

ESOL Connect

Peer Advising Program Toolkit



Nashville State Community College

Nashville State
Community College

Advising Success Network

About the ASN

The Advising Success Network (ASN) is a dynamic network of national organizations partnering to engage institutions in holistic advising redesign to advance success for all students, including Black, Latinx/a/o, Indigenous, Asian, and Pacific Islander students and poverty-affected students. The network develops services and resources to guide institutions in implementing evidence-based advising practices. Since its formation in 2018, ASN has supported over 250 institutions in 30 states and created more than 50 open-source resources for practitioners and students. ASN is coordinated by NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, and includes partners Achieving the Dream, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Center for Innovation in Postsecondary Education, EDUCAUSE, NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising, the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, and Young Invincibles.

About NASPA

NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Advising Success Network funded this project. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Advising Success Network. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information.



Special Thanks

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- Kati Murphy, Institutional Research Analyst
- Jayme Hay, Student Success Advisor
- Michael Sostre, Student Success Advisor
- ESOL Faculty and Staff
- ESOL Connect Peer Advisors
- Current ESOL Students and Alumni

Each contributor played a vital role in shaping the vision, design, validation, and implementation of the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program. Their collective expertise across student advising, peer mentorship, ESOL education, and student advocacy ensured that this program remained both student-centered and institutionally grounded.

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Executive Summary

Higher education institutions across the country are navigating a shared challenge: while academic programs are carefully designed to support degree completion, many students—particularly multilingual learners—continue to express uncertainty about how their language development translates into academic readiness. ESOL students often face barriers to persistence and completion, yet struggle to access culturally responsive peer support that can bridge the gap between coursework and college success.

The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program at Nashville State Community College (NSCC) was developed in response to these intersecting challenges.

ESOL, or English Speakers of Other Languages, refers to students whose first language is not English and who are developing academic English proficiency alongside their coursework. At Nashville State Community College, ESOL students are defined as nonnative English speakers who require additional academic English instruction—delivered through Listening & Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Grammar coursework—to build the language skills needed for success in college-level classes.

Institutional Profile

About Nashville State Community College

Nashville State Community College is a community college serving the greater Nashville area through six campuses. The college offers more than 80 academic programs designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population and the regional workforce.

With a total of 8,084 students enrolled in the Fall 2025 term, NSCC reflects the dynamic community it serves:

- 56% are first-generation college students
- 35% are adult learners aged 25 or older
- Enrollment is nearly evenly split between full-time and part-time students

This diversity provides flexibility for learners at all stages of life and underscores the need for culturally responsive, comprehensive support services such as the ESOL Connect program.

NSCC's Track Record

NSCC has demonstrated extensive experience in securing and effectively managing funding to implement programs that remove barriers to student success:

- Nashville GRAD and Nashville Flex programs: Funded by Metro Nashville to provide academic support and address financial needs beyond tuition
- Beyond Financial Aid initiative: Addresses critical non-tuition expenses such as

- childcare, transportation, and emergency financial needs
- GEAR UP program: Federally funded initiative to increase college readiness for low-income students
- New Skills Ready grant: Funded by JP Morgan Chase to support college-to-career readiness initiatives Advancing Workforce Equity Program: \$7.8 million grant funded through the American Rescue Plan

With extensive experience in grant management, research-driven program implementation, and student success initiatives, NSCC has demonstrated its ability to design and sustain impactful programs. The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program builds upon these established frameworks, leveraging evidence-based advising models to enhance retention and completion rates among multilingual learners.

ESOL Program at Nashville State

Nashville State's ESOL program supports nonnative English speakers in developing the academic English skills needed for college success, offering Levels 2, 3, and 4 in Listening & Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Grammar. The Listening & Speaking classes help students improve their ability to understand academic lectures and conversations, participate in class discussions, present ideas clearly, and expand their academic vocabulary. Reading courses prepare students for the heavy reading demands of college by strengthening comprehension, teaching strategies such as skimming and scanning, and helping students build the advanced vocabulary needed for academic texts.

Writing courses guide students in becoming confident academic writers by helping them construct clear sentences, develop organized ideas, and produce essays that meet college expectations. Grammar courses support accuracy and clarity by helping students understand and use a wide range of English structures, including verb forms, sentence patterns, and other essential grammar needed for effective communication. Together, these components build a strong foundation for expressing ideas successfully in both spoken and written academic settings.

Students may also take the American College Experience course, which introduces the U.S. college system and helps them understand degree options, financial aid, academic expectations, and how to make informed decisions about their educational pathway. This class equips students with practical knowledge to navigate college life and plan for longterm goals. -term goals.

After students complete their Level 4 ESOL coursework, they transition out of the ESOL sequence and move forward into courses for their chosen major. In other words, Level 4 serves as the bridge to collegelevel study, positioning students to use their strengthened academic English skills in the same classes required for degree completion alongside other Nashville State students

The Need for ESOL Connect

Through ongoing conversations with students, faculty consultations, advising sessions, and institutional data analysis, the Student Success Center identified a consistent theme: ESOL students were requesting more intentional peer support, clearer guidance on navigating college systems, and stronger connections between their language development and academic success. While each ESOL course includes structured learning outcomes, many students experience challenges adapting to academic expectations, building confidence in English communication, and accessing resources independently.

Over the past two academic years, ESOL course enrollment has declined, and many students are refusing their recommended ESOL courses despite data showing that students who complete at least one semester of ESOL succeed in college-level classes (particularly English Composition I) at higher rates than those who refuse. Students often trust peer recommendations over staff advocacy, with many reporting "my friend told me these classes are pointless."

The ESOL Connect program addresses this gap by pairing trained peer advisors—students who have successfully completed the ESOL program—with current ESOL students to provide guidance, encouragement, and culturally responsive support.

What We Did

To address this need, NSCC designed the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program—a structured initiative that intentionally pairs ESOL students with trained peer advisors who provide mentoring, encouragement, and practical support throughout each semester. These peer advisors are former ESOL students who have successfully completed all assigned levels of ESOL coursework and transitioned to college-level classes, offering valuable first-hand cultural competence and relatable insights.

The initiative was piloted beginning in Summer 2025 with two hired peer advisors. From the outset, the project was grounded in evidence-based advising practices and collaborative design.

A Collaborative, Student-Centered Process

The development process was intentionally student-centered and equity-minded. Input from student success advisors and faculty directly informed refinements to program structure, peer advisor training, communication strategies, and support resources. This feedback helped ensure the program was accessible, realistic, and responsive to the varied lived experiences of the students it is designed to support.

ESOL faculty contributed curriculum and teaching expertise, while Student Success Advisors ensured alignment with academic advising best practices. The Director of the Student Success Center provided supervisory support and institutional backing.

The Difference This Work Has Made

The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program has transformed how ESOL students engage with college preparation. Students now have access to:

- One-on-one support from someone who has been in their situation
- Monthly check-in meetings addressing academic progress, study strategies, campus navigation, and personal well-being
- Monthly workshops covering academic skills, English practice, and wellness strategies
- A peer who can relate to their cultural background and language learning journey
- Help navigating NSCC systems including D2L, myNSCC, and student email
- Monthly gift card incentives for staying connected with their Peer Advisor

For Student Success Advisors and ESOL faculty, the program provides a shared framework that strengthens advising conversations, supports student persistence, and reinforces commitment to ESOL coursework throughout the academic journey.

Implementation Snapshot

The development of the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program took place over approximately six months during Summer 2025, allowing time for training development, iterative review, and stakeholder feedback. Key project investments included professional development and the hiring of two part-time peer advisors as student employees.

Why This Program Matters for Other Institutions

This program model has been developed for institutions to seamlessly adapt to their own contexts to support ESOL students on their higher education journeys through connection and mentorship. By combining peer support, culturally responsive advising, and evidence-based practices, institutions can develop programs that make learning visible, intentional, and success-focused.

At its core, this work is about empowering students with clarity, confidence, and connection—while providing institutions with a sustainable approach to peer advising that responds to both student needs and institutional capacity.

Program Overview

What is ESOL Connect?

ESOL Connect is a peer advising initiative within the Student Success Center that pairs high-achieving former ESOL students with current ESOL students to provide mentoring, encouragement, and practical support throughout each semester.

Through ESOL Connect, ESOL students are paired with Peer Advisors (PAs) who have direct experience with ESOL classes and provide valuable first-hand cultural competence that many full-time staff do not possess. Peer advisors serve as a bridge between professional staff and students—someone who is fully knowledgeable about NSCC systems and fully relatable regarding the ESOL experience.

Peer Advisor Selection and Qualifications

Peer Advisors are selected from faculty and staff nominations to the program Steering Committee. Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Successfully completed all assigned levels of ESOL coursework at NSCC
- Currently enrolled in college-level courses with good academic standing
- Demonstrated commitment to helping other ESOL students
- Strong communication skills and cultural competence
- Did not officially refuse ESOL classes (students who refused are not eligible)

Peer Advisors are hired as part-time student employees on NSCC payroll

Supervision and Support

Peer Advisors are supervised by the Assistant Director of the Student Success Center. Peer advisors meet with the Assistant Director at the beginning of each semester to:

- Review their academic class schedule
- Schedule their work hours for the term
- Discuss program goals and expectations
- Receive ongoing guidance and support throughout the semester

Key Performance Indicators and Metrics

The success of the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program is measured using quantifiable metrics aligned with NSCC's institutional goals for student persistence and retention.

