



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Impact of STEP on College Teaching

Vicki Pitstick, Program Manager

Second-Year Transformational Experience Program

Office of Academic Affairs



STEP Faculty Mentors & Panelists

- ❖ Steven Bibyk, Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering
- ❖ Lisa Cravens-Brown, Senior Lecturer, Psychology
- ❖ Peter Curtis, Professor, Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology
- ❖ Nicole Kraft, Assistant Professor – Clinical, Communication



The Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP)

- Weekly interaction with faculty outside of the classroom
- Engagement w/ at least 3 co-curricular programs on campus
- Completion of financial literacy online module & in-person coaching session with trained peer facilitator
- Exploration of 6 categories of transformational experiences including **study abroad, internships, community service, undergraduate research, leadership, & creative artistic endeavors**



The Second-Year Transformational Experience Program (STEP)

- Creation of written proposal for how students can use up to \$2000 in STEP fellowship to support a transformational experience
- Reflect and report back on experience
 - Reflect at U.OSU.EDU
 - Report back at STEP Expo, research forum, pecha kucha, or some other way



Faculty Engagement in STEP

Faculty engagement is a centerpiece of the Second-year Transformational Experience Program.

Research shows that interaction with faculty, both formal and informal, is a predictor of student success, thus STEP has made it a priority to create an environment at Ohio State in which faculty and students develop meaningful academic and intellectual engagement.



In an article from Gallup, Ray & Kafka stated *“if graduates recalled having a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in all aspects of their well-being.”*

- Gallup-Purdue Study, 2014



STEP Faculty Mentor Expectations

- Attend two, day-long STEP Faculty Retreats
- Participate in one additional STEP Faculty Enrichment Seminar
- Guide up to 20 second-year students through an exploration of personal development and education-enhancing experiences through weekly, small group (cohort) meetings during Fall Semester
- Assist these students in the development of STEP projects
- Increase students' awareness of their own identity, evidence and reflection-based decision making, and global citizenship in order to assist them in choosing a path forward
- Interact with students one-on-one and provide advice and mentoring
- Be part of the conversation to assist STEP students, other STEP faculty mentors and the STEP administration in continuing to grow and develop the program.



STEP Faculty Benefits

- Engagement with students outside of the classroom
- An opportunity to work with other faculty mentors from across the university
- Opportunities to have informal lunches with students – Student Life provides each faculty mentor with meal blocks to be used at any campus dining facility
- Increased knowledge of the university and all its resources
- \$5,000 to be used at the faculty mentor's own discretion for personal or academic pursuits
- Acknowledgment within promotion materials as “recognition of teaching excellence” and as “significant university service,” thereby fulfilling two areas of faculty recognition for excellence



“The ultimate goal of the education system is to shift to the individual the burden of pursuing one’s own education”

-John W. Gardner, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under President Lyndon Johnson

Teacher/student meeting in a lecture classroom is being both supplemented and partially replaced with processes that use online and social media mechanisms.

This transformation of the traditional lecture classroom continues as universities strive to improve student outcomes while responding to increasing financial and political pressures.

In a bold endeavor called STEP, The Ohio State University puts up to \$2000 into the hands of students to direct how they transform some of their educational process.



Questions for Panelists

- What enticed you to become a STEP Faculty Mentor?
- How has being a STEP Faculty Mentor impacted your interactions with students and your teaching?
- What are your hopes for student/faculty interaction at Ohio State as a whole/in the future?

Questions for All

- What skills should teachers develop for more effective student interactions outside the lecture classroom as universities transform?
- What skills should teachers develop to mentor students who are “empowered” to direct more of their own education?
- How does participating in the STEP program allow faculty to develop and hone these skills and mesh with the First Year Experience?
- What are your hopes for student/faculty interaction at Ohio State as a whole/in the future?



Because of STEP . . .

I have built relationships with the students and my faculty colleagues; I have gained insights about programs and departments across campus; and have had the opportunity to participate in a number of interdisciplinary projects.

I have a richer understanding of the student experience. For example, I am in parts of campus I had no reason to visit before, such as residence halls and dining locations. This makes me a better teacher, a better faculty committee member, and a better Ohio State community citizen.

I feel like I'm teaching at a small, liberal arts college that is deeply invested in the success of its undergraduate students

I have become more knowledgeable about the opportunities on the campus for undergraduate students, and the services the university provides to our students. It has also been enlightening to see how these opportunities and services are interconnected, not just a set of disjointed parts. Being involved in STEP has been a great professional development activity for me as a faculty member.



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Questions?



**Thank you for
your attendance
& participation!**

CONTACT S

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