

# DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

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## International Student Experience Exchange

## Mentee Handbook

International Student and Scholar Services  
DePaul University  
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Chicago, IL 60604

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## About The ISEE Peer Mentor Program

### **ISEE Peer Mentor Program Mission**

The International Student Experience Exchange was established by International Student and Scholar Services (ISS) as a bridge program connecting committed student Mentors with incoming international students to improve their academic achievement, social competence, and to facilitate smooth adjustment into the new environment. By sharing experiences and insights, Mentors can ease the transition process of new international students by making deeper connections that enhance the quality of the new international student experience.

### **ISEE Peer Mentor Program Goals and Objectives:**

- To help new students adjust and transition into DePaul life smoothly and identify campus resources
- To provide new students with an intercultural friendship to help them understand the nuances of American culture
- To help new students actively engage in extra-curricular clubs and student life activities

The ISEE Program is a 10-week program. You are a valuable part of the program.

### **Organization of the ISEE Mentor Program**

New international students are matched in teams with an ISEE Peer Mentor. Mentors are matched to mentees based on the following criteria:

**Gender:** we preferably try to keep Mentor and Mentee from same gender. In some cases, we might mix genders.

**Academic area of study:** ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to match you to a peer Mentor who is also in a similar academic program here at DePaul. Therefore, if you study business, we will try to pair you with a peer Mentor who also studies business. Please note that we cannot guarantee a perfect match to a peer Mentor in a specific academic area every time, but we will do our best to match Mentors and Mentees accordingly.

**Cross-cultural:** To encourage new friendships, ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to pair new international students with peer Mentors who have different cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds in an effort to expand student's intercultural communication skills.

**Similar social interests:** ISEE Program Coordinators will attempt to match you to other students who share similar hobbies, such as enjoyment of sports, engagement in the arts, etc.

Together, you, your fellow new student Mentees, and your Mentor will form a small ISEE Peer Group. Mentors will organize social activities on a weekly basis for their Mentee groups, answer questions, and help new student Mentees have an awesome time.

### **Being a New Student Mentee**

A “Mentee” refers to new and returning international students who would like some support in adjusting to the culture and environment here in Chicago at DePaul University. Your Mentor will assist with helping you to adapt and adjust to your new surroundings. For the first 10 weeks of your academic program here at DePaul, your Mentor will serve as a friend and a “cultural informant”.

You will benefit by making new friends, developing confidence, increasing cultural awareness, and expanding appreciation of American culture.

### **Expectations for New Student Mentees**

While attending DePaul, your first responsibility is to be a student. Work, friends, and other extracurricular activities also demand time. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this Peer Mentor Program and we hope it will help you to feel more comfortable and at home at DePaul. The expectations for you as a new student Mentee on this program are outlined in this handbook. How you carry out your role as a new student Mentee will make the biggest difference in the lives of your ISEE Peer Group.

#### Outline of Responsibilities:

**Your role as a new student Mentee begins as soon as you receive the name and email contact information for your Peer Mentor.**

1. Email your Mentor and ISEE Peer Group to introduce yourself.
2. Ask your Mentor lots of questions.
3. Attend ISS events with your mentor. (See the Events Calendar on our website for fun events!)

**Communication is key.** Effective communication will help you keep in touch with other Mentors, other international students and ISS. Make sure to attend all ISEE meetings and maintain communication with ISEE Program Administrators.

### **How to Stay Involved Throughout the Quarter**

The ISEE Program and International Student and Scholar Services (ISS) Calendar will help you to stay involved. To check the calendar online, please visit: <http://offices.depaul.edu/global-engagement/student-resources/getting-involved/Pages/default.aspx> for weekly events.

Stay tuned to events that you can participate in across campus at DePaul! Some of these activities are sponsored by ISS and some of them are hosted by other departments. For example you can attend:

<p>1. Bon Appetit</p> <p>ISS hosts an outing for students twice per quarter to a new ethnic restaurant out in the city of Chicago. To learn about dates, times and prices, contact: <a href="mailto:iss@depaul.edu">iss@depaul.edu</a>.</p>	<p>2. Global Coffee Hours</p> <p>ISS hosts a free coffee hour twice per quarter where American students and international students are invited to socialize over light refreshments. To learn about dates and times, please email: <a href="mailto:iss@depaul.edu">iss@depaul.edu</a></p>
<p>3. Campus Recreation</p> <p>Campus Recreation hosts camping trips, kayaking trips, rock-wall climbing events and so much more. To learn about fun events, please visit: <a href="https://campusrec.depaul.edu/#1">https://campusrec.depaul.edu/#1</a></p>	<p>4. Writing Center</p> <p>UCWBL (University Center for Writing Based Learning) hosts Conversation Partners where international students can make appointments with American students to practice spoken English to improve conversation skills. To learn about making an appointment, visit: <a href="http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/CMWR/cmwr.html">http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/CMWR/cmwr.html</a></p>
<p>5. Office of Student Involvement</p> <p>OSI coordinates over 300 student clubs here on campus. To learn more, visit: <a href="http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/involvement/">http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/involvement/</a></p>	<p>6. Athletics</p> <p>Go to a Blue Demons Sports game! To learn more, please visit: <a href="http://www.depaulbluedemons.com/">http://www.depaulbluedemons.com/</a></p> <p>7. Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change</p> <p>To learn more, visit: <a href="http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/cip.aspx">http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/about/departments/Pages/cip.aspx</a></p>

**Other activities to do include:**

- Get together for a home cooked meal
- Enjoying ice cream at a Chicago restaurant
- Play miniature golf at Navy Pier
- Attend a play
- Go to a movie and café afterwards
- Check out the art exhibits at the DePaul Art Museum
- Study together
- Go rollerblading or bike riding
- Meet for Coffee or at an on campus dining facility

- Visit a local church
- Eat at a local restaurant
- Meet and discuss career goals
- Attend a student organization event together
- Make a snowman in the winter
- Chat on the phone
- Play racquetball at the Ray Meyer
- Have a picnic at Millennium Park
- Bake cookies! Who can say no to cookies?
- Share Pictures or have game nights
- Throw birthday parties, holiday parties

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

- **How many Mentors can I have?**

Each Mentee has access to one Mentor at a time.

- **How diverse is the Mentor pool?**

ISEE welcomes student Mentors of all backgrounds. Our Mentors are very diverse and half of them have studied abroad or are interested in studying in another country/culture. ISEE Mentors are a group of friendly people who are excited to get to know you!

- **Will my Mentor be with me the whole year?**

No. This is only a 10-week peer-mentoring program to help you with your arrival and welcome experience. It is highly encouraged to stay friends with your peer Mentor after the conclusion of the ISEE program.

- **Can I switch Mentors within a quarter?**

Yes. If you feel that your Mentor is not responsive or attentive, please let us know and we will try our best to pair you with a different Mentor. Simply send an email to [iseeprogram@depaul.edu](mailto:iseeprogram@depaul.edu).

- **I have been an ISEE Mentee in the past, can I now be a Mentor?**

Yes! You are more than welcome to be a mentor after you have finished your commitment as a Mentee. We appreciate your efforts to share your own experience and help other international students who need assistance in adjustment. To apply, please email [iseeprogram@depaul.edu](mailto:iseeprogram@depaul.edu) or fill out the ISEE Mentor Application at: <http://bit.ly/iseementor>

- **What if I find that I don't have enough time to meet with my Mentor?** We understand that sometimes when there is a lot of work to do, or when you are feeling tired, meeting with your Mentor may not feel like a priority. However, our experience suggests that, a) learning to develop a balance between your social/recreational and work life is essential for your long term success; b) meeting with Mentors can be actually be helpful at such times.

Nevertheless, we realize that sometimes it just is not possible to meet. If that should happen, we ask that you be respectful of your Mentor's time and let them know in advance if you are unable to meet.

If in-person meetings are too difficult to schedule, please contact each other by phone, email, Skype or Facebook. **COMMUNICATION IS KEY!**

- **What should I consider as a Mentee about limits of the mentoring relationship?**

We hope that both you and your Mentor will find a comfortable way of building a relationship with each other. Although we do not have any restrictions on how you define your relationship with your Mentor, please consider following questions:

- Do you want to establish any time boundaries? (e.g., no calls after 10PM).

- Do you want to invite your Mentor into your home and/or meet your friends and family?
- Do you want to be “friends” on Facebook?

• **Can I ask my Mentor for money?**

Please do NOT lend/borrow money from your Mentor. You may end up spending small amounts of money for your activities (e.g., going out to dinner) though we expect that you will each pay for your own expenses. In addition, we discourage activities that are very expensive. There are many things to do on campus or locally that are either free or low cost. If you encounter any financial difficulties, please consult with banks or ISS for further suggestions.