Definitions

For the purposes of this program, key terms are defined as follows:

- Persistence: Enrolling in the next semester (measured fall to spring)
- Retention: Enrolling in the next fall term (measured fall to fall)
- Progression: The successful continuation of an ESOL student to the next level of ESOL coursework. Progression specifically focuses on educational advancement within the ESOL program sequence, tracking whether students complete their current ESOL level and proceed to the subsequent level of instruction

Primary KPIs

The program focuses on three primary areas of measurement:

1. Course Progression Metrics

Current baseline: 60% of ESOL students attempt the next level of coursework, with 47% successfully passing.

Program goals:

- Increase attempt rate to 70% (10% increase)
- Increase pass rate to 57% (10% increase)

Measurement method: Track progression rates through institutional data each semester.

2. Course Refusal Reduction

Goal: 15% reduction in ESOL course refusals among eligible students who place into ESOL classes.

Measurement method: Compare refusal rates before and after program implementation.

3. Student Engagement

Goal: 60% of program participants attend at least five peer advisor meetings or success workshops per semester.

Measurement method: Track attendance via sign-in sheets and peer advisor reports.

Program Satisfaction

Semesterly surveys are administered to advisees, peer advisors, faculty, and program staff to assess program effectiveness and impact.

Goal: 80% overall satisfaction rate among participants.

Surveys measure:

- Perceived support received through the program
- Effectiveness of peer advising interactions
- Impact on student success and confidence
- Quality of workshops and resources provided
- Overall program value and recommendations for improvement

Assessment Timeline

These KPIs allow the program to evaluate success both quantitatively and qualitatively, ensuring that data-driven adjustments can be made to maximize effectiveness in supporting ESOL students at NSCC. Assessment occurs on a semesterly basis with comprehensive annual reporting.

Dissemination and Scalability

Beyond benefiting ESOL students at NSCC, this program has been designed as a scalable model for other institutions supporting multilingual students. The program model can be seamlessly adapted to different institutional contexts.

Resource Development

A comprehensive Resource Document has been created to support program replication, containing:

- Hiring and Recruiting Plans
- Promotional flyers for recruiting peer advisors and advisees
- A presentation for faculty with a script
- Peer advisor application materials
- Advisee application materials
- Comprehensive Peer Advisor Training Handbook including:
 - Program mission and values
 - Peer advisor role expectations and responsibilities

- Professional standards including FERPA compliance
- Guidance for student check-ins and case documentation
- Communication templates and protocols
- Clear referral procedures for connecting students with campus support services
- Email templates for peer advisor communication
- Tabling event talking points
- Classroom visit guidelines for peer advisors
- Workshop presentation ideas
- Guides for conducting effective check in meetings
- Case management documentation guidelines
- Detailed presentation and guide on designing and facilitating student workshops
- Presentation and guide on conducting effective one-on-one check-in meetings

Institutional Adaptation

Institutions can adapt the ESOL Connect model by:

- Customizing materials to reflect local context and student populations
- Adjusting peer advisor qualifications based on institutional ESOL program structure
- Scaling the program based on available resources and student enrollment
- Modifying workshop topics to address specific student needs
- Integrating the program into existing advising and student support structures

Conclusion

The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program represents a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to supporting multilingual learners at Nashville State Community College. By leveraging the power of peer mentorship and culturally responsive support, the program addresses critical challenges in ESOL student persistence, progression, and engagement.

The program's success reflects NSCC's broader mission to provide accessible, high-quality education and comprehensive support for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Through holistic advising, student belonging initiatives, and degree completion support, ESOL Connect strengthens NSCC's commitment to equitable student success.

Key outcomes achieved through the program include:

- Providing ESOL students with relatable peer support from former ESOL students
- Creating a structured framework for student engagement through check-ins and workshops
- Offering culturally responsive support that professional staff may not be able to provide
- Leveraging peer influence to increase commitment to ESOL coursework
- Building a scalable model that other institutions can adapt

Moving Forward

As the program continues to evolve and generate data, its scalable model and comprehensive resources will serve as valuable tools for institutions nationwide seeking to enhance support for multilingual learners. The ESOL Connect team remains committed to:

- Continuous improvement based on student and stakeholder feedback
- Regular assessment of program effectiveness and impact
- Knowledge sharing with the broader higher education community
- Advancing success for ESOL students both at NSCC and beyond

A Closing Word

This program model has been developed for institutions to seamlessly adapt to their own contexts to support ESOL students on their higher education journeys through connection and mentorship. The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program is more than a set of meetings and workshops—it is a flexible framework that helps students understand how their

language skills grow over time, take intentional steps toward their academic goals, and make the most of the resources available to them.

The success of this initiative demonstrates what is possible when institutions center student voice, leverage peer influence, and commit to culturally responsive support. By offering clear pathways, intentional development opportunities, and ongoing connection, institutions can help multilingual learners build confidence, discover strengths, and chart meaningful educational futures.

Appendices

The following appendices provide detailed program materials and resources developed for the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program. These materials are available for adaptation by other institutions seeking to implement similar peer advising initiatives.

Available Resources

- Appendix A: ESOL Connect Recruitment and Hiring Documents – A comprehensive overview of the recruitment and hiring process for ESOL Connect Peer advisors. Documents included are:
 - Timeline and recruitment plan
 - Faculty presentation and script
 - Promotional flyers and email templates
 - Hiring timeline and application templates
 - Interview evaluation form
 - Expectations for both peer advisors and program participants
- Appendix B: ESOL Connect Student Training Materials – Comprehensive training guide used to train ESOL Connect Peer Advisors. Materials include:
 - ESOL Connect Peer Advisor Training Handbook
 - Presentation and training guide on how to build an effective student workshop
 - Presentation and training guide on how to conduct student check in meetings

ESOL Connect

Hiring and Recruiting Documents



Nashville State
Community College

Peer Advisor Recruitment and Hiring Documentation

This document provides a comprehensive overview of the recruitment and hiring processes for peer advisors within our program. The materials contained herein are designed to guide program administrators through each stage of identifying, evaluating, and onboarding qualified peer advisors. The document is organized into two primary sections: Recruitment and Hiring.

The Recruitment section includes:

- Detailed timeline and the overall recruitment plan,
- A faculty presentation with accompanying script
- Promotional flyers
- A recruiting email template to facilitate outreach efforts.

The Hiring section includes:

- The hiring timeline
- An application template for the Peer Advisors
- An interview form for candidate evaluation
- Expectations for both peer advisors and program participants.

Together, these resources establish a systematic approach to building a strong team of peer advisors who can effectively support and guide program participants.

Recruitment Plan for Peer Advisors

The peer advisor recruitment process follows a three-month timeline spanning May through July for both 2025 and 2026. In May 2025, the process begins with outreach to ESOL faculty and staff to gather recommendations for students who would be strong candidates for the program. These recommended candidates are then compiled into a list and screened for eligibility before receiving recruitment emails and flyers. The following month in June, a hiring committee is formed to conduct peer advisor interviews with the qualified candidates. Finally, in July 2025, the Human Resources department completes the hiring process, and the newly selected peer advisors report for their training.

The 2026 recruitment cycle introduces an important enhancement to the candidate sourcing strategy. In addition to soliciting faculty recommendations, the recruitment team also reaches out directly to current ESOL Connect participants who are completing their ESOL courses and will be transitioning out of the program. This dual-source approach expands the potential candidate pool and leverages the firsthand program knowledge of graduating participants. The subsequent interview and hiring phases mirror the 2025 timeline, maintaining the same structured progression through committee interviews and HR onboarding.

Recruitment Plan for Peer Advisors • 2025



May 2025

- ✓ Reach out to ESOL faculty/staff for recommendation of students that would be a good fit for the program
- ✓ Email recruitment email along with recruitment flyer



June 2025

- ✓ Form hiring committee
- ✓ Complete peer advisor interviews



July 2025

- ✓ HR completes hiring process
- ✓ Peer Advisors report for training

ESOL Peer Advising Program

Nashville State
Community College



What is ESOL Connect?

A new peer advising initiative from the Student Success Center.



Past ESOL students can become Peer Advisors.



Mentoring, encouragement, and practical support.



High-achieving, knowledgeable students on the rise.

Why ESOL Connect?

Increasing class enrollment and providing crucial peer support.



**Committing to ESOL classes ->
increased college success.**



**Higher trust when peers are
involved in decisions.**



**Liaison who is both relatable
and knowledgeable.**

ESOL Connect Pilot Timeline



Phase I: Development May – July 2025

- June: ESOL Connect Staff earned a micro credential from NACADA on creating peer advising programs
- Completed hiring process for two Peer Advisors
- Developed a Peer Advisor training handbook including duties, activities, and workshop development strategies



Phase II: Implementation July 2025 – May 2026

- July 21 start date for Peer Advisors, beginning with training
- Peer Advisors will support ESOL students and assist during Fall and Spring registration periods
- Peer Advisors and team will develop and implement workshops for ESOL students



Phase III: Reflection May – June 2026

- Gather new data on persistence rates among ESOL students
- Gather program feedback
- Assess if any changes should be made for future terms

Program Goals

Participation



Reduce the number of ESOL refusals:

Goal -15%

Progression



Students attempting the next ESOL level: Current 60% **Goal 70%**

Students passing the next ESOL level: Current 47% **Goal 57%**

Engagement



Advisees attending 5+ meetings per semester:

Goal 60%

The Impact of Faculty Partnership

Faculty play a key role in student trust and success. By helping raise awareness and reinforcing the power of peer mentorship, you help normalize ESOL support, reduce stigma, and empower students to engage fully in their learning journey.



Identify and recommend excellent PA candidates.



Invite PAs into classrooms to promote their services and share experiences.



Identify ESOL students who need the support PAs provide.



Nashville State
Community College

Questions?

Faculty Presentation Script

Introduction Slide

[Team introduces themselves]

We are on staff for a new Peer Advising program specifically for ESOL students, ESOL Connect.

