

# Negotiating Boundaries

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Basic Peer Leadership Training  
Bethune College Student Ombuds Services  
Sunday, May 14th, 2017



# We will explore:



- How your experiences will benefit incoming students
- How your experiences may inhibit incoming students
- Communication skills as a strategy to avoid this
- The “Do’s and Don’ts” of leadership

# A word on boundaries



- Boundaries are important rules and guidelines that should be set out in order to maintain a **positive** and **healthy** environment.
- If you do not set strong boundaries, many of the benefits of the student-peer leader relationship are LOST!

# A word on boundaries



Given the scenario, what  
are some possible  
**BOUNDARIES** that  
should be established  
with students?

# A word on boundaries



- **Contact information (emails, phone numbers)**
- **Meeting locations (e.g. office hours)**
- **Dating?**
- **Homework**
- **Money**

# A word on boundaries



- What do you do if you know someone beforehand?
- Preferential treatment and consistency

# Social-Discussion!



- Discuss how a PASS Leader must coordinate their FB group
- How can you be more professional in your interactions on social media platforms?



- If using a forum for a PL role, it is the responsibility of the PL to monitor the activity of the forum and ensure that there are no breaches of academic honesty.
- Check your privacy settings and ensure that they are updated.
- Ensure that your personal posts are maintained separately to ensure that there is no conflict of interest & professionalism is maintained.
- “Data shows that 93% of hiring managers review a candidate’s social profile before making a hiring decision.” (Davidson, 2014)

# A word on boundaries



## Things to keep in mind

- Mention romantic relationships to your coordinator
- Power imbalances
- Importance of professionalism
  - Effective communication
  - Representatives of an organization
- Equitable treatment
- We are here to serve our peers!

# Reflection Exercise



- The successes and challenges you had as a York student
- The positive and negative experiences you had as a York student
- Someone who has had a great impact on you as a student

# The Benefit of your Experience:



How might your  
experiences benefit an  
incoming student?

# The Benefit of sharing your Experience:



- Navigating the system
- How and where to get help
- How to get good grades
- How to make meaningful connections
- How to talk to faculty
- How to make the most of classes
- How to get what you need from your readings
- Knowing the language and culture of university

## The Pitfalls of sharing your Experience:



What are the drawbacks to imparting  
our own experience on others?

## The Pitfalls of sharing your Experience:



- What worked for me may not work for others
- Academic rules change from year to year
- Can come across as patronizing
- Not about us! The focus should be the student
- We make assumptions and have biases
- We pass along our baggage and close off what might be valuable avenues for our students



What do you think are  
the **Do's** and **Don'ts** of  
a Peer Leader?

# Ethics of Leadership



## DO BE:

- A friend
- An advisor
- Pro-student
- Sensitive to uniqueness of each student
- Ready to share your experiences
- An empowerer

## DO NOT BE:

- A buddy
- Condescending
- Anti-York
- Inconsistent in what you give your students
- Imposing your solutions
- A problem solver

# Final Thoughts



Please return to the topics you were given, possibly identifying some new boundaries that you have learned today!

# Apply what you have learned!



- 1) You and a friend are currently taking 1 class together (Biology) for which you are an assigned Peer Leader. They approach you asking for notes, old tests and homework for another course (Physics) they know you had already taken while you are sitting in class (Biology).
- 2) A classmate approaches you concerning the assigned homework in their class, stating that it is much too simple for them, and hence asking you, as a trusted Peer Leader, to do it for them offering you a choice of either a pay or a generous thanking letter to be sent to your supervisors. They say that because you work with SOS you have to help them, after all you must have better connections with the professor.
- 3) You have fallen head over heels in love with one student, and you find out that they will be in the class for which you are an assigned Peer Leader...

# Apply what you have learned!



- 4) A student explains to you that they do not have an account on any social media platform (and they are not interested in having one), nor an email address. They ask if they may exchange phone numbers with you instead and whether or not they may meet you in private whenever and wherever you choose, whenever they require assistance.
- 5) After a study session or PASS session or PT session or PM session, the student feels very grateful towards you, the Peer Leader, and would like to thank you in some way with gifts (objects, food or money).
- 6) A concerned student is sending numerous messages on the class' Facebook group, complaining about the lack of effectiveness of study sessions and the insufficient resources provided by the course director, explicitly stating that they are not performing well due to your “poor effort as a Peer Leader”.

# References and Resources



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