International Student Experience Exchange Peer Mentor Program

New Student Handbook

DePaul University Office for International Students and Scholars
1 East Jackson Blvd, Suite 9300
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312-362-8376
ISEE Email: ISEEprogram@depaul.edu
ISEE Website: http://oiss.depaul.edu/ISEEPeerMentorProgram/index.asp
ISEE Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ISEEDePaul
ISEE Orgsync: https://orgsync.com/67872/chapter
Welcome!
The International Student Experience Exchange (ISEE) mentor program was established in Spring 2012 by the Office for International Students and Scholars to help new international students adjust to Chicago and American culture, as they begin their study abroad experience at DePaul University. We sincerely hope that your international academic program is an enjoyable international experience and that the ISEE Peer Mentor Program helps add to your positive experience here.

Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS)
The Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS) is committed to providing quality advising services to over 1,500 non-immigrant international students and scholars in F-1 and J-1 visa statuses at DePaul University. Please check-out the OISS or other DePaul websites to locate information you may need: http://oiss.depaul.edu/ or send us an email at ISEEprogram@depaul.edu anytime.

About The ISEE Peer Mentor Program

ISEE Peer Mentor Program Mission
The International Student Experience Exchange is a bridge program that connects committed student mentors with incoming international students to improve their academic achievement, social competence, and to facilitate smooth adjustment into the new environment. By sharing experiences and insights, mentors can ease the transition process of new international students by making deeper connections that enhance the quality of the new international student experience.

ISEE Peer Mentor Program Goals and Objectives:
- To help new students adjust and transition into DePaul life smoothly and easily
- To help new students know how to identify campus resources in order to be academically successful
- To provide new students with a potential cultural informant to help them navigate the nuances of American culture
- To help new students actively engage in and out of class and facilitate involvement in extra-curricular clubs and student life activities
- To allow mentor students an opportunity to offer guidance and serve as a member of a collaborative support system for new students
- To facilitate foundations for long-term friendship

The ISEE Program is a 10 –week, STUDENT – RUN Program! You are a valuable part of the program. As a New Student Mentee in the ISEE Program, you are starting on your path of student leadership!
Organization of the ISEE Mentor Program
New international students will be matched with a team of ISEE Peer Mentors. One Mentor will be an international student and the other Mentor will be an American student. You will be matched to your mentor teams based on the following criteria:

Gender: if you are a female student, you will be paired with female mentors. If you are a male student, you will be paired with male mentors. *This is not a dating service.*

Academic area of study: ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to match you to a peer mentor who is also in a similar academic program here at DePaul. Therefore, if you study business, we will try to pair you with a peer mentor who also studies business. Please note that we cannot guarantee a perfect match to a peer mentor in a specific academic area every time, but we will do our best to match mentors and mentees accordingly.

Cross-cultural: In an attempt to help new students embrace interacting with other students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to pair new international students with peer mentors who have different cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds in an effort to expand student’s intercultural communication skills.
**Similar social interests:** ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to match you to other students who share similar hobbies, such as enjoyment of sports, engagement in the arts, etc.

Together, you, your fellow new student mentees and your Mentor Team will form a small ISEE Peer Group. Mentors will organize social activities on a weekly basis for their mentee groups, answer questions, and help new student mentees have an awesome time while here at DePaul. The ISEE Grouping structure looks like this:

![ISEE Grouping Structure Diagram]

**Being a New Student Mentee**
A “Mentee” refers to new and returning international students who would like some support in adjusting to the culture and environment here in Chicago at DePaul University. Your Mentor will assist with helping you to adapt and adjust to your new surroundings. For the first 10 weeks of your academic program here at DePaul, your Mentor will serve as a friend and a “cultural informant”. You will benefit by making new friends, developing confidence, increasing cultural awareness, and expanding appreciation of American culture.
Expectations for New Student Mentees
While attending DePaul, your first responsibility is to be a student. Work, friends, and other extracurricular activities also demand time. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this Peer Mentor Program and we hope it will help you to feel more comfortable and at home at DePaul. The expectations for you as a new student mentee this program are outlined in this handbook. How you carry out your role as a new student mentee will make the biggest difference in the lives of your ISEE Peer Group.