What is ESOL Connect?

ESOL Connect is a new peer advising initiative within the Student Success Center. ESOL Connect will invite past high-achieving ESOL students to serve as Peer Advisors, or PAs, to other students enrolled in ESOL classes.

Through ESOL Connect, ESOL students will be paired with PAs who have more direct experience with ESOL classes than anyone else on campus. PAs will have been through these courses themselves and will provide valuable first-hand cultural competence that many full-time staff do not possess.

PAs will provide mentoring, encouragement, and practical support throughout each semester. They will host one-on-one peer advising appointments where they can help students with any of their needs as it relates to college or ESOL. Whether it's discussing challenges within their classes, navigating NSCC systems and software, or struggling with the balance between student life and life outside of school, PAs will be equipped with the experience to help.

PAs will be selected from faculty and staff nominations to the Steering Committee. Nominees should be high-achieving ESOL students who have completed all assigned levels of ESOL coursework. If a student officially refused ESOL classes, then they will not be eligible to be selected as Peer Advisors.

PAs will be hired as part-time student employees on NSCC payroll. We considered the possibility of Federal Work Study students having PA-like duties, but this will not fully meet the needs of the advisees, as much of the important PA work will take place between semesters.

Why ESOL Connect?

Over the last two academic years, ESOL course enrollment has declined, and many students are refusing their recommended ESOL courses. Data shows that students who place into ESOL classes succeed in their first college classes (particularly English Composition I) at a higher rate when they first take at least one semester of ESOL, compared to those who refuse ESOL their first semester. We know from conversations with ESOL students that the classes genuinely benefit them both academically and outside of their educational journeys in the real world.

While we can advocate for the benefit of these classes to those who'd rather refuse, students don't always necessarily trust staff who can't directly relate to their experiences. We often hear "my friend told me these classes are pointless," and their minds are already made up. But having a Peer Advisor who CAN relate to them and can explain the benefits of the classes first-hand can drive more commitment to ESOL.

We've also observed a lack of peer-to-peer connection for ESOL students. The creation of PA positions allows there to be a middle person among professional staff and students who is fully knowledgeable and fully relatable.

ESOL Connect Pilot Timeline

We have broken this work down into three phases.

Phase I: This past summer, one of our team members completed a NACADA micro-credential training on Creating Peer Advising Programs to help us understand best practices for implementing this program. We have also developed a Peer Advising Handbook which details job duties and strategies for working as an effective peer advisor and have hired two Peer Advisors.

Phase II: We started PA training on July 21st, where we outlined specific job functions, discussed ideas for implementation, and educated PAs on institutional policies and advising best practices. In August, our PAs began assisting students with registration and post-ELPT follow-up meetings. Continuing into the fall, they will keep mentoring ESOL students who participate in the program and provide regular student success workshops which they will develop alongside ESOL Connect staff.

Phase III: Throughout the whole process, we will collect data on ESOL student persistent rates and complete a comparative analysis on grades between those who engage in ESOL Connect and those who do not. We will gather program feedback from PAs and advisees and assess what changes may need to be made for future terms.

Program Goals

We have specific metrics we are measuring success by beyond satisfaction surveys that we will distribute. We are looking to see ESOL class refusals lower by 15%.

We want to increase the number of students who attempt the next level of ESOL classes their second semester by 10%, and who pass that next level by 10%.

For student engagement in ESOL Connect, we want to see advisees attending at least 5 peer advisor meetings or success workshops throughout each semester.

The Impact of Faculty Partnership

We hope to partner with you, the faculty, on this new initiative. We've identified several ways your involvement could be deeply impactful for ESOL Connect.

1. You are on the front lines of these ESOL classes and see the students far more than we do in our role in the Student Success Center. You can identify students who will be excellent PA candidates and encourage them to apply for the position.
2. At your discretion, you can support integration by welcoming PAs into relevant class spaces as needed. We believe their input could be especially valuable in the American College Experience class, but any involvement they can have in other ESOL classes will surely be valuable.
3. You also will be able to identify students who need additional support and refer them to ESOL Connect Peer Advisors for help. Whether that's navigating NSCC systems, having someone to relate to any struggles they're experiencing with college life, or wanting to talk to someone who can relate more to their cultural background, PAs will be there for them.

Conclusion and Questions

We hope you will consider partnering with us in these ways, and we'd love to hear other ways you feel like you can partner with us! Let us know what questions you have!

ESOL

Peer Advising Program



ESOL CONNECT

What is ESOL Connect?

ESOL Connect is a peer advising program for Nashville State ESOL students. You'll be matched with a trained peer mentor who has completed the ESOL program at NSCC and can help you navigate college life, answer questions, build confidence, and get involved.

Apply
now



Have questions?

ESOLconnect@nscc.edu



Mentor.
Motivate.
Make an impact.

Have you completed your ESOL courses at NSCC?

Put your experience to work! ESOL Connect is a new peer advising program for ESOL students at NSCC, and Peer Advisors are needed. This paid opportunity is a chance to support others, grow your leadership skills, and make a difference on campus. Scan to apply today!

Questions?

ESOLConnect@nscc.edu



ESOL Connect Recruitment Email Template

Subject: Become an ESOL Connect Peer Advisor

Dear ESOL Student,

You have been recommended by ESOL faculty as an outstanding candidate for our peer advisor program! The ESOL Connect program is hiring peer advisors, and your success in the ESOL program makes you an ideal fit to support incoming students.

Position Details

- **Pay:** \$15/hour
- **Hours:** 15 hours per week during the semester
- **Start Date:** Training begins (insert date)

Your Role

Meet with assigned advisees 4-5 times per semester to provide guidance, answer questions, and help them navigate their ESOL journey. Connect through one-on-one meetings, check-ins, emails, and workshops.

What You'll Gain

- Develop valuable leadership and mentoring skills
- Build your professional resume
- Make meaningful connections with fellow students

Qualifications

- Current NSCC student
- Completed ESOL courses or be in your last semester of ESOL classes
- GPA of 2.5 or higher
- Reliable, respectful, and committed to helping others succeed

Ready to Apply? Click [HERE](#)(insert hyperlink) to complete an application. This is a rewarding opportunity to use your experience to help others while developing skills that will benefit your future career.

Sincerely,
ESOL Connect Program Team
Nashville State Community College

ESOL Connect Hiring Process

The hiring process for ESOL Connect Peer Advisors at Nashville State Community College follows a structured six-step approach designed to identify and onboard the most qualified candidates. The process begins with soliciting recommendations from ESOL faculty and staff for students who demonstrate strong leadership qualities and are nearing completion of the ESOL program. Once potential candidates are identified, they are invited to apply for peer advisor positions through a Microsoft Form application. The program then submits the job description to Human Resources to initiate the formal hiring process. Candidates participate in in-person or phone interviews where the hiring committee explains program details, outlines position expectations, and assesses each candidate's fit for the role. Following the interviews, the committee submits their recommendations for hire to HR. Selected candidates then complete all necessary paperwork with Human Resources before beginning the peer advisor training program. This comprehensive process ensures that peer advisors are not only academically qualified but also possess the interpersonal skills and program knowledge necessary to effectively support and guide fellow ESOL students.

HIRING PROCESS FOR ESOL CONNECT PEER ADVISOR'S

- 1 Identify through ESOL faculty and staff recommendations for students that demonstrate leadership qualities and that are almost complete with the ESOL program
- 2 Invite students to apply for Peer Advisor positions using the Microsoft Form
- 3 Submit job description to HR
- 4 In person/phone interview with candidates to explain the program, expectations, and determine fit
- 5 Submit recommendations for hire to HR
- 6 PA candidate completes paperwork for HR
Begin training program

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor Application

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Peer Advisor with ESOL Connect! Peer Advisors are NSCC students who have successfully completed the ESOL sequence and are currently enrolled in college-level courses. In this paid leadership role, Peer Advisors provide academic, social, and motivational support to new students currently enrolled in ESOL classes. This is a meaningful opportunity to build leadership skills, support student success, and make a positive impact on your community here at NSCC.

As a Peer Advisor, you will:

- Work 15 hours per week at a rate of \$15 per hour
- Meet regularly with a cohort of assigned advisees (typically 4-5 times per semester, per student)
- Communicate consistently with advisees and ESOL Connect program staff
- Serve as a supportive, relatable guide for new ESOL students
- Participate in mandatory training beginning July 21, 2025
- Help foster a welcoming, inclusive experience for ESOL students

Application Questions

1. Full name[Type here]

2. Student A#[Type here]

3. NSCC email address[Type here]

4. Phone number[Type here]

5. What ESOL levels and classes did you complete at NSCC?[Type here]

6. In which semester did you complete your ESOL classes?[Type here]

7. What is your major?[Type here]

8. What is your current GPA?[Type here]

9. Why are you interested in becoming a Peer Advisor for ESOL Connect?[Type here]

10. Please list any of your skills or personal qualities relevant to the role of ESOL Connect Peer Advisor.[Type here]

11. Have you ever mentored, tutored, or supported other students before? If yes, please briefly describe your experience.[Type here]

12. What kind of obstacles/barriers do you think new ESOL students might struggle with the most, and how would you help them?[Type here]

13. Are you available to attend mandatory Peer Advisor training beginning July 15?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Are you able to commit to meeting with each of your assigned mentees at least 4-5 times per semester?

☐ Yes ☐ No

15. Do you have any schedule limitations or preferred times for meetings?[Type here]

Agreement

By checking the box below, I confirm that I understand and agree to commit to the expectations of the ESOL Connect Peer Advisor role as outlined above.

☐ I agree to the expectations of the ESOL Connect Peer Advisor role.

