
*Identifying & supporting university students
with a history of reading difficulties*

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE 2:
Customized outreach**

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Supporting university students with a history of reading difficulties

Purpose

Our long-term goal is to develop evidence-based interventions for supporting educational outcomes of post-secondary students who report a history of reading difficulties. Through these interventions we seek to support students' academic achievement, university retention and graduation, and successful transition to the workforce.

The purpose of this implementation guide is to describe methods for identifying and supporting these students through customized outreach. Customized outreach refers to institutional programming that was specifically designed to support university students who report a history of reading difficulties. In documenting our customized outreach, we wish to provide a guide, not a recipe. This outreach was developed within the constraints and affordances of one post-secondary institution and may require modifications to meet the goals and realities of different institutions. We document the details and best practices of our program so that you can implement a similar program at your institution.

We have previously designed and evaluated the effectiveness of standard outreach via academic advising; we refer readers to *Implementation Guide 1 – Standard Outreach* and Deacon, Tucker, Bergey, Laroche, and Parrila (2017) for more information about the details and efficacy of this approach.

Background

University students who report a history of reading difficulties have low literacy levels and below average academic achievement. Below we provide background on our approach to identifying and supporting these students.

Identification. We have learned that university students identified by the Adult Reading History Questionnaire-Revised (ARHQ-R; Parrila, Corkett, Kirby, & Hein, 2003) have low literacy levels. Their reading comprehension levels are, on average, four grade levels below those of typical university students and similar to students with diagnosed learning disabilities (Deacon, Cook, Parrila, 2012). Deficits in word-level reading skills place students who report a history of reading difficulties at Level 2 on the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS; Strucker et al., 2005), a level that restricts full participation in a knowledge economy. And yet, these students often do not have a diagnosis nor the access to the supports and services that accompany such a diagnosis.

Preliminary results from our current cross-institutional longitudinal research reveals that students who report a history of reading difficulties encounter different challenges during their post-secondary studies than their peers who report no history of reading difficulties. For example, students who report a history of reading difficulties earn lower GPAs and fail or withdraw from courses at rates higher than typical university students (Bergey et al., 2017; Chevalier, Parrila, Ritchie, & Deacon, 2017). In addition, students who report a history of reading difficulties report deficits in their reading, learning, and studying strategies (Bergey et al., 2017; Chevalier et al., 2017). For instance, compared to students who report no history of reading difficulty, those who report a history of reading difficulties report poorer ability to prepare for and take tests, to monitor their comprehension and select main ideas, and to concentrate while studying. Without targeted outreach, students who report a history of reading difficulties do not appear to use academic support services at a different rate, despite their clear additional academic difficulties (Chevalier et al., 2017).

We now have beginning evidence of the long-term impacts of having a history of reading difficulties (Bergey, Horne-Robinson, Parrila, Laroche, & Deacon, 2017). We see lower rates of institutional retention and university completion than for students who report no history of reading difficulties. Soon, we will be able to report on workplace outcomes for this group.

Support. How can university students who report a history of reading difficulties be supported? One way we have attempted to answer this question is to work with student services at a university to identify and provide proactive study skills training to students who report a history of reading difficulties. Study skills have been linked to academic success in post-secondary education (Robbins et al., 2004) and are a known deficit area for students who report a history of reading difficulties (Bergey et al., 2017). As we describe later in this guide, we delivered study skills training using a peer coaching model.

Results from two years of testing of this approach at Dalhousie University show promise. We examined whether participation in peer coaching (as described in this implementation guide) was associated with changes in academic self-efficacy, self-reported use of learning and study strategies, use of academic support services, academic performance, and institutional retention. We examined outcomes for three groups: students who were invited and opted to participate in the peer coaching program, students who were invited and opted not to participate in the program, and students who were not invited to participate. We also assessed evidence of whether students with low literacy experienced differential effects within experimental groups. The results summarized below are described in greater detail in Bergey, Parrila, Laroche, and Deacon (2018).

Results indicated a positive effect of peer coaching on academic self-efficacy, the self-belief that one is capable of mastering challenging academic tasks. Peer coaching participants reported stable

academic self-efficacy while those in the comparison groups declined. Peer coaching participants also reported greater improvements relative to comparison groups in ability to manage time, concentrate during academic tasks, garner motivation, and approach school with a positive attitude. Analyses also indicated peer coaching participants reported descriptively greater increases in use of effective memory and comprehension-monitoring strategies relative to comparison groups. Analyses indicated that there were no unique effects for students with low literacy levels. Participation in peer coaching appears to have benefited all students, regardless of literacy level, in terms academic self-efficacy and learning and study strategies.