• **What if my Mentor asks me to do something that makes me feel uncomfortable?**

You can certainly decline invitations if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe with something your Mentor suggests (e.g., bungee jumping, or activities that not in keeping with your religious/spiritual values). Actually, this has never been an issue in ISEE so far. Mentees and mentors have been able to work out activities that fit both Mentees’ and Mentors’ preferences and there are many FREE things to do on campus and in the city of Chicago.

However, if you do notice significant differences, please be aware that many differences can be based on cultural values rather than personal conflicts. We encourage Mentors and Mentees to respect differences in religion, family, money, values, and traditions. We encourage you to explore these differences together (e.g., by talking with each other). If you feel further assistance is needed, please contact the ISEE Coordinators at [iseeprogram@depaul.edu](mailto:iseeprogram@depaul.edu).

• **What should I do in emergencies?**

Please keep in mind that mentors are NOT expected to handle psychological, medical, or legal emergencies. Please contact

Campus Public Safety in case of an emergency:

- Lincoln Park (773) 325-7777
- Loop (312) 362-8400

**Tips and information about career related, DePaul resources, etc.**

**Career Related**

**How to do a Resume:** <http://careercenter.depaul.edu/resumes/default.aspx>

**How to dress professionally:** First impressions are made in the first 5 seconds. Always wear a business suit, unless the employer tells you not to wear one. A suit is always the interview uniform. (Plus, smile and show enthusiasm).

<http://careercenter.depaul.edu/images/how-to-dress-for-work.jpg>

<https://deniserehner.wordpress.com/2009/11/11/dos-and-don%E2%80%99t-you-dare-wear-that-at-the-job-fair/>

**Handshake:** <https://depaul.joinhandshake.com/>

Handshake is DePaul’s hub for job and internship listings, career fair and event registration, mentor connections and more. Login with your Campus Connect username and password.

**Networking:** How to Develop American-Style Networking Skills

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-develop-american-style-networking-skills-andy-molinsky>

<http://www.careercenter.depaul.edu/networking/default.aspx>

**Interview Prep:** <http://careercenter.depaul.edu/resumes/interviewprep.aspx>

### **General activities and information**

**OrgSync:** <http://www.orgsync.com/>

You can check out all the ways to get involved on OrgSync, our campus-wide student engagement tool that provides students, faculty and staff with a direct connection to student organization and departmental portals, upcoming events and more. We also encourage you to attend our yearly Involvement Fairs.

**Lynda.com Free:** DePaul students, faculty, and staff can log in to <https://www.lynda.com> for unlimited free access to a vast online library of instructional videos covering the latest software, creative, and business skills. Taught by accomplished teachers and recognized industry experts, lynda.com is a high-quality resource for students, faculty, and staff looking to develop skills in Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, Mac & Windows, SPSS, Tableau, databases, web design, social media, photography, audio & video, design, animation, business, and a wide range of other topics.

<http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/technology-training/Pages/online-training.aspx>

**The writing center:** <http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/>

The Writing Center offers help—free of charge—to the entire DePaul University community, including students, alumni, faculty, and staff. We help you become more confident in your writing ability by assisting you at any stage of your project, from prewriting to drafting to revising.

This is a useful service offered by DePaul especially for international students. Before submitting your assignment to your professors, make an appointment with the writing center to make sure that it is written with perfect grammar and context.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** <http://offices.depaul.edu/mission-and-values/DES/projectsandprograms/Pages/VolunteerOpportunities.aspx>

<http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/student-life/community-engagement/Pages/default.aspx>

**Demon Discounts:** The Demon Discounts web site is dedicated to providing discounted products and services to the university community from vendors who provide support to DePaul University.

<http://discounts.depaul.edu/>

<http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/student-life/Pages/student-discounts.aspx>





## Template Introductory Email

You are strongly encouraged to write your own, personalized e-mails to your Mentor, but if you get stuck, here is an example for you to use:

Hi \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be your mentee this quarter as part of the ISEE program at DePaul.

I am looking forward to meeting you in person, but in the meantime we can get to know each other a little through e-mail. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_ year (major) student and this is my \_\_\_\_\_ year at DePaul. What are you majoring in? Do you have any clubs or interests you may want to pursue while at DePaul?

I'm looking forward to meeting you soon!

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]