Signature:[Type here]

Date:[Type here]

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor Interview

Form

Candidate: _____ Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

1. Why do you want to be a Peer Advisor for ESOL students?
2. Have you ever worked with students from different cultures or who speak different languages? Tell us about that experience.
3. How would you help a shy student feel comfortable talking to you about their problems?
4. This job requires 10-15 hours per week. How will you manage this with your own classes and other responsibilities?
5. Tell us about a time when you helped a friend or classmate with a problem. What did you do?
6. If a student tells you they don't see the value of their ESOL classes, how would you respond?
7. What strategies would you use to encourage ESOL students to attend and participate in their classes?
8. Why do you think peer support is important for students learning English?

POST-INTERVIEW CANDIDATE EVALUATION FORM

Scale: 1=unacceptable 2= needs improvement 3=meets expectations 4=exceeds expectations
5=excellent

Category	Comments	Rating
Experience relevant to job requirements		
Education relevant to job requirements		
Job Knowledge (relevant to job requirements)		
Understanding/knowledge of industry/product		
Communication Skills		
Customer Service Orientation		
Enthusiasm/Interest in Company and Position		
Skills Assessment <i>List required skills in the spaces below</i>		
Problem-solving skills		
Ability to work with other departments		
Initiative		
OVERALL SCORE TOTAL POINTS ÷ NUMBER OF ASSESSMENTS	/50	

Recommended Action:

☐ **Continue**
 ☐ Reject for experience/education
 ☐ Reject for salary requirement
☐ Applicant withdrew

☐ Other: _____

ESOL Connect Participant Expectations

As an ESOL Connect participant/advisee, you are taking an important step toward success by engaging with a Peer Advisor who has experience navigating ESOL coursework and college life. To help ensure a meaningful experience for you, you agree to the following expectations if chosen to continue as an ESOL Connect participant:

- Stay engaged in your ESOL courses and program requirements. Ask questions of your Peer Advisor and your instructors, and seek help when you need it.
- Meet with your assigned ESOL Connect Peer Advisor approximately 4-5 times per semester, and participate in check-ins, workshops, and events as scheduled.
- Communicate respectfully and reliably with your Peer Advisor and ESOL Connect staff. Check your NSCC email regularly and respond promptly to messages.
- Be prepared for meetings with your Peer Advisor by bringing questions, assignments, or topics you would like to discuss.
- Your Peer Advisor will maintain privacy and respect boundaries during conversations. As a participant, you should share honestly with your Peer Advisor, but understand that your Peer Advisor may refer you to Student Success Advisors or other NSCC resources when appropriate.
- Participate in creating a welcoming, inclusive environment by being open to support and engaging positively with your Peer Advisor.

Agreement

By indicating 'Yes, I do agree' on the Advisee application, I confirm that I have reviewed these expectations and agree to uphold them throughout my time in the program.

☐ Yes, I do agree

Signature:[Type here]

Date:[Type here]

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor Expectations

ESOL Connect Peer Advisors are serving in a trusted, paid leadership role. Your experience as a successful ESOL student gives you a valuable perspective to support others just beginning their journey. To help ensure a meaningful experience for both you and your advisees, you agree to the following expectations if chosen to continue as an ESOL Connect Peer Advisor:

- Work 15 hours per week during the semester and accurately track time as directed, including meetings, preparation, workshops, check-ins, and documentation.
- Meet with each assigned advisee approximately 4-5 times per semester, prioritizing one-on-one support and engaging through check-ins, email, events, and workshops.
- Communicate respectfully and reliably with advisees and ESOL Connect staff. Check NSCC email daily and respond promptly. Notify supervisor in advance if unable to meet responsibilities.
- Complete required Peer Advisor training beginning July 21 as part of professional development.
- Maintain privacy of advisees and treat conversations with care. Refer students to Student Success Advisors or NSCC resources when appropriate.
- Encourage mentees to stay engaged in ESOL coursework and create a welcoming, inclusive space for questions and support.

Agreement

By indicating 'Yes, I do agree' on the Peer Advisor application, I confirm that I have reviewed these expectations and agree to uphold them throughout my time in the program.

☐ Yes, I do agree

Signature:[Type here]

Date:[Type here]

ESOL Connect Student Training Materials



Nashville State
Community College

Peer Advisor Training Guide Summary

This comprehensive training guide provides peer advisors with the essential knowledge, skills, and resources needed to effectively support students in their role. The guide includes an extensive training handbook that covers the program mission and values, peer advisor role expectations and responsibilities, professional standards including FERPA compliance and confidentiality, practical guidance for student check-ins and case documentation, communication templates and protocols, and clear referral procedures for connecting students with campus support services.

Additionally, the guide features a detailed presentation and step-by-step resource on designing and facilitating student workshops, equipping peer advisors with the tools to create engaging and educational group sessions. It also contains a presentation and guide focused on conducting effective one-on-one student check-in meetings, ensuring peer advisors can provide meaningful individual support and guidance. Together, these materials prepare peer advisors to confidently fulfill their responsibilities and make a positive impact on student success.



**ESOL Connect Handbook
Peer Advisor Training**

Nashville State
Community College

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program was developed through the collaborative efforts of dedicated professionals committed to advancing equitable student success at Nashville State Community College (NSCC). This program reflects NSCC's mission to provide accessible, high-quality education and comprehensive support for students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Through this initiative, the college continues to strengthen its commitment to holistic advising, student belonging, and degree completion for multilingual learners.

We acknowledge the leadership and vision of the ESOL Connect Program development team: Renae Rakidzic, Kati Murphy, Jayme Hay, and Michael Sostre, whose collective experience in student advising, peer mentorship, and student advocacy created this program with thought and determination. This program model has been developed for institutions to seamlessly adapt to their own contexts to support ESOL students on their higher education journeys through connection and mentorship.

ESOL Connect was funded through the Advising Success Network Pitch Competition in 2025.

The [Advising Success Network](#) (ASN) is a dynamic network of national organizations partnering to engage institutions in holistic advising redesign to advance success for all students, including Black, Latinx/a/o, Indigenous, Asian, and Pacific Islander students and poverty-affected students. The network develops services and resources to guide institutions in implementing evidence-based advising practices. Since its formation in 2018, ASN has supported over 250 institutions in 30 states and created more than 50 [open-source resources](#) for practitioners and students. ASN is coordinated by [NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education](#), and includes partners [Achieving the Dream](#), the [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#), the [Center for Innovation in Postsecondary Education](#), [EDUCAUSE](#), [NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising](#), the [National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition](#), and [Young Invincibles](#).

Nashville State Community College is a community college serving the greater Nashville area through six campuses. The college offers more than 80 academic programs designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population and the regional workforce.

With a total of 8,084 students enrolled in the Fall 2025 term, NSCC reflects the dynamic community it serves. 56% of NSCC's students are first-generation college students, and 35% are adult learners aged 25 or older. Enrollment is nearly evenly split between full-time and part-time students, providing flexibility for learners at all stages of life.

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ESOL CONNECT MISSION STATEMENT:

The ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program is designed to support ESOL students by pairing them with trained peer advisors who have successfully completed the ESOL program and transitioned to college-level coursework. The mission of ESOL Connect is to foster belonging, increase academic confidence, and reduce barriers to success through culturally responsive, peer-to-peer support. By providing guidance, encouragement, and connections to campus resources, the program aims to improve ESOL course persistence, strengthen progression to college-level classes, and enhance overall student engagement. Ultimately, ESOL Connect seeks to create a scalable, student-centered model that empowers multilingual learners and contributes to more equitable advising practices at Nashville State Community College and beyond.

PEER ADVISING TRAINING MANUAL: OVERVIEW

As a Peer Advisor in the ESOL Connect program, you serve as a trusted guide and source of support for ESOL students as they transition into and through their academic journey at Nashville State Community College. Drawing from your own experience as a former ESOL student, you help foster a sense of belonging, encourage academic engagement, and connect students to campus resources that support their success. This handbook provides an overview of the ESOL Connect program, outlines your role and responsibilities, and serves as a reference to help you navigate your work with confidence, professionalism, and care.

ESOL CONNECT PEER ADVISOR EXPECTATIONS

ESOL Connect Peer Advisors serve in a trusted, paid leadership role. Your experience as a successful ESOL student gives you a valuable perspective to support others just beginning their journey. To help ensure a meaningful experience for both you and your advisees, you agree to the following expectations if chosen to continue as an ESOL Connect Peer Advisor:

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

Time Commitment

As an ESOL Peer Advisor, you'll commit to working 15 hours per week during the semester, accurately tracking all your time including meetings, preparation, workshops, check-ins, and documentation.

Caseload Management

You'll be assigned a maximum of 15 advisees each term—a caseload size designed to ensure you can provide meaningful, individualized support while maintaining quality interactions with each student.

Regular Advisee Meetings

A core part of your role involves scheduling and conducting monthly meetings with each advisee, totaling 4-5 meetings per semester. These meetings serve as important touchpoints to check on academic progress, address challenges or concerns, provide encouragement and support, and connect students with appropriate resources. ESOL Peer Advisees must meet with you at least three times per term for a check-in, though attendance at ESOL Connect workshops can also count as a check-in, providing opportunities for informal support and connection. You should prioritize one-on-one support and engage with students through check-ins, email, events, and workshops.

Workshop Development and Delivery

You'll design and facilitate monthly workshops specifically for ESOL Connect students. These workshops should focus on developing ESOL language skills, strategies for adapting to college life, community building activities, and academic success techniques.

Communication Standards

Strong communication is essential in this role—you'll need to communicate respectfully and reliably with both advisees and ESOL Connect staff, check your NSCC email daily and respond promptly to messages, maintain consistent professional communication with your assigned advisees, keep your supervisor informed regarding student progress and concerns, and coordinate with other campus resources when making referrals. If you're unable to meet your responsibilities, you should notify your supervisor in advance.