Overall, we found that peer coaching participants reported more stable academic confidence and increased use of a range of learning and study strategies compared to students who did not participate in the program. These effects are promising given that prior research has shown that academically successful students who report a history of reading difficulties view their personal motivation and study habits as essential to their success (Corkett, Hein, & Parrila, 2008). In addition, academic self-efficacy and learning and study strategies have been linked to increased academic performance and improved personal adjustment during the first year of university (e.g., Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Robbins et al., 2004).

We found evidence that participation in peer coaching was associated with greater use of additional academic support services. In particular, peer coaching appeared to connect students with low literacy levels to the Accessibility Centre, where students can seek accommodations for learning difficulties. Peer coaching participants were significantly more likely to use the Accessibility Centre in the semester following peer coaching than were students with low literacy in the control group. Over 10% of students with low literacy who participated in peer coaching used the Accessibility Centre during the second semester, compared to only 1% of students with low literacy in the control group.

While peer coaching was associated with several positive outcomes, the results do not provide strong evidence of effects on academic performance and institutional retention. Peer coaching participants had descriptively higher GPAs than students in the comparison groups in their first two years; however, the size of the difference was modest and did not reach statistical significance. Similarly, with regard to institutional retention, a descriptively greater percentage of peer coaching participants with low literacy re-enrolled in their second year relative to comparison groups, but this difference was not statistically significant.

Our efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of early identification and outreach are on-going. We will soon be able to report on the impacts of customized outreach on graduation rates and on employment. We hope to see effects on both of these outcomes.

Procedures for identifying students who report a history of reading difficulties

Screening tool. The *Adult Reading History Questionnaire – Revised* (ARHQ-R; Parrila et al., 2003) is a questionnaire made up of 20 questions. Some questions ask about early reading experiences (Elementary School scale) and others ask about current reading experiences. Research indicates that the Elementary School scale is a reliable instrument for identifying university students with a history of reading difficulties. Each question has five-point Likert scale response options (see example below). The ARHQ-R is available in both French and English. To request access to the ARHQ-R, please contact Dr. Rauno Parrila (see contact information below).

Example Question

How much difficulty did you have learning to read in elementary school?

(1) None (2) Not much (3) Some (4) Quite a bit (5) A great deal

Screening procedure. To determine whether a student has a self-reported history of reading difficulties, administer the Elementary School scale of the ARHQ-R. These 8 questions take less than 5 minutes to complete and can be administered via an online survey platform or paper-and-pencil format. To follow our procedure, administration of the ARHQ-R takes place at the start of the first year of the post-secondary program to maximize the potential of early identification. For example, we begin screening two weeks before the start date of the academic semester until two weeks into the semester. Once the questionnaire is completed, one can determine whether a student has a self-reported history of reading difficulties by scoring the responses to the questions from the Elementary School scale.

Implementation. The administration of the ARHQ-R offers flexibility. Screening with the ARHQ-R can be:

- Administered online or on paper
- Administered regardless of the age of the post-secondary student
- Modified slightly to suit reading level needs or institutional context (any modifications to questions require the author's written consent)
- Administered in English or French.

Language: Please note that the efficacy evidence for using ARHQ-R as a screening tool is based on individuals with a first acquired language that matches the language of instruction in the post-secondary setting. As such, the questionnaire included questions about students' first spoken language and first language for reading and writing, both of which were inclusion criteria for our research. At this time, there is no evidence as to how ARHQ-R might be used with post-secondary students learning in a language that is not the language in which they first learned to read. Therefore, we recommend that the ARHQ-R be administered in the language that matches the individuals' first language and the language of the academic setting

We encourage you to think about how this screening tool can be incorporated into your institution's existing initiatives. For example, using the ARHQ-R as a screening tool may help identify students who might benefit from existing programs at your institution but may need encouragement to access these programs.

Preparing customized outreach for students who report a history of reading difficulties

Overview. Our customized outreach consisted of providing small-group peer coaching workshops on study strategies. Students with a range of reading backgrounds were invited to participate in five one-hour weekly workshops led by experienced undergraduate and graduate students. Workshops were delivered early in students' first semester and addressed the following topics: (1) time management; (2) learning and memory; (3) test taking and test preparation; (4) selecting the main idea; (5) concentration.

