Position: Engage Leader

Unit & Department: UVic Office of Student Life (OSL), New Student Engagement (NSE).

Available Opportunities: ~5

Dates: September, 2021 (start day TBD) – April 30th, 2022

Time Commitment: Approximately 8 hours per week, with a mix of set hours and self-scheduled hours.

Nature of the Role: The Engage Leader (EL) role provides volunteers an opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the UVic community, to support the inclusion of their fellow students in that community, and to foster their own growth as leaders.

Role reports to: Coordinator, Student Engagement

Recognition: In addition to being recognized as a leader in the UVic community, an EL will receive:

- a tuition credit of $800 applied to the EL’s tuition account at the beginning of each term.

Our Philosophy

The NSE team empowers students to develop a sense of belonging and to find meaningful connections within the UVic community. We achieve these goals by creating intentional spaces and opportunities for students to engage with peers and academics, as well as to explore and develop a sense of identity and purpose. We strive to support the diverse needs of new students by fostering an environment which equips new students to thrive throughout their time at UVic.

New students, like all UVic students, come from a variety of backgrounds and have a wide range of lived experiences. To meet their needs and to help them engage fully with the UVic community, we seek volunteers for the EL role who also come from a variety of backgrounds and who have a wide range of lived experiences. We actively encourage everyone (including but not limited to Indigenous peoples, people of all races, people from all places of origin and each ethnicity, people of colour, people of all religions and spiritual beliefs, people with visible and invisible disabilities, and people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions) to apply for the EL role.

Role Summary
ELs are part of the NSE team within the OSL. They act as peer-mentors for new students participating in the New Student Connect (“Connect”) program. The Connect program offers new students a virtual community where they can connect with both peers and programming relevant to their needs. ELs play a major role in creating a sense of belonging amongst new students.

Each EL will guide a group of new students (called a “pod”) through the 2021-2022 academic year. Using a variety of virtual platforms (primarily Microsoft Teams and email) ELs will be responsible for providing mentorship and support to the students in their pod, and for sharing information about campus resources and services. Each EL will also facilitate connections between students within the EL’s pod and collaborate with other leaders in the Connect program to create a welcoming and informative virtual community for new students.

If you have a passion for mentorship, community building, facilitation, and creative problem-solving, you may find the EL role to be both a good fit and personally rewarding. In addition, if you are invested both in further developing your own leadership practice and in improving the experience of other students at UVic, you may find that this volunteer opportunity leverages your growth in both of these areas.

**Virtual and In-Person Participation**

- Much of what an EL is expected to do can be done virtually.
- ELs should be available to be on campus during September 2021.
  - *We may be able to offer a fully virtual position for ELs who are unable to be on campus. Please see the “eligibility for the EL role” section below for further details.*
- Our in-person expectations will always be governed by the most current UVic policy which will, in turn incorporate the most current BC Provincial Health Service measures.
- There may be opportunities for ELs to participate in in-person Connect activities such as mentorship, meetings, and community events when it is safe to do so.

**Primary Expectations of ELs**

An EL will be expected to:

- facilitate outreach to and develop helping and mentoring relationships with students in the EL’s pod by offering monthly check-ins;
- share information about campus resources and services and help new students to navigate their access to these services;
- individually and in collaboration with other ELs, lead activities that build community and which encourage connections between students;
- use virtual tools such as video calls, voice calls, and instant messaging through Microsoft Teams or other UVic virtual platforms to share information and encourage community engagement;
- undertake necessary administrative tasks diligently (e.g., completing interaction notes and reviewing communications from the NSE team);
- appropriately reach out for help if an EL recognizes or suspects that a student is struggling, particularly with concerns related to wellness or conduct;
- maintain information about students in the highest degree of confidentiality by following reporting protocols and managing information responsibly. ELs will receive training which
addresses specifically their and UVic’s obligations under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
• maintain clear, healthy and appropriate boundaries in connection with the EL’s role as a peer-mentor; and
• attend regular meetings with the EL’s supervisor, the NSE team, and other ELs.