Training and Professional Development

You'll complete the required Peer Advisor training beginning on (DATE) as part of your professional development. This training provides essential knowledge and skills for effective peer advising and is required for all peer advisors.

Confidentiality and Referrals

Throughout your work, you must maintain the privacy of your advisees and treat all conversations with care, while knowing when to refer students to Student Success Advisors or other NSCC resources when appropriate.

Student Engagement

You should actively encourage your mentees to stay engaged in their ESOL coursework and create a welcoming, inclusive space where they feel comfortable asking questions and seeking support.

ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. As an ESOL Connect Peer Advisor, you will have access to certain information about your advisees, and FERPA requires that you handle this information responsibly and confidentially.

Under FERPA, educational records include a wide range of information such as grades, course schedules, contact information, and any notes or documentation related to a student's academic experience. This law gives students the right to privacy regarding their educational records and restricts who can access or share this information without the student's consent.

As a Peer Advisor working with student information, you are required to comply with FERPA regulations. This means you cannot share details about your advisees with friends, family, or other students, and you must be mindful of discussing student information in public spaces where conversations might be overheard.

Ethical Standards

Confidentiality

Maintain strict confidentiality regarding all advisee information. All conversations and personal details shared by students must be treated with the utmost care and discretion. Information should only be shared with appropriate personnel when necessary for student support or safety. This confidentiality is not only an ethical obligation but also a legal requirement under FERPA.

Your advisees trust you with personal information about their academic challenges, personal circumstances, and goals. Honoring this trust is fundamental to your role and essential for building the supportive relationships that make peer advising effective.

Appropriate Referrals

Recognize the limits of your role and refer students to their Student Success Advisor or other campus resources when situations require professional intervention or specialized support. This includes academic concerns, personal crises, or issues beyond the scope of peer advising.

Knowing when to refer a student is just as important as knowing how to support them directly. If an advisee shares information about mental health concerns, financial hardship, academic probation, or other serious matters, connect them with the appropriate professional resources on campus. You are not expected to solve every problem—you are expected to be a supportive guide who knows when to bring in additional help.

Remember that your role as a Peer Advisor is both a privilege and a responsibility. You have the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on fellow students' academic success and overall college experience. By maintaining confidentiality, adhering to FERPA regulations, and making appropriate referrals, you demonstrate the professionalism and integrity that make you worthy of the trust your advisees place in you.

CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE 30-MINUTE CHECK-IN MEETINGS WITH ESOL STUDENTS

A 30-minute check-in should be structured, yet flexible enough to address each student's unique needs. Use this framework to guide your conversation while remaining responsive to what matters most to the student.

Meeting Structure Overview

Opening (5 minutes)

- Welcome the student warmly and create a comfortable atmosphere
- Begin with a simple conversation starter to help them relax
- Briefly review what you'll cover today and ask what's most important to them

Core Discussion (20 minutes)

- Follow the question categories below, prioritizing based on student needs
- Listen more than you speak
- Take brief notes on key points and action items

Closing (5 minutes)

- Summarize key takeaways together
- Schedule your next meeting
- End on an encouraging note

Essential Check-In Questions for ESOL Students

Important Note: These questions are meant as a guideline and conversation starter—not a script or checklist to work through mechanically. Let the conversation flow naturally based on what the student brings up and what they need most.

Academic Progress

- How are your classes going this semester?
- Which class feels easiest for you? Which is most challenging?

Language and Communication Support

- Do you feel comfortable asking questions in class?
- Have you been able to communicate with classmates for group work?

Study Strategies and Time Management

- What does your study routine look like?
- Where do you usually study?
- How much time are you spending on homework each day?
- Are you balancing school with work or family responsibilities?

Campus Resources and Navigation

- Have you used any support services like tutoring center?
- Are you comfortable using D2L, myNSCC, and checking your student email?
- Is there anything you need help finding on campus?

Personal Well-being and Adjustment

- What has been the biggest challenge for you this semester?
- Are you feeling connected to other students?
- Is anything outside of school affecting your studies?
- How are you managing stress?
- Practical Concerns
- Are you having any trouble getting to campus?
- Do you have what you need for your classes (textbooks, supplies, computer access)?

Social Connection and Belonging

- Have you made friends or study partners?
- Have you joined any clubs or activities?
- Do you feel comfortable here on campus?
- Who do you talk to when you need help or support?

Goals and Next Steps

- What do you want to accomplish before we meet again?
- What support do you need from me?

Best Practices for ESOL Student Check-Ins

Let the Conversation Flow Naturally

When conducting check-ins with ESOL students, it's important to let the conversation flow naturally rather than treating it as a formal interview or interrogation. You don't need to rush through every question on your list—in fact, some of your most meaningful meetings might focus deeply on just one or two areas rather than superficially covering many topics. Think of the questions as helpful prompts to use when the conversation naturally pauses, not as a required agenda that must be completed. Quality of connection matters far more than quantity of topics covered.

Creating a Safe Space

Creating a safe and supportive space is essential for these conversations. Make sure to validate students' experiences without judgment, celebrate their small wins and progress, and normalize the act of asking for help and using available resources. While maintaining confidentiality is important, you should also know when situations require referring students to professional support services.

Being Culturally Responsive

Being culturally responsive means recognizing that educational systems and expectations differ significantly across cultures. Some students may come from backgrounds where questioning authority is discouraged, so be sensitive to different communication styles and varying levels of comfort with direct conversation. Finally, effective follow-through is crucial—take clear notes on action items and next steps, make sure to follow up on concerns raised in previous meetings, and connect students with specific people or offices when they need additional support.

Remember: The most effective check-ins happen when students feel heard, not questioned. Your role is to be a supportive guide and connector, not to solve every problem or cover every topic. Focus on building trust, listening actively, and letting the conversation go where it needs to go.

CASE MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTATION

ESOL Connect Peer Advisors will document interactions and communication with their advisees using the ESOL Connect Peer Advisor Communication Log. This log is formatted as an Excel Workbook, and is designed to help you track and document your interactions with ESOL students. It contains multiple tabs, each serving a specific purpose.

- **Tab 1: Advisee Overview**

This tab lists your assigned advisees along with their contact information. Use this tab as a reference only. Do not enter interaction notes here.

- **Tab 2: Other Interactions**

You may sometimes have interactions with students who are not assigned to you. Use this tab to document communication with ESOL students who are NOT your assigned advisees. Here, you'll log the date of the interaction, the student's name, and brief notes about your communication.

- **Tabs 3 and beyond: Individual Advisee Tabs**

Each of your assigned advisees has their own tab for detailed communication logs. In these tabs, you'll record the interaction date, interaction method (select from options provided), notes summarizing the interaction, as well as tags to categorize the interaction.

Interaction Method: When selecting the interaction method, you'll have the following options: In-Person, Virtual (via Zoom, for example), Phone, Email, Small Group Advising, Event, or Other. If categorizing an interaction method as "Other," please make sure to include information in the notes section.

Tags: Tags help you organize interactions by topic. They are short keywords that describe the main theme of the conversation. You can create your own tags as needed. Tags should be simple and relevant to the interaction. Some examples:

- Financial Aid: Questions or issues related to scholarships, FAFSA, tuition, grants, etc.
 - *Note: Peer Advisors should not attempt to answer questions about Financial Aid, but should rather refer advisees to their Student Success Advisor or to the Financial Aid office. Please see the Handbook section "When to Reach Out."
- Habits: Study skills, time management, attendance, etc.

- Registration: Course enrollment or schedule changes, etc.
- Technology: Help with online platforms or email access.

Best Practices for Notetaking

Keep notes concise and action-oriented.

Focus on capturing key concerns, decisions made, and concrete next steps rather than transcribing everything that was said. Your notes should help you remember what matters most and what you need to follow up on, not serve as a verbatim record of the conversation.

Balance detail with confidentiality.

Document enough information to provide continuity between meetings and track progress, but be mindful of sensitive details. Write notes as if others might see them—avoid including overly personal information that isn't directly relevant to your advising role.

Document referrals and resources clearly.

When you recommend specific offices, people, or resources, note exactly what you suggested and why. This helps you follow up effectively and ensures you can remind the student of these connections if needed.

Write notes soon after the meeting.

Try to complete your notes within a few hours while the details are still fresh. Waiting too long can lead to forgotten information or confused memories of different conversations.

EMAIL TEMPLATES FOR PEER ADVISORS

Welcome Email to a New Advisee

Subject: Welcome to ESOL Connect!

Hi [Student's Preferred First Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am your Peer Advisor with ESOL Connect! I'm so excited to get to know you and to help support you in your journey here at NSCC.

I've been through the ESOL program myself, and I know that starting college classes in a language different from your native one can feel overwhelming at times. The good news is that you are not alone. I am here to help you navigate your courses, connect you with resources, and help answer questions you have along the way.

Let's choose a time to meet for our first check-in! You can reply to this email, and we'll set something up. I am looking forward to getting to know you and working together!

Warmly,

[Your Name]

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor

Follow-Up Email After First Meeting

Subject: Our First Meeting

Hi [Student's Preferred First Name],

It was great meeting you today! I really enjoyed hearing more about your goals and classes. Please remember that I'm here to support you this semester. Please feel free to reach out for help with time management strategies, getting to know your instructors, or just checking in.

Let's keep in touch! Please don't hesitate to reach out if anything comes up. I'll follow up soon to plan our next meeting.