In the following section, we describe procedures for recruiting students, training peer coaches, implementing workshops, communicating with participants before and after workshops, incentivizing participation, and documenting peer coaching workshops and attendance. We describe each in the section below. Table 1 illustrates a timeline of outreach procedures.

Recruitment procedures

Recruitment into peer coaching was carried out within the first 2 weeks of students' first semester at university (see Table 1). Below, we describe recruitment decisions and actions.

Identify the scope and scale of the customized outreach. As you plan your customized intervention, two important decisions are the scope and scale of the outreach. Scope refers to the extent of early reading difficulties that is targeted by the intervention. University officials might wish to design

interventions to target only students with early reading difficulties or may focus on a wide range of levels of early reading difficulties, including students who report no history of reading difficulty. In our research, we included students with a range of reading backgrounds, including those who reported moderate to widespread reading difficulties as well as students who reported no or very low levels of early reading difficulty.

Related to the question of scope is the question of scale. What is the preferred number of students to be served by the customized outreach? The scale of the customized outreach depends on various factors, including the goals of the outreach, the size of the institution, institutional resources, number of peer coaches, and so on. In each year of our research, we invited 100-175 students to participate, roughly half of whom had moderate to widespread early reading difficulties.

Table 1: Timeline for providing customized outreach

Time	Procedures		
	Recruitment	Training Peer Coaches	Implementing workshops
Before 1 st semester	Send e-mails to students to complete ARHQ-R via registrar	Select peer coaches Begin orientation training	
1 st week of semester	End data collection with ARHQ-R Advertise on campus, social media, in first year classes Identify workshop times	Complete orientation training	
2 nd week	Identify students who report a history of reading difficulties Recruit students through online sign-ups and phone calls		
3 rd week		Debrief workshop 1 and practice for workshop 2	Send pre-workshop e-mail Workshop 1: Time management Send post-workshop e-mail
4 th week		Debrief workshop 2 and practice for workshop 3	Send pre-workshop e-mail Workshop 2: Learning and memory Send post-workshop e-mail
5 th week		Debrief workshop 3 and practice for workshop 4	Send pre-workshop e-mail Workshop 3: Test preparation and test taking Send post-workshop e-mail
6 th week		Debrief workshop 4 and practice for workshop 5	Send pre-workshop e-mail Workshop 4: Selecting the main idea Send post-workshop e-mail

7 th week		Debrief workshop 5	Send pre-workshop e-mail Workshop 5: Concentration Send post-workshop e-mail
After 8 th week			Recognize participation on co-curricular record Obtain participant feedback on workshops

Identify the desired number and size of peer coaching groups. Each coaching group consists of 10-20 students and meets once weekly during five weeks. The number of coaching groups depends on student interest in peer coaching and the potential scale of the peer coaching program, based on available resources, number of peer coaches, funds for incentives, etc. Recruit more students to each group than the desired maximum number. Many students who are recruited will not sign up for the program, and many students who sign up, will not actually attend workshops. In each year of our research, we had 4-6 groups, with 10-20 participants in each group. We found that approximately 1 in 3 invited students participated in the program. Therefore, we recommend that you invite three times as many students as you have capacity to serve.

Identify workshop times that are likely to be available and attractive for students. When selecting workshop times, consider the following:

- Lunch and dinnertime are often natural breaks in students' schedules; these times are especially ideal if food will be provided during workshops as an incentive.
- Avoid times when high-enrollment first-year courses are offered (e.g., courses in introductory science and math disciplines, psychology, etc.)
- Choose time slots that have start times that coincide with typical start times for courses (e.g., if classes typically start at 12:05 p.m., have this as the starting time for peer coaching sessions)

Recruitment via personalized e-mails. Students are initially recruited through e-mail invitations and reminders. Emails include a link to an online form where students can sign up to participate. In this form, students provide their name and school ID and indicate whether they are interested in participating or learning more about peer coaching. If students wish to participate, they select their preferred and available times from a list of possible weekly workshop times. Students who select times receive an e-mail confirming their interest and time. If students wish to learn more about the program, they provide a phone number and times when they can be reached.

Email messages are personalized with the student name and emphasized the following points:

- Many first-year students experience difficulty getting used to the academic demands of university.

