment and reflection are integral components of the program and are designed to help Peer Educators recognize their development, connect their experiences to the Bison Life Learning Goals and Outcomes, and identify opportunities for continued growth. The assessment process emphasizes learning, self-discovery, and skill development rather than evaluation alone. Through intentional reflection and feedback, Peer Educators gain a deeper understanding of how their experiences contribute to their personal, academic, professional, and community impact.

- **Bison Life Learning Outcomes Assessment**
  As a co-curricular leadership experience, the Health Promotion Peer Education Program intentionally supports the four Bison Life learning goals of **Discover, Connect, Grow, and Thrive.** Throughout their participation, Peer Educators will have opportunities to demonstrate growth in each of the associated outcome areas including leveraging resources, developing self-awareness, engaging across differences, strengthening communication skills, fostering connections, utilizing teamwork skills, advancing critical thinking, demonstrating professionalism, building leadership skills, applying well-being practices, fostering communities of belonging, and pursuing career and self-development opportunities.

  Peer Educators will complete self-assessments using the NDSU Bison Life co-curricular rubric framework at designated points throughout the academic year. These assessments provide a structured opportunity for students to evaluate their current level of competency, identify strengths, recognize areas for improvement, and document growth over time.

Assessment results may be used to guide individual development plans, program improvements, and overall evaluation of student learning outcomes.

- **Individual Reflection and One-on-One Meetings**
  Reflection is an essential part of transforming experience into learning. In addition to group discussions and team debriefs, Peer Educators will participate in intentional one-on-one meetings with the Health Promotion Coordinators throughout the academic year. These meetings are designed to provide individualized support, mentorship, and professional development opportunities.

  During one-on-one meetings, Peer Educators will:
  - Reflect on their experiences, successes, and challenges.
  - Discuss progress toward personal and professional goals.
  - Review growth related to Bison Life learning outcomes.
  - Identify opportunities for leadership and skill development.
  - Explore strategies for overcoming barriers and enhancing performance.
  - Connect program experiences to future academic, career, and life goals.

  These conversations encourage ongoing reflection and help students recognize the value and impact of their contributions to the campus community.

Health and Well-being for All

The Health Promotion Peer Education Program is intentionally designed to be more than a student employment or volunteer experience. It is a leadership and professional development opportunity that equips students with transferable skills, practical experience, and personal insight that will benefit them throughout their academic journey, future careers, and supports a lifelong commitment to promoting health and well-being for all.