Secondary Expectations of ELs

An EL will also be expected to:

• support UVic Orientation programming in a variety of different ways including leading campus tours, facilitating group ice-breakers, and setting-up/taking-down event spaces;
• participate in all aspects of EL training, meetings with supervisor(s), and regular team meetings;
• maintain an organized calendar to manage and schedule student check-ins;
• follow procedures which govern the provision and use of UVic’s resources; and
• promote safety, inclusion, and diversity in alignment with the Connect program’s policies and goals.

Eligibility for the EL Role

A person interested in the EL role must:

• be returning to UVic as an undergraduate or graduate student in good standing for the Fall 2021 term;
• be enrolled in both the Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 terms; and
• have completed a minimum of one term of study at the time of application submission.

Please note: The EL’s role will be undertaken primarily virtually with some on-campus requirements. For this reason, an EL must have regular access to a computer, a reliable internet service, and be able to participate in video calls. The OSL recognizes that some people who would be interested in and well-suited to the EL’s role may be restricted in their ability to satisfy these requirements by their personal circumstances. The OSL wants to ensure such individuals are not excluded from the EL role. A person who is interested in the EL role and who would face a restriction of the type described above may contact Emily Huynh, Manager, Student Life and Engagement at the OSL (studentlifemgr@uvic.ca) to discuss the nature of and the reason for the restriction. In appropriate cases, the OSL may be able to provide necessary assistance to the person in question for the duration of the person’s EL role.

Core Competencies for the EL Role

An EL must:

• be able to demonstrate active listening and an awareness of the needs of/trends affecting new students at UVic;
• have excellent communication skills (listening, written, oral, and facilitation);
• demonstrate discretion and sound judgement in conversations with students, peers, and supervisors;
- have a passion for contributing to the student experience at UVic;
- have the ability to work both independently and as part of a larger team;
- have excellent time management skills;
- have good and current technological skills including proficiency with video call tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams and familiarity with commonly used social media platforms;
- have an understanding of the systemic challenges and structural barriers students face in accessing and attending UVic. Lived experience of navigating barriers would be an asset; and
- must have the ability to engage in critical self-reflection and an understanding of (or willingness to learn about) privilege and oppression.

Please note: The OSL recognizes that a person who is interested in the EL role may not have prior formal experience in one or more of the above core competencies. The OSL recognizes that the lived experiences of students from diverse backgrounds, as well as the capacity and potential to work across differences, may provide an alternative and equivalent way to be equipped for the EL role.

Benefits of Involvement

An EL will:

- learn new skills and gain experience in student leadership and peer mentorship;
- establish a diverse network of friends and peers across campus;
- build or enhance a Co-Curricular Record;
- receive a personalized reference, via LinkedIn and/or other channels;
- access personal development opportunities through the OSL and receive mentorship from OSL staff; and
- leave a legacy to the UVic community and shape the student experience at UVic for years to come.

How to Apply:

We are interested in your responses to the three questions listed below.

Step 1: Please type out your responses to these questions, exceeding no more than 1000 words in total, i.e. for all three questions combined.

Step 2: Submit your application at this Survey Monkey link: [https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/Connect_2021](https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/Connect_2021). You will be asked to complete a page with general information about yourself. You will then upload a PDF document of your responses to these questions, and submit your resume.

1. Why are you interested in being a peer mentor with the New Student Connect program?
2. Reflecting on your first year of university, what was an experience or something you learned that stands out? If you are an international, graduate, transfer or mature student you may provide us with your chosen context.
3. What are you hoping to give and gain from this opportunity?
Please submit the survey form by **Thursday September 23rd, 11:59PM PT**. We will begin reviewing applications upon receiving them, so we encourage you to apply as early as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to email Angi & Priyanka at getconnected@uvic.ca.