- Peer coaching is a program that can help students get a head start with their studies by learning effective study strategies.
- Participants will learn what other first-year students and more experienced students do to study effectively at university; students leave with concrete study tips.
- Sessions cover topics such as strategies for time management, learning and memory, testing, selecting main ideas and concentration.
- There are additional incentives: Pizza each session; recognition on students' co-curricular record; chance to win a draw for a \$100 gift card; and free materials, such as a planner and study tip handouts.

Recruitment by phone. Students who do not respond to e-mail invitations or who request additional information via online sign-up receive a phone call. Trained students can make phone calls to reduce demands on administrative staff. The purpose of the call is to describe and promote the program. If students are interested, the recruiter signs them up for their preferred time. As with the online sign-up form, recruiters also record students' non-preferred available workshop times; this allows planners to re-assign students across groups in the case that some groups become over-booked.

Additional recruitment strategies. In addition to the primary recruitment channels of e-mails and phone calls, the following recruitment strategies may be helpful:

- Ask instructors of large-enrollment first-year course to advertise peer coaching; provide a presentation slide for instructors who would like one.
- Place informational posters in high traffic areas on campus such as dorms, cafeterias, by high-enrollment first-year classroom, on public bulletin boards, etc.
- Advertise on university-sponsored social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Advertise in newsletters and other publications first-year students will receive before or at the start of the year.
- Be consistent in the look and language of recruitment materials. Peer coaching advertising must compete with a flood of information sent to first-year students. Having a consistent name, logo, and look (e.g., color scheme, font, etc.) to your recruitment materials can help students recognize your program and differentiate it from others. In our research, we called our program *StudySharp Peer Coaching* (see Appendix B for our logo)

Training peer coaches

Knowledgeable and skilled peer coaches are a critical component of a successful peer coaching program. In this section, we describe how peer coaches were selected, trained and supported.

Identify high quality peer coaches. Successful peer coaches are likely to be academically successful students, who are organized, conscientious, interested in helping others, and who have strong interpersonal skills to facilitate group discussions. In our research, we used high GPA or enrollment in graduate studies as criteria (see Appendix C for a job description). Peer coaches should be interviewed to evaluate their relevant qualities. During interviews, candidates were asked to deliver a short lesson (see Appendix D for more details).

Train peer coaches through orientation sessions. Orientation sessions took place 2-3 weeks prior to the start of the fall semester. Orientation is led by a trainer who has a strong understanding of the peer coaching curriculum and program. Orientation consists of approximately 12 instructional hours in addition to 5-10 hours of personal study by coaches. Before orientation sessions, coaches read the *Peer Coaching Curriculum*, including training materials. Training materials are described in the *Study Resources for Coaches* sections in the *Peer Coaching Curriculum*. During orientation sessions, the trainer and coaches discuss key points in the preparation materials and curriculum. The goal of discussions is to clarify knowledge about study strategies and to help peer coaches identify personal examples of effective strategies from their own experience as students. Trainer and coaches review key points and procedures of the lesson plan. The goal of this review is to clarify questions about study strategies and lesson plan procedures. If possible, peer coaches from a previous year can model giving each workshop. During orientation meetings, the trainer and coaches discuss additional program logistics, e.g., recruitment, communication with students, etc.

Train peer coaches through debrief and practice sessions. Debrief and practice sessions took place following each of the first four workshops. In these sessions, which last approximately 1.5 hours, the trainer and coaches discuss workshop reports from prior workshop (see Appendix G). The group identifies effective coaching strategies and discusses possible solutions to problems that arose in the previous workshop. After discussing the previous workshop, coaches practice leading the next workshop. The trainers, administrative staff, and volunteers serve as mock students. The goal of the practice is for coaches to increase knowledge of study strategies, familiarity with lesson plans, and confidence in their ability to teach the content to others. After the practice lesson, the trainer, staff, and volunteers provide feedback to the peer coaches (e.g., instructions that were unclear, points that were overlooked; suggestions for integrating personal examples into the lesson plan, etc.).

Delivering the Peer Coaching Curriculum

Peer Coaching Curriculum. Detailed instructions and materials for individual workshops are found in the *Peer Coaching Curriculum*. Each of five workshop topics includes learning objectives, lesson overviews, workshop materials, pre-workshop e-mails, study resources for coaches, detailed lesson plans, student handouts, and supporting materials.