Outline of Responsibilities:
Your role as a new student mentee begins as soon as you receive the name and email contact information for your Peer Mentor.

1. Email your Mentor and ISEE Peer Group to introduce yourself.
2. Attend Kick Off Events.
3. You and your ISEE Mentor should sign the Mentor / Mentee Contract.
4. Submit the Mentor / Mentee Contract to your assigned Student Committee Leader.
5. Ask your Mentor lots of questions.
6. Attend ISEE events with your ISEE Peer Group.
7. Contact your Mentor and Peer Group each week to actively participate and discuss relevant topics. Some relevant topics include:
   a. Week One = Exploring Chicago and DePaul and getting settled
   b. Week Two = How to get involved in Student Life
   c. Week Three = Observations on American Culture
   d. Week Four = How to befriend or date an American
   e. Week Five = MIDTERMS (Focus on exams)
   f. Week Six = How to deal with Culture Shock
   g. Week Seven = How to stay healthy at DePaul
   h. Week Eight = How to stay safe in Chicago
   i. Week Nine = Lessons from participating in the ISEE Program
   j. Week Ten = FINAL EXAMS (Focus on exams)

8. Get involved in DePaul student life! (See the Events Calendar on our website for fun events!)
9. Four times per quarter, complete and submit a Connectivity Report to the Student Committee Leader. (Refer to the Appendix for a sample Connectivity Report).
10. Nominate your Mentor for the BEST MENTOR award at the ISEE Wrap Up event.
11. Attend the ISEE Wrap Up event at the end of the quarter.
12. Work with your assigned Student Leader Committee Member throughout the quarter for extra support.
13. Complete an evaluation at the end of the 10 week program.

Communication is key. Effective communication will help you keep in touch with other mentors, other international students and the OISS department. Make sure to attend all ISEE meetings and maintain communication with ISEE Program Administrators.
How to Stay Involved Throughout the Quarter

The ISEE Program Calendar should help you to stay involved. To check the calendar online, please visit: http://international.depaul.edu/AboutUs/NewsandEvents/index.asp frequently for weekly events.

Stay tuned to events that you can participate in across campus at DePaul! Some of these activities are sponsored by OISS and some of them are hosted by other departments. For example you can attend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Bon Appetit</th>
<th>2. International Coffee Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OISS hosts an outing for students on the first Friday of every month to a new ethnic restaurant out in the city of Chicago. To learn about dates, times and prices, contact: <a href="mailto:oiss@depaul.edu">oiss@depaul.edu</a></td>
<td>IPO hosts a free coffee hour twice per quarter where American students and international students are invited to come, play games and enjoy food and beverages. To learn about dates and times, please email: <a href="mailto:internationalprograms@depaul.edu">internationalprograms@depaul.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Campus Recreation</td>
<td>4. Writing Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Recreation hosts camping trips, kayaking trips, rock-wall climbing events and so much more. To learn about fun events, please visit: <a href="http://campusrec.depaul.edu/events/Pages/default.aspx">http://campusrec.depaul.edu/events/Pages/default.aspx</a></td>
<td>UCWBL (University Center for Writing Based Learning) hosts Conversation Partners where international students can make appointments with American students to practice spoken English to improve conversation skills. To learn about making an appointment, visit: <a href="http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/Writing%20Center/convo.html">http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/Writing%20Center/convo.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Office of Student Involvement</td>
<td>6. Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSI coordinates over 300 student clubs here on campus. To learn more, visit: <a href="http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/involvement/">http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/involvement/</a></td>
<td>Go to a Blue Demons Basketball game! To learn more, please visit: <a href="http://www.depaulbluedemons.com/">http://www.depaulbluedemons.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Center for Intercultural Programs: <a href="http://www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/cip/">http://www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/cip/</a></td>
<td>Go for a Neighborhood tour and learn more about Chicago!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other activities to do include:
- Get together for a home cooked meal
- Enjoying ice cream at a Chicago restaurant
- Play miniature golf at Navy Pier
- Attend a play
- Go to a movie and café afterwards
- Check out the art exhibits at the DePaul Art Museum
- Study together
- Go rollerblading or bike riding
- Meet for Coffee or at an on campus dining facility
- Visit a local church
- Eat at a local restaurant
- Meet and discuss career goals
- Attend a student organization event together
- Make a snowman in the winter
- Chat on the phone
- Play racquetball at the Ray Meyer
- Have a picnic at Millenium Park
- Bake cookies! Who can say no to cookies?
- Share Pictures or have game nights
- Throw birthday parties, holiday parties
Frequently Asked Questions:

• How many mentors can I have?
Each mentee has access to 2 mentors at a time—one American Mentor and one International Student Mentor.

• How diverse is the mentor pool?
ISEE welcomes student mentors of all backgrounds. Our mentors are very diverse and half of them have studied abroad or are interested in studying in another country/culture. ISEE mentors are a group of internationally friendly people who are excited to get to know you!

• Will my mentor be with me the whole year?
No. This is only a 10-week peer mentoring program to help you with your arrival and welcome experience. If you want to stay friends with your peer mentor after the conclusion of the ISEE program, then that is highly encouraged.

• Can I participate as a mentee again during the Winter quarter?
Yes! If you enjoyed your time as a new student mentee in the fall quarter, then please do sign up to be paired with another mentor for the winter quarter. This will help you expand your social support network and is highly encouraged. You do not have to re-apply. Simply send an email to ISEEprogram@depaul.edu to express interest in participating for a second term.

• Can I switch mentors within a quarter?
Yes. If you feel that your Mentor is not responsive or attentive, please let us know and we will try our best to pair you with a different mentor. Simply send an email to ISEEprogram@depaul.edu.

• I have been an ISEE mentee in the past, can I now be a mentor?
Yes! You are more than welcome to be a mentor after you have finished your commitment as a mentee. We appreciate your efforts to share your own experience and help out other international students who need assistance in adjustment. To apply, please email ISEEprogram@depaul.edu or print out the ISEE Mentor Application on our website at: http://oiss.depaul.edu/ISEEPeerMentorProgram/index.asp

• What if I find that I don’t have enough time to meet with my mentor during the semester?
We understand that sometimes when there is a lot of work to do, or when you are feeling tired, meeting with your mentor may not feel like a priority. However, our experience suggests that, a) learning to develop a balance between your social/recreational and work life is essential for your long term success; b) meeting with mentors can be actually be helpful at such times.

Nevertheless, we realize that sometimes it just is not possible to meet. If that should happen, we ask that you be respectful of your mentor’s time and let them know in advance if you are unable to meet.

If in-person meetings are too difficult to schedule, please contact each other by phone, email, Skype or facebook. COMMUNICATION IS KEY!
• **What should I consider as a mentee about limits of the mentoring relationship?**
We hope that both you and your mentor will find a comfortable way of building a relationship with each other. Although we do not have any restrictions on how you define your relationship with your mentor, please consider following questions:
  - Do you want to establish any time boundaries? (e.g., no calls after 10PM).
  - Do you want to invite your mentor into your home and/or meet your friends and family?
  - Do you want to be “friends” on Facebook?

• **Can I ask my mentor for money?**
Please do NOT lend/borrow money from your mentor. You may end up spending small amounts of money for your activities (e.g., going out to dinner) though we expect that you will each pay for your own expenses. Also, we discourage activities that are very expensive. There are many things to do on campus or locally that are either free or low cost. If you encounter any financial difficulties, please consult with banks or ISSS for further suggestions.