Warmly,

[Your Name]

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor

Reminder Email for Upcoming Meeting - optional

Subject: Reminder: Our Meeting on [Date]

Hi [Student's Preferred First Name],

Just a quick reminder that we have a meeting scheduled for [Date] at [Time]. We'll meet at [Location or Zoom link].

Let me know if you need to reschedule or if you have any questions beforehand. Otherwise, I will see you then! I look forward to meeting with you.

Best,

[Your Name]

ESOL Connect Peer Advisor

Mid-Semester Check In

Subject: Mid-Semester Check In

Hi [Student's Preferred First Name],

We're already halfway through the semester – can you believe it?

I just wanted to check in to see how your classes are going and if there's anything I can help with. Whether you're feeling great or struggling a bit, I'm here to listen and support you. Please feel free to reply to this email or schedule a meeting.

Congratulations on your hard work so far!

Best,

[Your Name]

After a Missed Appointment

Subject: Missed Meeting on [Date]

Hi [Student's Preferred First Name],

I noticed that we didn't get to meet on [Date] as planned, and I just wanted to check in and make sure everything's okay. College life can get hectic, and I'm here to help.

Let me know if you would like to reschedule or if there's anything you want to talk about.

Thinking of you!

[Your Name]

TABLING EVENT TALKING POINTS

Peer Advisors may occasionally be asked to participate in campus events at tables set up to provide information to students. The Peer Advisors' goal at these types of events would be to connect with current or incoming ESOL students, raise awareness about the ESOL Connect Peer Advising Program, and encourage eligible students to apply to participate in the incentive program. Here are some example talking points that Peer Advisors can use for inspiration:

General Introductions

"Hi! Are you an ESOL student? I'm a Peer Advisor as part of a new program called ESOL Connect. We're here to support ESOL students on campus. I'd love to tell you more."

Quick Program Description

"ESOL Connect is a free peer support program that pairs students currently taking ESOL classes with Peer Advisors. Peer Advisors are students like me who have already completed the ESOL program and know what it's like. We're here to answer questions, help you navigate college, and cheer you on as you work toward your goals."

Key Benefits to Mention

- One-on-one support from someone who has been in your situation
- Monthly gift card incentives for staying connected with your Peer Advisor
- Help with college life: classes, communication, getting involved
- A friendly face on campus you can rely on and a community you can get involved in

If a Student is Interested

"If you're interested, just scan this QR code to apply, and you'll hear from someone soon."

- Help them scan the QR code
- Remind them to apply before the deadline
- Offer a flyer or any take-away information if available

If a Student is Unsure

"No problem; college can be a lot to take in at first, and you don't have to decide today. If you change your mind, we'd love to have you! Feel free to scan the QR to have the application saved for later or visit the ESOL Connect page on the NSCC website for more information."

Questions Students Might Ask You

- Does it cost anything to join?
 - *No, it is free for students!*
- Will this help me with my English?
 - *Yes! Communicating with your Peer Advisor will help you develop your English communication skills and feel more confident.*
- Do I still have a Student Success Advisor?
 - *Yes, you'll still have an SSA. ESOL Connect is extra support from a student who understands what you're going through.*

CLASSROOM VISIT GUIDE FOR PEER ADVISORS

Timing: 5 - 10minutes total

Talking Points

1. Introduce Yourself

- Share your name and that you're an ESOL Connect Peer Advisor
- Mention you completed the ESOL program and are now taking college-level courses

2. Share Your Story — MOST IMPORTANT

This is the heart of your presentation. Be authentic and personal.

Talk about:

- What your ESOL experience was like
- Specific challenges you faced (nerves about speaking English, not knowing where to get help, balancing responsibilities, feeling uncertain, etc.)
- How you overcame those challenges
- Where you are now and what helped you succeed
- Why you wanted to become a peer advisor

Make it real. Students need to see themselves in your story.

3. What is ESOL Connect?

- *Free program that pairs students with a peer advisor who understands their experience*
- *Meet 4-5 times during the semester for support and guidance*
- *Help with navigating campus, finding resources, building confidence*
- *Someone to answer questions and encourage you along the way*

4. How to Sign Up

- Share flyers with QR code
- Share ESOL Connect email address (ESOLconnect@nscc.edu) for more information
- Emphasize it's voluntary

5. Ask if there's any questions

Reminders

- **Your story matters most** — be genuine and vulnerable
- Smile and make eye contact
- Respect the instructor's time
- Follow up with students who sign up within 2-3 days

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION IDEAS FOR PEER ADVISORS

These workshops are designed and led by Peer Advisors to support ESOL Connect participants. Each workshop will be held once per month and will count toward program engagement. Peer Advisors are encouraged to create their own topics, but the ideas below can serve as inspiration.

Academic Skills

- How to Communicate with Instructors: Tips on emailing, asking for help, and participating in class
- Understanding a Course Syllabus: How to read a syllabus, keep up with deadlines, and stay organized
- Using NSCC Technology: Hands-on introduction to myNSCC, D2L, Student Email, etc.
- Study Strategies: Basic study strategies, note-taking tips, campus learning resources, tutoring, etc.
- Adapting to the American College System: Small group discussions on classroom expectations, grading systems, and cultural norms in U.S. higher education

English Practice & Communication

- Small Talk & 'Campus' English: Practice everyday conversations, asking for directions, introducing yourself and your major
- Common American Idioms & Phrases: Understand and use expressions often heard in classes or conversations
- Public Speaking for Beginners: Low-pressure practice speaking clearly and confidently

Wellness

- Handling Stress & Staying Motivated: Coping strategies and encouragement
- Balancing School, Work, & Family: Tips on managing multiple responsibilities
- Celebrating You: A supportive space to share cultural identities, backgrounds, and personal strengths

WHEN TO REACH OUT TO STUDENT SUCCESS ADVISORS AND THE STUDENT RESOURCE TEAM:

As a Peer Advisor, you're an important first point of contact for students—but you're *not* expected to have all the answers. Knowing when to loop in a professional staff member is key to supporting students effectively and ethically.

Reach Out to a Student Success Advisor When:

- You're unsure about **specific program/graduation requirements, transfer pathways, or program-specific advising**.
- A student wants to **change their major** or add a concentration or certificate (Use Change of Major form).
- A student has questions about how their **transfer credits or prior learning** apply to their degree or wants to know what courses are best for a **transfer pathway** (ex: TSU, MTSU, UTK).
- A student is trying to **register for a course that is full**, has a **prerequisite error**, or is **requesting an override**.
- A student has been placed on **academic warning, probation, or suspension** and needs to understand the next steps.
- There are questions about **graduation eligibility, petitions**, or degree audits.
- A student expresses that they are considering **dropping out, withdrawing from all classes**, or are in an academic crisis.

Reach Out to a Student Resource Manager When:

- A student is struggling with **mental health** issues beyond what you feel comfortable handling (e.g., anxiety, depression, trauma, or talk of self-harm).
- You learn that a student is facing **housing insecurity, food insecurity, or financial emergencies** that may interfere with their success.
- A student shares a situation involving **domestic violence, abuse**, or any safety concern—either personal or affecting someone else.
- A student has ongoing issues with **faculty, grades, or accommodations** that you are not trained to address.
- You've given guidance, but the student seems **confused, overwhelmed, or stuck** despite your support.
- You're unsure whether a resource is still active or what the most appropriate referral is for the situation.

- ****NOTE: If you feel as though a situation needs to be taken to an SRM or a CARE Referral needs to be submitted, please also inform an SSA to ensure all parties are aware. ****

*Peer advising is about **support, not perfection**. If you're unsure about how to handle a student situation or feel like a question is outside your scope—**that's your cue to ask**. Even if you feel like you "almost know" the answer, academic planning can have big consequences if miscommunicated. Enrolling in college courses impacts financial aid, graduation, and transfer readiness.*

A great way to handle uncertain moments is by saying:

"That's a great question—let me check with someone and get back to you with the best information."

This builds trust and shows students that getting the **right** information is more important than giving a fast answer.

Reach out to:

- Your **Supervising Advisor**
- A **Student Success Center staff member**
- A **Student Resource Manager (SRM)** for personal resource questions

ESOL CONNECT HANDBOOK: NSCC PROCESSES

This handbook has a companion titled “ESOL Connect Handbook: NSCC Processes.” This additional handbook contains information that is more specific to Nashville State Community College, such as contacts, registration information, and more. Please see the NSCC Processes Handbook for information about:

- Contacts Directory for all NSCC employees
- Accessing NSCC email
- How to reset login information if needed
- Accessing Microsoft 365 applications
- A flow chart that visualizes the progression of ESOL courses at NSCC
- An overview of how to register for NSCC classes
- Resources for students post-registration
- Accessing D2L
- Navigating DegreeWorks
- More financial aid information
- Paying student bills
- Finding campus resources
- Submitting CARE Referrals

Workshop Presentation Ideas for Peer Advisors

These workshops are designed and led by Peer Advisors to support ESOL Connect participants. Each workshop will be held once per month and will count toward program engagement. Peer Advisors are encouraged to create their own topics, but the ideas below can serve as inspiration.

Academic Skills

- How to Communicate with Instructors: Tips on emailing, asking for help, and participating in class
- Understanding a Course Syllabus: How to read a syllabus, keep up with deadlines, and stay organized
- Using NSCC Technology: Hands-on introduction to myNSCC, D2L, Student Email, etc.
- Study Strategies: Basic study strategies, note-taking tips, campus learning resources, tutoring, etc.
- Adapting to the American College System: Small group discussions on classroom expectations, grading systems, and cultural norms in U.S. higher education

English Practice & Communication

- Small Talk & 'Campus' English: Practice everyday conversations, asking for directions, introducing yourself and your major
- Common American Idioms & Phrases: Understand and use expressions often heard in classes or conversations
- Public Speaking for Beginners: Low-pressure practice speaking clearly and confidently

Wellness

- Handling Stress & Staying Motivated: Coping strategies and encouragement
- Balancing School, Work, & Family: Tips on managing multiple responsibilities
- Celebrating You: A supportive space to share cultural identities, backgrounds, and personal strengths

Peer Advisor Training: Creating and Presenting Workshops

Developing skills for effective workshop
delivery



Introduction and Objectives

Training Goals and Overview

Workshop Purpose and Goals

Understand the role of monthly workshops in supporting ESOL learners academically, socially, and personally.