Materials binder for students. Students receive loose-leaf handouts in each workshop. To help students organize workshop materials, we provide each participant with a soft-cover binder (i.e., *Duotang*) on the first workshop. Student handouts were 3-hole punched.

Coaching principles and strategies. The following coaching principles and strategies guided coaches as they carried out lesson plans.

1. **Be organized and prepared.** Make sure to have all the necessary materials. Keep handouts organized and easy to find. Keep extra handouts from prior workshops for students who missed the previous session.
2. **Work as a team.** Coaches alternate between leading and supporting activities and discussions. The peer coach who is not leading should play a supportive role (e.g., take attendance, move around the room to encourage students to stay focused, record student responses on the board during group discussion).
3. **Create a relaxed, casual atmosphere.** Greet students as they enter. Engage students in conversation before and after workshops. Use effective ice-breaker activities, especially in early workshops. Use humor. Smile. Organize the classroom in a way that facilitates interaction, e.g. place chairs in a circular formation.
4. **Make personal connections.** Share personal examples of the academic challenges coaches have faced and the study strategies that helped them overcome. Personal examples may include effective study strategies and ineffective strategies coaches have tried and adapted.
5. **Learn students' names and use nametags.** Ask students to create a name placard by folding a sheet of paper. Nametags help coaches learn students' names and allow for personalized interactions during early workshops. Nametags can also assist with taking attendance.

6. **Normalize difficulty and emphasize the value of study strategies.** Help students understand that academic difficulties are common, including among academically successful students. Highlight what research shows works for many students. Provide personal examples of challenges and study strategies that helped the coaches. Create opportunities for students to share their study strategies and why they use them. Emphasize that good study habits are worth the extra work because they help students feel more capable and reduce stress.
7. **Give clear instructions.** When explaining an activity, give clear instructions. Repeat instructions twice. Model the activity if possible. Allow time for students to ask clarifying questions.
8. **Keep it interactive.** Encourage everyone to participate. Ask students to talk in pairs first if whole group discussion appears to be intimidating. Go around the room asking each person what he or she does in a given scenario. Frame negative student responses in a positive or constructive way. Validate students' difficulties and current attempts to respond. Ask followup prompts (e.g., What else?). Share personal examples. Be patient when waiting for students to respond to questions (embrace silence – it often means students are thinking). Rephrase a question if responses aren't forthcoming. Don't fish for specific responses; let discussion be authentic and student-driven.
9. **Use the board to facilitate discussion.** Some workshops begin with a brainstorm of common difficulties (e.g., managing time, studying for test, concentrating). Writing student responses on the board (i.e., blackboard, white board, poster) facilitates group discussion: it allows students to see their individual contributions, compels participation, and leaves a visual record of the discussion that can be returned to when strategies are discussed. Write responses in the students' own words, if possible. The coach not leading the discussion can record student responses.
10. **Show continuity and connections between workshops.** At the beginning of each workshop, ask about strategies used since the last session. Make connections to what has already been learned in previous workshops, and to what the current session will focus on.

Communicating with participants before and after workshops

Communicate with students weekly before each workshop. Send pre-workshop emails one day before each session. Pre-workshop e-mails note the time and location of the workshop, including a map and directions, and materials students should bring (see Appendix C for an example).

Communicate with students weekly following each workshop. Send post-workshop emails after each session within 2-3 days of the workshop. Post-workshop e-mails highlight key points from the week's workshop, provide links to additional resources, include a digital copy of workshop handout(s), and preview and promote the up-coming workshop (see Appendix C for an example).

Additional communication tips:

- We created an email account dedicated to peer coaching that was accessible to the trainer, administrative staff, and peer coaches.
- We created e-mail groups for each weekly time slot to facilitate pre- and post-workshop emails.
- For the first several weeks, we posted ample signage to help students find meeting place.

Incentivizing participation

Students were incentivized to participate in peer coaching in several ways:

- Students received repeated reminders of the value of peer coaching for helping students successfully transition from high school to university. Students were told that prior students found the program very helpful and worth their time.
- Students received free pizza during each workshop.
- Students who attended four of five peer coaching workshops received recognition on their Co-Curricular Record, the University's official non-academic transcript at the university. After the fifth workshop, student who met the attendance requirement received e-mailed instructions for how to receive this recognition.
- For each workshop students attended, they were entered into a draw for a \$100 gift card to an online store.