• **What if my mentor asks me to do something that makes me feel uncomfortable?**
You can certainly decline invitations if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe with something your mentor suggests (e.g., bungee jumping, or activities that not in keeping with your religious/spiritual values). Actually, this has never been an issue in ISEE so far. Mentees and mentors have been able to work out activities that fit both mentees’ and mentors’ preferences and there are lots of FREE things to do on campus and in the city of Chicago.

However, if you do notice significant differences, please be aware that many differences can be based on cultural values rather than personal conflicts. We encourage mentors and mentees to respect differences in religion, family, money, values, and traditions. We encourage you to explore these differences together (e.g., by talking with each other). If you feel further assistance is needed, please contact the ISEE Coordinators at ISEEprogram@depaul.edu .

• **When are my Connectivity Reports due?**
Mentees should submit at least 4 Connectivity reports during the 10 week quarter. Reports should be submitted to the Student Committee Leader on Week 2, Week 4, Week 6 and Week 8. For questions about when and how to submit Connectivity Reports, please email ISEEprogram@depaul.edu .

• **What should I do in emergencies?**
Please keep in mind that mentors are NOT expected to handle psychological, medical, or legal emergencies. Please check out the following resource guide on the next page for helpful phone numbers.
Appendix A: Campus Resources

When calling from a DePaul campus phone, only dial the last five digits of the phone number.

Office for International Students and Scholars
International Admission Office 312.362.6542 DPC 9300
English Language Academy 312.362.6455 Lewis 1704
CDM Graduate Admission 312.362.8714 243 S. Wabash
College of Commerce 312.362.6783 DPC 8500
KGSB 312.362.8810 DPC 7900
College of Law 312.362.8552 Lewis 931
College of LA&S 773.325.7315 2352 N. Clifton
School of Education 773.325.7740 SAC 3rd fl.
School for New Learning 312.362.8001 Lewis 200
Theatre School 773.325.7917 2135 N. Kenmore
Campus Recreation - Lincoln Park 773-325-7450 Campusrec.depaul.edu
Campus Security - Lincoln Park 773.325.7777 Centennial 304
Campus Security - Loop 312.362.8400 Lewis 103
Career Center - Lincoln Park 773.325.7431 SAC 192
Career Center - Loop 312.362.8437 DPC 9th fl.
DePaul Central - Lincoln Park 312.362.6628 SAC101
DePaul Central - Loop 312.362.6628 DPC 9th fl.
ID Services - Lincoln Park 773.325.7466 SC 109
ID Services - Loop 312.362.5959 DPC 9th fl.
Library - Lincoln Park 773.325.7862 2350 N. Kenmore
Library - Loop 312.362.8433 DPC 10th fl.
Student Legal Services 773.325.4959 990 W. Fullerton
University Ombudsperson 312.362.8707 55 E. Jackson
Writing Center - Lincoln Park 773.325.4272 McGaw 250
Writing Center - Loop 312.362.6726 Lewis 1620
University Ministry 312.362.7902 1 E. Jackson, 11008
Center for Intercultural Programs 773.325.4807 2250 N. Sheffield, 105
University Counseling Service 312.362.6923 25 E. Jackson, Suite 1465

SAC = 2320 N. Kenmore
McGaw = McGaw Hall, 802 W. Belden
SC = Student Center, 2250 N. Sheffield

DePaul International Student Organization (DISO)

Use the DePaul International Student Organization to keep in contact with international students and others interested in cross-cultural communication. DISO organizes social events and trips throughout the year.
Appendix B: Weekly Connectivity Report

Office for International Students and Scholars ISEE Peer Mentor Program
International Student Experience Exchange: Weekly Connectivity Report

FOR New Student Mentees TO COMPLETE:
This Connectivity Report must be submitted to the ISEE Student Committee Leader after completion of each meeting or event that is conducted with your ISEE Peer Group. Mentors and Mentees should be meeting and/or communicating together at least once per week. Activities such as attending athletic events, scholarly events or social events should be included in this report.

