

BLUEprint Graduate Assistantship

Paul Robeson Cultural Center

General Description

The two BLUEprint Graduate Assistants assist primarily with the coordination and implementation of the BLUEprint Peer Mentoring Program. The Graduate Assistants have individual and collective responsibilities, which will contribute to the general administration of the program. Reporting directly to the Assistant Director, and indirectly to the Director of the PRCC, the Graduate Assistants will gain unique experience related to university cultural centers and multicultural student affairs, along with skills in: college student development, co-curricular program development, research and assessment, student advising and advocacy, curriculum development, social justice education, academic support, and other applicable categories.

Sponsored by the Paul Robeson Cultural Center (PRCC) and started in 2012, the BLUEprint Peer Mentoring Program focuses on offering cultural, social, and academic support to students of color, specifically first-year and transfer/change-of-campus students. The purpose of BLUEprint is to promote the overall well-being of each student involved (mentors and mentees), while contributing to their successful acclimation to and persistence at The Pennsylvania State University.

As of 2015, BLUEprint became one of less than 50 peer mentoring programs to receive the International Mentor Training Program Certification (IMPTC) through the College Reading and Learning Association, which holds the program to strict standards and enables students to earn various levels of mentor certification. The certification statuses are achieved based upon each mentor's completion of required training hours, in-person mentoring hours, and periodic performance evaluations. Students who are selected to serve as mentors through a rigorous application process must participate in frequent trainings in order to foster the necessary knowledge and skills to have positive and meaningful interactions with their assigned mentees.

Mentors and mentees are offered monthly enrichment sessions to learn about and discuss topics related to the following areas: academic resources and success, cultural competence, personal skills, campus and community engagement, and professional development. In addition to one-on-one mentor/mentee meetings, the pairs attend various workshops, performances, intergroup dialogues, community service projects, team-building retreats, social gatherings, exploratory trips, and other PRCC-sponsored programs.

Learning Outcomes

Through this assistantship housed in the PRCC, the BLUEprint Graduate Assistants will:

- Develop the ability to conceptualize and implement meaningful and engaging co-curricular student support programs.
- Cultivate a deeper understanding of and familiarity with offering multifaceted support related to the collegiate experience for students of color.
- Acquire an increased understanding of how to integrate theory and research into student-centered practice within a higher education setting.
- Gain comprehensive logistical planning skills, as well as a practical understanding of curriculum development for student support programs.
- Develop the ability to effectively create and facilitate educational and leadership training opportunities for students.
- Foster skills and knowledge relevant to offering multicultural, diversity, and social justice education.
- Enhance professional leadership, communication, and conflict management skills through interaction and collaboration with diverse populations of students, faculty, staff, and community members.
- Gain experience in advising students and student organizations regarding cultural, social, and academic matters.

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Position Responsibilities

This position is approximately 20 hours a week, which includes some evening and weekend hours. The specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- **Membership Recruitment:** Assist with the successful recruitment of the 2017-2018 Mentee Cohort (first-year and transfer/change-of-campus students) and 2017-2018 Mentor Cohort (students with 2nd-5th year standing) through outreach to academic units, Student Affairs units, campus/community organizations, student organizations, involvement fairs, summer enrichment programs, New Student Orientation events, email lists, etc.
- **Programming & Event Planning:** Assist with the coordination of BLUEprint large group events, including open educational programs, community service projects, academic support efforts, team-building retreats, exploratory trips, and social gatherings.
- **Membership Evaluation:** Assist with the tracking and evaluation of mentor and mentee participation for the purpose of meeting IMPTC standards, awarding mentor certification and determining invitations for continued membership, special opportunities, and incentive-giving.
- **Curriculum Development:** Assist with the educational content and logistical planning for monthly enrichment sessions, monthly cohort meetings, team-building retreats, exploratory trips, and mentor training events, which can include opportunities for facilitation and co-facilitation with individuals from academic units, Student Affairs units, and campus/community organizations.
- **Student Advising & Advocacy:** Assist with the advising of the Student Planning Committee and other student leaders within BLUEprint, which includes attending weekly coordinator meetings, weekly full committee meetings, and other meetings.
- **Co-Curricular Program Development:** Assist with designing and implementing new and sustainable initiatives for BLUEprint to improve best practices, including K-12 and commonwealth campus outreach, in addition to ensuring successful adherence to IMPTC requirements.
- **Research & Assessment:** Assist with the development and implementation of assessment tools, along with compiling and analyzing assessment data collected from the 2017-2018 academic year, as a means to gauge the effectiveness and areas of improvement for BLUEprint and to produce our annual assessment report to be shared with the Vice President for Student Affairs and other senior administrators.
- **Promotion & Marketing:** Assist with the promotion and marketing of BLUEprint and other PRCC-sponsored programs through social media, email lists, photo and video archiving, printer flyers, and digital newsletters.
- **Professional Development:** Attend the monthly PRCC professional staff meetings, regular meetings with supervisor, and other PRCC-sponsored programs.
- Other duties as assigned by the Assistant Director and Director.

Qualifications

A successful candidate in this position should possess the following:

- Full-time enrollment in a Master's degree program at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park.
- Experience working with or demonstrated commitment to serving minoritized student populations and communities of color.
- Strong understanding of student diversity as it relates to offering cultural, social, and academic support.
- Strong interpersonal, problem-solving, and communication skills, as well as the ability to manage multiple tasks.
- Experience in event planning and implementing educational programming.
- Ability to establish and build rapport with others in order to create productive and supportive relationships with students and professional colleagues.