According to student feedback, students were most persuaded to attend peer workshops by the value of the information they received and the official recognition on the co-curricular record.

Documenting peer coaching sessions and participation

Coaches complete Workshop Report. Following each workshop, coaches complete a Workshop Report (see Appendix E). The report documents workshop highlights, challenges, and deviations from planned lessons.

Track attendance. Attendance is recorded for each workshop. Attendance records are essential for evaluating the uptake and impact of peer coaching programming.

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Appendices

- A. Telephone recruitment script
- B. Logo
- C. Peer coaching job description
- D. Interview mini-lesson prompt
- E. Example of pre-workshop e-mail
- F. Example of post-workshop e-mail
- G. Workshop reports

Appendix A: Telephone Recruitment Script

Hello,

May I please speak to ____?

If parent:

Hello. My name is _____. I am calling from Student Services at [name of institution].

Is _____ available?

[Yes/No]

[If No] I was trying to reach _____ to let him/her know about some workshops we are offering to help students develop effective and efficient study habits. This is the phone number we had on file. Is this a good number for me to reach [him/her]?

[Note alternative contact number if it is offered]

Okay, I will try to reach him/her by e-mail.

[If they offer to pass the message on: leave your name and the lab's phone number and the study sharp email.

Thanks for your time. Have a good day.

If student:

Hello. My name is _____. I am calling from Student Services at [name of institution].

Is this _____?

[If No] Sorry. Is this a number I can reach him/her at? [Try to figure out the relation of the answerer and the target student and respond accordingly]. I'll try back later. Or I'll send him/her an e-mail.

[If Yes] How are you doing today? Do you have a minute or two to talk now? [If no, ask when a good time would be, and record this on the spreadsheet].

Key Points of the Pitch

- You recently completed the StudySharp Self-Assessment—thanks a lot for doing that. I'm calling because you've been randomly selected to participate in a peer coaching program.
- Basically, the program involves a couple of 1-hour, informal, small-group workshops.
- At these, you get free pizza while you discuss effective study strategies with more experienced university students.
- Students who participated last year said the program really helped them figure out how to study better.
- Plus, you'll meet other first year students and be entered to win prizes. [if they ask: \$100 Apple Gift card; plus free additional supplies, like a planner].

- And do you know about the co-curricular record? It's a way that our university officially recognizes things you do, like volunteering or workshops. Taking part in these workshops can be added to your Co-Curricular Record.
- Availability is limited and slots will be filled in a first-come basis.

Does this sound like something you'd be interested in?

[If No] That's fine. Participation is completely voluntary. Do you mind if I ask why?

→ Record reason in final column

Thanks. If you change your mind, you can respond to the e-mail we sent you or e-mail [program e-mail]. Thanks for your time and I hope you have a successful year.

[If Yes] Great. I want to find a time that works with your schedule.

Peer coaching sessions are offered at the following times.

[List of times]

Which times are preferred?

→ Assign the person to a preferred time.

→ Make sure you note all available and preferred time in Peer.Coaching.Signup.xlsx]

Great. Let's schedule you for _____. The peer coaching workshops will begin next week. The workshops will take place in [location information]

We will send you an e-mail to confirm your workshop time and will provide written directions about how to find the meeting place.

Do you have any questions?

Again, my name is _____. I'll be one of the peer coaches. The other peer coach are _____ and _____. So you'll be hearing from us shortly.

Thank you so much for your time. I'll see you next week. Have a good day.

Appendix B: Peer Coaching Program Logo



Appendix C: Peer Coaching Job Description

Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the StudySharp intervention leader, StudySharp Peer Coaches will be responsible for implementing activities designed to help first year students develop study and learning strategies that lead to academic success. To reach this goal, StudySharp Peer-Coaches will:

- Actively participate in training sessions
- Plan weekly small group peer-coaching sessions (6 weeks) Coach students on learning and study strategies
- Communicate with coaches before and after coaching sessions Make records of peer-coaching sessions
- Manage logistics of peer-coaching sessions (e.g., attendance, room set up and clean up, etc.)

