

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Student-Faculty Partnerships is a highly selective program offered by Berea's Center for Teaching and Learning that pairs accepted applicants with a Berea faculty member for one semester. Student participants sit in on a faculty member's class sessions (one hour/week) and have regular conversations with them about teaching goals. Each student participant takes observation notes on their faculty partner's course and offers suggestions from their perspective as a student expert. Student participants do not take the faculty member's course for credit and are not expected to learn the material or complete readings or homework.

In addition to observing, accepted applicants take a .25-credit class (one hour/week), where they meet with other student participants and discuss communicating, teaching, and learning.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

Students commonly note these benefits to participating in Student-Faculty Partnerships:

- Better understanding of their personal learning needs and experiences
- Stronger relationships with faculty members
- Experience giving meaningful, effective feedback in professional/educational settings
- Greater sense of belonging in the classroom
- Better insight into the complexities of teaching and learning
- "Enhanced confidence, motivation, and enthusiasm" (Cook-Sather, A., Bovill, C., Felten, P., 2014)

Additionally, SFPP is a valuable item for résumés/CVs, especially for those interested in teaching, training, and communication. This is also an experience you can speak to in job, internship, and graduate/professional school application materials. The .25-credit course will give you practice imagining and articulating how to take these skills into other educational, professional, and personal settings.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1) **Secure a recommendation** from a Berea faculty or staff member. This recommender should be able to comment on your ability to communicate respectfully and effectively and your likely success working closely with a faculty member on teaching/learning goals and class dynamics.

Your recommender should give a brief but substantive recommendation to Program Coordinators Lauren Hall (e-mail: Lauren_Hall@berea.edu or phone: *3209) or Dr. Leslie Ortquist-Ahrens (ortquistahrensl@berea.edu).

- 2) **Complete the Application Form** (next page).
- 3) **Read and sign the Letter of Commitment** (page 3). This letter underscores the necessity of enrolling and remaining in the .25-credit course; visiting your Faculty Partner's class weekly; and being timely, present, and communicative in all aspects of your program participation. Read closely before signing.
- 4) **Send your completed Application Form, Letter of Commitment, and your (tentative) spring schedule to Lauren Hall** (Lauren_Hall@berea.edu). You are also welcome to drop off a physical copy of your application materials: 112 Hutchins Library, Lower Level, or e-mail/stop by with any questions!

APPLICATION FORM

(If completing this PDF on your Berea laptop in Adobe Reader, you can type in responses and add a signature by selecting “Tools” / “Fill & Sign” from the top toolbar.)

Name:

Year:

Major(s):

Minor(s):

Faculty/Staff Recommender Name:

Why do you want to be a Student Partner?

What do you think would make you an effective Student Partner?

Please comment on any experiences you have that might benefit you in doing this work (e.g., labor positions, leadership roles, courses, hobbies)

Once you have a tentative spring schedule in place, please e-mail it to Lauren_Hall@bera.edu

Scheduling notes:

- Every effort will be made to match you with a Faculty Partner if you are accepted into the program. However, **your assignment to a partnership is subject to the number of faculty participants and their course schedules.** If your schedule does not match any of the participating faculty member’s course schedules, we will not be able to offer you a partnership and you will not be able to participate. Your application will be considered again for next year’s program without a need to re-apply.
- If you are accepted into the program and matched with a faculty partner, you must commit to remaining in the program and the .25-credit course. **If you drop the course, your faculty partner will no longer be able to participate.**

LETTER OF COMMITMENT

Date:

I recognize that as a participant in the Student-Faculty Partnerships Program there are commitments I must make to **demonstrate respect** for myself, the program, and my Faculty/Student Partner(s).

I recognize and am willing to **engage in a collaborative partnership** focused on pedagogical issues initially identified by my Faculty Partner(s) and expanded upon as we agree together is appropriate.

I recognize that, if accepted, dropping or **withdrawing from the .25-credit course will keep a faculty member from being able to participate in the program.**

I commit to being a full participant in the .25-credit course, which includes **regular attendance, thoughtful contributions, and ongoing and timely communication** via e-mail.

I will respect myself and my Partner throughout this project by **communicating with honesty and courtesy** to the best of my ability so we may meet challenges together. By making this commitment I will take responsibility to communicate with my Faculty Partner(s) and the Program Coordinators about challenges I encounter or that my Partner and I encounter together.

I **commit to communicate with the Program Coordinators** if at any time I feel uncomfortable or have concerns, questions, or suggestions of any kind.

In the event I am unable to meet one or more of the requirements for the partnership(s) (classroom observation, meeting with Faculty Partner, meeting with Student Partners, etc.), I will do my best to **communicate with the appropriate party** (Faculty Partner, Program Coordinators).

I commit to **reflecting on this work using the means provided** (weekly class sessions, moments of focused assessment, etc.).

I commit to upholding the privacy of my partner and to **keeping strictly confidential anything discussed in weekly meetings** with other Student Partners and the Program Coordinator. I **will not share information about my Partner with anyone outside** of these forums unless necessary, meaning that I will communicate with the Program Coordinators about any issues that need to be addressed.

Sincerely,

Signature:

Printed Name:

FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

- *“I cannot recommend this experience highly enough. It will broaden your horizons and teach you to think and analyze on levels you may have never considered before. The relevance and applicability to life itself also cannot be understated, for ideally, it will teach you to listen, observe, communicate, and encourage growth in these things in all areas of life, if you choose to learn from them and apply them in this way. Whether you intend to be a teacher, a parent, a lawyer, or any other thing in the professional world, this will only provide another fortification to the development of those skills.”*
- *“I have a newfound confidence in my academic abilities and have added new abilities to my toolset. I feel so much better about working with and talking to faculty members. . . . I feel like this program came along at the best time. It’s made me a lot calmer about the prospects of graduating because, no matter what may come, I know that I have the smarts and skillset to thrive.”*
- *“I have learned that I do have a valuable perspective, even as a student, and that I am more willing to share my opinion with my professors. I also think the program has helped me to be able to better communicate with people who I typically view as being in a place of higher authority.”*
- *“The most important insight that I received through this program is how to truly be in partnership with another person and how to let things develop organically. . . . I feel like this program taught me true partnership because I felt independent and secure in terms of my experience with the course but I never felt lonely or like I couldn’t ask for help. This class has enhanced my security when it comes to speaking with people who are in higher positions of authority than me. It was not difficult to begin with, but I feel like I can speak to and advocate for myself (if necessary) even better than before.”*
- *“[T]his radical approach to learning and teaching is something that I can and have brought to other spheres of my life. It’s helped me to be better at communicating with my partner and deliberate with word choices. It’s helped me to motivate myself in my classes.”*

Questions? Reach out!

E-mail Lauren_Hall@berea.edu or stop by:
112 Hutchins Library, lower level