Planning Engaging Sessions

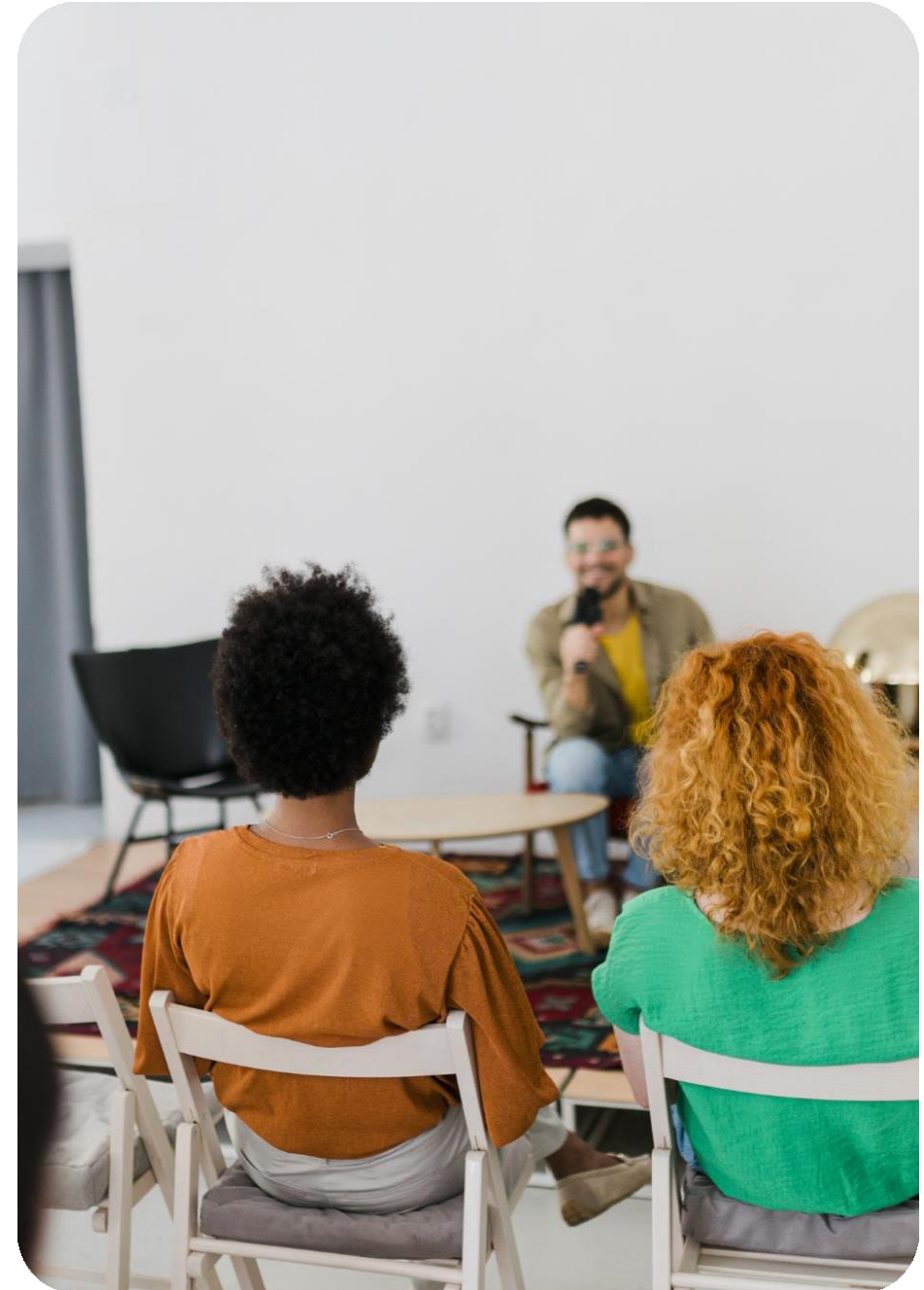
Learn to select relevant topics and plan activities that encourage interaction and participation.

Presentation Skills for Advisors

Master presentation techniques that boost confidence and foster an inclusive, participative environment.

Adapting Content for Diversity

Design workshops that align with program goals while meeting diverse ESOL students' learning needs.



Steps to Create a Workshop

Planning and Structuring Your Workshop

Topic Selection

Choose topics that resonate with ESOL students, such as academic skills and wellness.

Define Objectives

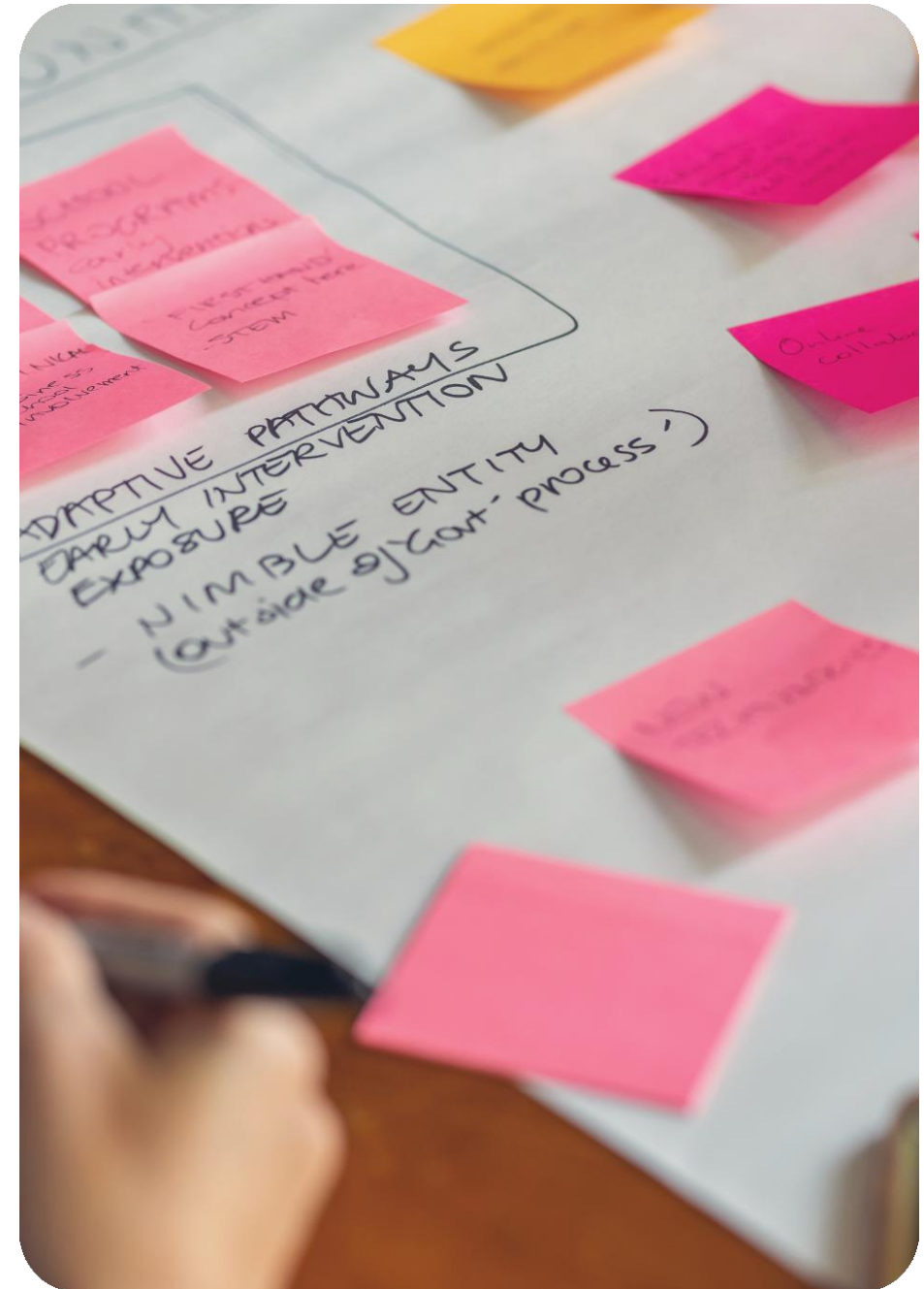
Set clear learning goals for participants to achieve by the end of the session.

Engaging Activities

Use small group discussions, role-playing, and hands-on demonstrations for engagement.

Preparation and Timing

Plan materials in advance and manage session timing to maintain flow and clarity.



Tips for Effective Presentation

Engaging Delivery and Communication Techniques

Clear and Simple Communication

Speak slowly and use simple language to ensure participants understand the content clearly.

Interactive Engagement

Use Q&A sessions, group activities, and demonstrations to keep participants actively involved.

Non-Verbal Communication

Maintain eye contact and positive body language to convey confidence and approachability.

Time and Atmosphere Management

Manage time effectively and foster a welcoming, culturally inclusive environment to build trust.



Example Workshop Ideas

Categories and Sample Topics

CATEGORY	SAMPLE TOPICS
Academic Skills	Communicating with instructors, understanding syllabi, adapting to U.S. college norms
English Practice	Small talk, idioms, public speaking
Wellness	Stress management, balancing responsibilities, cultural celebration

Group Activity

Workshop Creation

Break into small groups and prepare a mock workshop for ESOL students.

