

Undergraduate Program for Advancing Learning: Peer-Leader Contract

Academic Year 2026-2027

Dates of Employment:

This position is a year-long commitment. Please note that very occasionally, UPAL groups do not fill. In this circumstance, we do our best to find a placement for peer leaders, but this might not be possible in all cases.

What we expect of you:

Professionalism & Communication

1. **Communicate with the program manager in a timely manner** regarding issues such as scheduling conflicts, challenges with participants, or similar circumstances, **and respond** (within 24 hours) to all emails from the manager, peer leaders, and UPAL participants.
2. Always **maintain student confidentiality**, which includes any personal observations or judgments about students and their academic performance or behaviors.

Training

3. Participate in the **peer leader orientation** held at the beginning of the academic year.
4. **Attend and be an active participant at each weekly (fall quarter) or biweekly (winter and spring) mentor meeting.** Speak up if you do not understand something – your questions benefit others, too!
 - a. In the rare instances when you must miss a mentor meeting, you must **notify the program manager beforehand and arrange a time to meet and review the material.**
5. First-year UPAL mentors only: **Attend one professional development workshop in fall quarter.**

Leading sessions

6. **Fully prepare for your UPAL session** by reviewing the weekly curriculum and coordinating with your co-mentor about your plan for sharing session leadership, facilitation, and responsibilities. **Facilitate your assigned one-hour UPAL session once per week** during each academic quarter, weeks 3-9 of the quarter.
7. **Facilitate full participation and active learning** in your UPAL session (i.e., ask for volunteers, call on students to respond to questions, share your own experiences, etc.).
8. Treat participants, fellow mentors, and ASLA staff with **courtesy and respect.**
9. Understand that a **peer leader is not expected to know all the answers.** If you don't

know the answer to a question, refer students to other resources, including the program manager, or research ways to support and get back to the student at a later time. Avoid giving an answer of which you're unsure.

Program support

10. **Record student attendance & complete your session report immediately** after your UPAL session is over.
11. **Follow up with participants after absences and one-on-one meetings** as necessary or as requested by program manager. The program manager will inform participants when their absences are marked unexcused, but you will be expected to touch base with them about the content and resources they missed (for both excused and unexcused absences).
12. In the rare case that you are unable to attend your session due to an emergency, **notify the program manager, your co-mentor and group participants** in advance.
13. **Participate in program evaluation** by offering feedback and responding to surveys.

I understand the roles and responsibilities of a UPAL mentor, and I pledge to adhere to the above guidelines throughout my time as a peer leader during the 2026-27 academic year.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

What you can expect of us:

1. Support for your development as mentors and leaders.
2. Timely responses to your questions.
3. Help addressing any concerns that arise for you with your group or the program.
4. And last but not least, an opportunity to...
 - Practice effective public speaking and group facilitation skills, and help others understand complex ideas.
 - Reinforce your own academic skills.
 - Enhance your resume with a meaningful title and entry.
 - Develop your employability through professional development and feedback.
 - Be a leader on campus and give back to the greater Northwestern community.
 - Contribute to the academic growth and development of the students you assist.
 - Meet new people and develop diverse networks.

Don't hesitate to reach out with questions!

Shawn