Mentee Name: __________________________________________ Date:______________

Mentor Names: __________________________________________

Name of Event: __________________________________________

Date of Event: _____ / _____/ __________   Time of Event: ______________ am / pm
(Date format is MM/DD/YYYY)   (Please indicate morning or afternoon)

Type of Event: _____ Educational   _____Informative   _____Social   _____ Other: ______

Location of Event: _______________________________________

ISEE Peer Group Members who participated:
(Please list names here.)

1. _______________________________   4. _______________________________
2. _______________________________   5. _______________________________
3. _______________________________   6. _______________________________

Summary:
Please provide a brief description of your meeting/communication with your mentees. Feel free to share your observations on your mentee’s participation in the function. Please include other information that you feel is important:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

You can submit this form by scan and email to ISEEprogram@depaul.edu or by bringing it to:
The Office of International Students and Scholars
1 East Jackson Blvd. Suite 9300
Chicago, IL 60604
Appendix C: Template Introductory Email

You are strongly encouraged to write your own, personalized e-mails to your Mentor and Peer Group, but if you get stuck, here is an example for you to use:

Hi __________,

My name is __________ and I will be part of your ISEE Peer Group this year as part of the ISEE program at DePaul.

I am looking forward to meeting you in person at the Kick Off event on __________, but in the meantime we can get to know each other a little through e-mail. I'm a ______ year (major) student and this is my ______ year at DePaul. What are you majoring in? Do you have any clubs or interests you may want to pursue while at DePaul?

I'm looking forward to meeting you in August!
Sincerely,
-(Your Name)
Mentor / Mentee Contract

As an ISEE Peer Mentor, I, __________________________, do hereby declare to:

(Print Mentor’s Name here)

1. Contact assigned mentees on a weekly basis.
2. Establish a schedule for future meetings with assigned mentees.
3. Post Photos and stories of ISEE gatherings on Facebook and Orgsync throughout the quarter.
4. Regularly discuss the needs and expectations of assigned mentees.
5. Provide mentees with information regarding support services available for student success at DePaul University.

As an ISEE Peer Mentee with mutual responsibilities, we do hereby declare to:

1. Be proactive with initiating interaction with mentors.
2. Ask questions and communicate frequently.
3. Submit Connectivity Reports regularly.
4. Use other mentors as resources.
5. Respect the time and effort of others who contribute to your experience.
6. Attend all scheduled events.
7. Seriously consider becoming a mentor for new students the following year.

Assigned Mentees, Please sign here: __________________________________________
_________________________________________  _________________________________
_________________________________________  _________________________________
_________________________________________  _________________________________

Incentives and Awards:

**Most Active Mentee Award:** Each mentee who successfully attends all ISEE mentor weekly meetings scheduled with their ISEE Mentors will receive an award at the end of the quarter!

**Most Outstanding Event Award:** One ISEE Mentor will be awarded a prize at the end of the quarter for planning a super creative event that gets mentees interacting with other DePaul students on or off-campus.

**Best Mentor Award:** Mentees will be allowed to nominate their ISEE mentor for the BEST Mentor Award in honor of mentors who go above and beyond to provide guidance to their assigned mentees. This award will be given at the end of the quarter at a special wrap-up event.

**Bulldog Award:** Any ISEE Mentor that turns in all of his or her paperwork at the end of the quarter will receive a Bulldog Award for having what we call “Bulldog Tenacity” in submitting all 8 of their connectivity reports.

**Volunteer Service Award:** Any ISEE participant who demonstrates leadership in helping international students to participate in volunteer community service will be honored at the wrap up event.

**Alumni Service Award:** Any ISEE Alumni that stays connected to the ISEE Program and continues to support the program will be honored at the wrap up event.