This workshop can be a topic of your choice and include an interactive component.



Closing and Resources

Guide to Conducting Effective 30-Minute Check-In Meetings with ESOL Students

A 30-minute check-in should be structured, yet flexible enough to address each student's unique needs. Use this framework to guide your conversation while remaining responsive to what matters most to the student.

Meeting Structure Overview

Meeting Framework (30 Minutes)

Opening (5 minutes)

- Welcome the student warmly and create a comfortable atmosphere
- Begin with a simple conversation starter to help them relax
- Briefly review what you'll cover today and ask what's most important to them

Core Discussion (20 minutes)

- Follow the question categories below, prioritizing based on student needs
- Listen more than you speak
- Take brief notes on key points and action items

Closing (5 minutes)

- Summarize key takeaways together
- Schedule your next meeting
- End on an encouraging note

Essential Check-In Questions for ESOL Students

Important Note: These questions are meant as a guideline and conversation starter—not a script or checklist to work through mechanically. Let the conversation flow naturally based on what the student brings up and what they need most.

Academic Progress

- How are your classes going this semester?
- Which class feels easiest for you? Which is most challenging?

Language and Communication Support

- Do you feel comfortable asking questions in class?
- Have you been able to communicate with classmates for group work?

Study Strategies and Time Management

- What does your study routine look like?
- Where do you usually study?
- How much time are you spending on homework each day?
- Are you balancing school with work or family responsibilities?

Campus Resources and Navigation

- Have you used any support services like tutoring center?
- Are you comfortable using D2L, myNSCC, and checking your student email?
- Is there anything you need help finding on campus?

Personal Well-being and Adjustment

- What has been the biggest challenge for you this semester?
- Are you feeling connected to other students?
- Is anything outside of school affecting your studies?
- How are you managing stress?

Practical Concerns

- Are you having any trouble getting to campus?
- Do you have what you need for your classes (textbooks, supplies, computer access)?

Social Connection and Belonging

- Have you made friends or study partners?
- Have you joined any clubs or activities?
- Do you feel comfortable here on campus?
- Who do you talk to when you need help or support?

Goals and Next Steps

- What do you want to accomplish before we meet again?
- What support do you need from me?

Best Practices for ESOL Student Check-Ins

Let the Conversation Flow Naturally

- Don't interrogate or rush through questions - this should feel like a supportive conversation, not an interview

- It's okay to go deep on one issue rather than superficially covering many topics
- Use the questions as prompts when conversation lulls, not as a required agenda
- Some of your best meetings might only touch on 1-2 question areas - quality over quantity

Creating a Safe Space

- Validate their experiences without judgment
- Celebrate small wins and progress
- Normalize asking for help and using resources
- Maintain confidentiality while knowing when to refer to professional support

Being Culturally Responsive

- Be aware that educational systems differ across cultures
- Recognize that some students may come from cultures where questioning authority is discouraged
- Be sensitive to different communication styles and comfort levels

Follow-Through

- Take clear notes on action items and next steps
- Follow up on concerns from previous meetings
- Connect them with specific people or offices as needed

Remember: The most effective check-ins happen when students feel heard, not questioned. Your role is to be a supportive guide and connector, not to solve every problem or cover every topic. Focus on building trust, listening actively, and letting the conversation go where it needs to go.

Conducting Check-In Meetings with ESOL Students

Strategies for successful brief meetings with language learners



Introduction and Objectives





Training Objectives

Meeting Structure and Framework

Learn how to effectively structure 30-minute check-in meetings to maximize engagement and productivity.

Communication Best Practices

Apply strategies for asking meaningful questions and creating a trusting, supportive environment.

Culturally Responsive Approaches

Use culturally sensitive methods to foster inclusivity and empowerment during student interactions.

Empowering Students

Guide students to take ownership of their academic journey with follow-ups and encouragement.

Meeting Structure Overview



Framework for a 30-Minute Meeting

Meeting Structure Overview

The 30-minute meeting is divided into Opening, Core Discussion, and Closing phases for effective time use.

Opening Phase

Advisors welcome students, establish comfort, and clarify meeting goals within the first five minutes.

Core Discussion Focus

Focus on student's priorities like academic progress, language support, study habits, and well-being using guiding questions.

Closing and Action Steps

Summarize discussion, identify actionable steps, schedule next meeting, and end on an encouraging note.



Essential Check-In Questions



Categories of Questions

Academic Progress

Questions about how students are performing academically help identify their strengths and challenges.

Support and Resources

Inquiring about language support and campus resources ensures students access needed help.

Well-being and Social Connection

Questions about personal well-being and social belonging foster holistic student support and connection.

Goals and Practical Concerns

Discussing goals and practical issues helps students plan next steps and overcome obstacles.



Best Practices for ESOL Student Check-Ins



Core Principles

Supportive Environment

Create a student-centered, supportive atmosphere that allows natural conversation flow and avoids rushed interactions.

Effective Communication

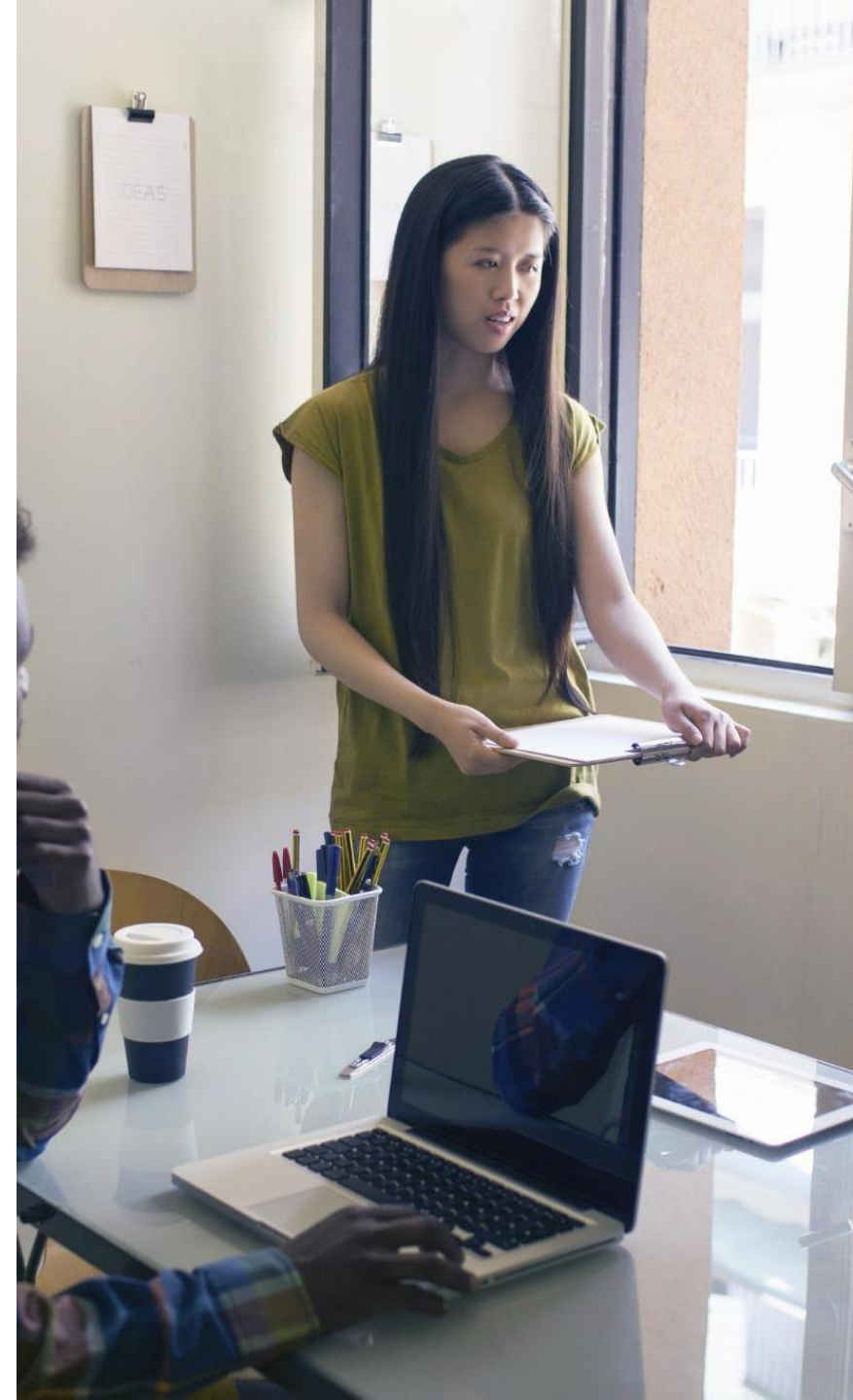
Use clear, moderate-paced speech with simple professional language and check for understanding continuously.

Cultural Responsiveness

Respect diverse communication styles, avoid assumptions, and recognize cultural differences in authority and participation.

Collaborative Follow-Through

Empower students to identify priorities and solutions while ensuring accountability through notes and scheduling.



Follow-Through and Closing Reminder



Ensuring Consistency and Support

Building Trust Through Follow-Through

Consistent follow-up with students builds trust and ensures they feel genuinely supported throughout their journey.

Clear Communication and Documentation

Taking clear notes and providing written summaries help students remember resources and referrals offered by advisors.

Consistent Engagement and Connection

Maintaining regular meeting times and connecting students with relevant resources shows reliability and care.

Active Listening and Support

Effective check-ins focus on listening actively, allowing students to feel heard and valued rather than questioned.

