



MEMO

From the office of the...

Vice President (Education)

TO: Executive Board
FROM: Spencer Graham, Vice President (Education)
SUBJECT: First Year Success Program Consultant
DATE: June 20, 2013

Hi everyone,

I've reworked the job description for this position based on our discussions and SRA feedback. At SRA training weekend, the First Year Success Program received a lot of excitement and positive feedback. A concern that I noted was that there were some details of the program that hadn't been worked out yet, and I completely agree.

For this reason, I am pleased to present: The First Year Success Program Consultant. This person will only be working for two months (July and August). Their job duties will exclusively be to do research and consultation into the best practices for a quality first-year success program. The consultant will not necessarily be the *manager* of the pilot program when it launches during the year (although it doesn't rule them out as a contender for the job).

The consultant is a good idea because it sets the program up for success. This person will ensure that the future manager has a bank of practices to refer to throughout the year. One major output from the consultant will be a *strategic plan* for the First Year Success Program. This plan will highlight important details, such as whether to keep the program faculty-specific or go with the mix-it-up model. Other important considerations will also be addressed. The future manager will be able to use this strategic plan to launch the program, and thus allows the person to focus exclusively on *execution*. The details of other related job responsibilities are provided in the attached job description for your approval.

As most of you know, I initially wanted to hire one person to do both the initial planning, launch the program in September, and lead it throughout the year. However, I'm very accepting of the fact that this is a pilot program, and I would rather see extra quality and deliberate thought in the planning process before the program goes live. Keeping the job separate allows for flexibility in launch date, and ensures that the planning process is not crowded out by other duties (hiring student leaders, marketing & advertising). Basically – I don't want us to get ahead of ourselves.

To provide a historical perspective: Last year when Siobhan launched the Peer Support Line, she hired a person strictly for doing consultation and research in the initial stages. She did this because although she had a vision for the project, she simply didn't have the time to devote to sorting out nitty-gritty details and planning of the program. This person was paid an honorarium. I'm a firm believer in salaried wages instead – it ensures that the person is fairly compensated for the amount of work they put in. Honorariums are also messy: what happens if the person needs to be let go halfway through their contract? How much do you pay them?

Another point I'd like to mention is that an operating policy is not necessary at this time. I see it this way: since the finer details are still yet to be worked out through the consultation process. It would be a better idea to hire this individual first, and for the VP Ed to work collaboratively with them to create the highest-quality operating policy for the program's launch.

Some of you may be asking about the name change from First Year Learning and Mentorship Program to First Year Success Program. Though there is a mentorship component to the program (based on the relationships that students are able to form with upper year students), mentorship is neither the sole nor primary goal. The program's chief goal is to encourage student success by facilitating group activity and discussion. This activity and discussion will aim to inspire deliberate thought and reflection for each student moving forward in their undergraduate career.

Regarding wages, finance committee recommended a wage of \$11.40/hour (Level 3). The committee rationalized that the weight of responsibilities was comparable to the Advocacy coordinator, which is also paid at the Level 3 wage level. This recommendation is reflected in the proposed amendment to Operating Policy 2.2 – Employment Wages, submitted for your approval.

So that basically wraps up the memo. If you have any questions or recommendations, please don't hesitate to email me!

Much love,

Spencer