

Becoming a Peer Advisor

Program Description

The Honors Peer Advising Center (HPAC) provides significant support related to honors credit, honors diplomas, and honors student plans to earn an Honors Laureate Diploma, though it will adapt to support honors students as needed. The HPAC's main service is one-on-one peer advising appointments, but it may also offer small-group workshops.

Position Description

The primary duty of HPAC peer advisors is to meet individually with honors students in an Honors advising capacity. Peer advisors are trained to ask questions, get students actively involved in finding solutions, and introduce resources as necessary.

This position lasts for a full academic year, beginning in the fall semester. HPAC advisors work four hours per week in the center and enroll in UH 4104: Honors Student Teaching Practicum each fall and spring semester. Peer Advisors practice collaborative learning, communication and problem-solving skills, reflection, and develop familiarity with Honors and University resources. The position is unpaid, but the credit earned through UH 4104 counts as experiential learning toward completion of the Honors Laureate Diploma.

Practicum

UH 4104 Honors Student Teaching Practicum supports Honors Peer Educators and Peer Advisors during the semesters in which they work with honors students. For Peer Advisors, this 2-credit P/F course provides training and support and meets once a week for 75 minutes for the first half of the fall semester, less frequently later in the fall semester, and usually not at all during the spring semester. This course emphasizes discussion-based teaching; active, collaborative learning; and building student communities through development of personal teaching strengths and understanding of honors students' characteristics and needs. This course is mandatory for students teaching a Reading Seminar or working in the Honors Peer Advising Center. UH 4104 is repeatable for up to eight (8) credits and is P/F only.

Time Commitment

- One, 3-hour pre-fall semester training session
- Four (4) hours weekly of advising appointments
- 75-minute Practicum (meeting frequency as described above) with homework
- One workshop per semester (TBD)
- Academic year commitment

Selection Criteria

The application to become a Peer Advisor opens each March and closes on the first business day in April. The most successful peer educators are honors students who can be approachable, reliable role models and mentors with strong communication, listening, and interpersonal skills; strong organization and time management skills; experience in peer leadership; a strong academic record; and adaptability, empathy, and patience. The best applicants will have experience in Honors and at Virginia Tech, willingness to learn Honors and University resources inside and out, and sufficient availability throughout the full academic year.