Nuts & Bolts

- 10-hour per week position beginning September 1, 2014 through November 30
- Applicants should expect to be flexible with shifts between 12:00pm – 2:00pm, 4:00pm – 7:00pm, Monday through Thursday from September 15th-October 16th.
- Training is mandatory and will be held weekdays from September 1st-12th
- Peer-coaching experience will be noted on your Co-Curricular Record (CCR) once completed
- Students in all disciplines and of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply

Qualifications

- Applicants should be upper year students: going into their 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year of undergraduate study, preferably in psychology and with a GPA around 3.75 or greater
- Motivated and enthusiastic
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills with a demonstrated ability to effectively communicate with students
- Exceptional listening skills and ability to understand students' academic challenges
- Demonstrated competence in study and learning skills (time management; selecting, understanding and retaining main ideas; test preparation)
- Able to handle multiple tasks with attention to detail
- Demonstrated success working as a contributing member of a team
- Tact and ability to respect and maintain confidentiality

The ideal candidate: Enjoys social interactions; develops rapport with others quickly; is outgoing and energetic; appreciates working in a team; is able to give and take constructive criticism; is a hard worker and prompt; is organized; has good studying and time management habits; enjoys helping others

Appendix D: Mini-lesson Prompt for Peer Coach Interview

The following instructions were given to Peer Coaching Candidates in advance of their interview.

Instructions. In preparation for your interview, please prepare a 3-5 minute mini-lesson on the topic on selecting the main idea while reading. Your mini-lesson should include 1-2 learning objectives, be appropriate for first-year university students, and include a description of an activity that would help students develop their ability to select the main idea while reading. The activity could be designed to take more than 5 minutes, but you should be able to introduce the topic and strategies and describe the activity within 5 minutes. You do not need to submit anything in writing, but you will be asked to deliver the mini-lesson during the interview.

Appendix E: Example Pre-Workshop E-mail

Subject: Reminder--StudySharp Peer Coaching Workshop Tomorrow at [STARTTIME]
[Location information].

Hello! This is a friendly reminder that you have your first StudySharp Peer Coaching meeting **tomorrow**, [DAY, DATE from STARTTIME-ENDTIME]. We will meet in [Location information]. Details about how to find the room and what to bring are repeated below.

See you there!

StudySharp Peer Coaches

Where do we meet?

- [Location information].
- To see a map, click here [provide link to map]

Lost or have questions?

- Call [contact details]
- Email [contact details]

Appendix F: Example Post-Workshop E-mail

Hi Everyone,

I'm glad many of you were able to make it to the first StudySharp Peer Coaching session. It was great to meet you. If you missed it, please join us next week. Below is a quick look at what we will cover next week and a recap of this week's session.

NEXT WORKSHOP: Next week we will discuss how to learn information so that it sticks. Lots of students struggle with remembering all the new information they are presented with. At the workshop you'll learn strategies that will help you. Remember, pizza is on us and if you come to 4 out of 5 sessions these workshops, you will receive official recognition on your co-curricular record (your official non-academic transcript).

RECAP OF LAST WORKSHOP: This week we covered many issues within the topic of Time Management. In particular, we talked about structuring time and keep track of our tasks. The handout you received during the workshop is attached. Some strategies we discussed that could be helpful are:

- Scheduling regular time to study
- Breaking up your tasks over time
- Finding a study space
- Using rewards as motivation
- Regularly reviewing what is to come and setting short-term goals for your work and classes

LOOKING FOR MORE HELP WITH STUDYING?

- The university offers **free Studying for Success Workshops**. Find one that fits your schedule here. Workshop titles include: Note-taking & Listening Techniques • Managing Time & Avoiding Procrastination • Get Focused: Concentration & Memorization • Effective Reading Strategies • Setting SMART Goals • Get Focused: Concentration & Memorization • Working in a Group - Getting Started (#1) • Working in a Group - Moving Forward (#2) Strategies for Multiple Choice Exams • Short Answer & Essay Exams: Avoiding the Blank Page • Presentation & Speaking

Skills

- The univeristy offers **free study skills tutors in your content area**. These tutors will help you better understand how to study in your discipline. Find out more [here](#).

We are excited to see you all next week at the session on learning information so that it sticks!

Cheers, StudySharp Peer Coaches

Appendix G: Peer Coaching Workshop Reports

Session date/time:

Session topic:

Coaches:

Documenting the lesson

What took place during the session relative to the lesson plan? For example, what was skipped? What unplanned material was addressed?

Evaluating and reflecting on the lesson

What worked well? Why?

What did not work well or go as planned? Why?

Other comments or reflections?