

## Student Linx Peer Mentoring

**Dorinda Harvey-Bravo**

Coordinator, Student Mentoring and Development  
Student Services

**Andrew Monaghan**

Coordinator, Student Linx  
Griffith English Language Institute

### Mentoring@Griffith

Central support for mentoring programs throughout Griffith University

- Consultation and support to establish and develop programs
- Resources to support program set up and coordination
- Online database
- Facilitation of Mentor Training
- University-wide events to promote and celebrate mentoring

[griffith.edu.au/mentoring](http://griffith.edu.au/mentoring)



### Student Linx

#### Background

- The Student Linx program is a strand of the Griffith English Language Enhancement Strategy (GELES)
- Student Linx events include:
  - › The Amazing Race
  - › International Trivia
  - › Language Exchange
  - › Mahjong Competitions
  - › Global Networking BBQ
  - › Social Sporting Teams



### Student Linx



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## Student Linx Peer Mentoring



## Student Linx Peer Mentoring

- A joint initiative between Student Linx and Mentoring@Griffith
- Trialled on the Nathan campus
- Now held on the two main campuses (Nathan and Gold Coast) each semester
- Mentors attend a brief training session
- Oversight and administration by an Event Management student undertaking a work-integrated learning placement
- Small groups of international students from non-English speaking backgrounds are assigned to a native English speaking mentor
- Participants meet at a café on campus for a free coffee and a chat as a form of social and English language support
- One-hour meeting per week for 8 weeks
- Completion is based on attending 6 of the 8 sessions

## Recent changes

Following feedback from participants, a number of changes were made to the program in Semester 2, 2011 in order to make it more appealing to prospective mentors and mentees

- Mentor / Mentee preference based on:
  - › Gender
  - › Native language – Mentors could select to be partnered with someone who spoke a specific language
- Longer time slots – Previously, participants had to be available at a certain hour each week; these were extended to 3 hours and 2 hours
- Language Exchange – this program was held simultaneously so that students could participate in both programs

## Evaluation

### Sem 1, 2010 (Nathan)

Mentor final evaluation – N = 7

- I feel confident when interacting with people from other cultures – mean 4.43
- I have a good understanding of how the Australian culture is different from other cultures – 4.00
- I know a lot about the experience of international students in Australia – 4.14

• Comments:  
 "I believe my intercultural skills have improved a lot through out the program."  
 "I am more aware of the challenges international students face in regards to learning English in Australia."  
 "I now interact more with international students."

### Sem 1, 2010 (Nathan)

Mentee final evaluation – N = 8

- I feel confident when interacting with local students and native English speakers – 3.13
- I feel that local students at Griffith University are interested in getting to know me and my culture – 3.75
- I feel good about my experience in the Student Linx Peer Support Program – 3.50

• Comments:  
 "It's about how to mingle with people."  
 "I realise that I can communicate with local students. I feel more confident than in the past."  
 "Everyone is interested in each culture."

## Evaluation

### Sem 2, 2010 (Gold Coast)

Mentor final evaluation – N = 4

- I feel confident when interacting with people from other cultures – mean 4.25
- I have a good understanding of how the Australian culture is different from other cultures – 3.50
- I know a lot about the experience of international students in Australia – 3.75

• Comments:  
 "[I am] more open minded. I actually want to talk to international students."  
 "I feel like I have become a better listener and more confident initiating conversations with international students."  
 "I am more confident in group projects collaborating and relying on other students to contribute."

### Sem 2, 2010 (Gold Coast)

Mentee final evaluation – N = 11

- I feel confident when interacting with local students and native English speakers – 3.64
- I feel that local students at Griffith University are interested in getting to know me and my culture – 3.73
- I feel good about my experience in the Student Linx Peer Support Program – 4.64

• Comments:  
 "Friendly atmosphere and good coffee. It's a good opportunity to make friends and practice English."  
 "I made some friends and learnt more local culture."  
 "It was a great program."

## Evaluation

### Sem 1, 2011 (Nathan)

Mentor final evaluation – N = 14

- I feel confident when interacting with people from other cultures – mean 4.50
- I have a good understanding of how the Australian culture is different from other cultures – 4.29
- I know a lot about the experience of international students in Australia – 4.00

• Comments:  
 "I understand their life living in Australia more deeply."  
 "Studying abroad can be difficult, a supportive social network helps students to overcome all the difficulties."  
 "I realised how fast I speak."

### Sem 1, 2011 (Nathan)

Mentee final evaluation – N = 5

- I feel confident when interacting with local students and native English speakers – 3.80
- I feel that local students at Griffith University are interested in getting to know me and my culture – 3.20
- I feel good about my experience in the Student Linx Peer Support Program – 4.20

• Comments:  
 "Talking with the locals and the mentor have helped me."  
 "Can practice to speak English in the University environment."  
 "I have enjoyed the coffee time and hanging out with the people who participated in the program."

## Evaluation

Sem 1, 2011 (Gold Coast)

Mentor final evaluation – N = 10

- I feel confident when interacting with people from other cultures – mean 4.50
- I have a good understanding of how the Australian culture is different from other cultures – 4.00
- I know a lot about the experience of international students in Australia – 4.10
- Comments:  
"I realise that going overseas is not as easy as I first thought."  
"[My involvement has] created more awareness of how they feel and the things they do – where they live, with who."  
"It helped me to understand the difficulty that international students have understanding Aussie English."

Sem 1, 2011 (Gold Coast)

Mentee final evaluation – N = 8

- I feel confident when interacting with local students and native English speakers – 4.13
- I feel that local students at Griffith University are interested in getting to know me and my culture – 2.63
- I feel good about my experience in the Student Linx Peer Support Program – 4.13
- Comments:  
"I think I could make many friends throughout this program."  
"[I liked] to meet every week in a nice atmosphere, have a chat and drink good coffee."  
"Overall it was a great experience for me. Thanks very much."

## Evaluation

Sem 2, 2011 (Nathan + Gold Coast)

Mentor final evaluation – N = 19

- I am now more confident interacting with people from a non-English speaking background – mean 4.39
- I now have a greater understanding of cultures other than my own – 4.42
- Comments:  
"This event provided me with a wonderful opportunity to interact with international students and improve my intercultural communication skills."  
"Peer mentoring was a great way to meet new people, as well as improve my leadership skills."  
"I think I appreciate other cultures a lot more now."

Sem 2, 2011 (Nathan + Gold Coast)

Mentee final evaluation – N = 41

- I am now more confident interacting with native English speakers – 3.74
- Taking part in this event has helped improve my English – 3.98
- I now have a greater understanding of cultures other than my own – 3.74
- Comments:  
"This event would be wonderful opportunity for all of international students."  
"I think it was really good. I enjoyed it. I hope I can be a mentor the next time."  
"Provides me [with] an opportunity to interact with others and make friends and understand the culture furthermore."

## Student Linx Peer Mentoring in 2012

Planned changes as a result of feedback and observations in 2011

- Mentee information flyer to include a QR code that links to the online registration form
- Remove 'language' preference from Mentor registration form
- Facebook group to keep students engaged and encourage interaction outside the parameters of the program
- Mentors to send weekly text message reminders to Mentees
- Mentors will be responsible for recording Mentee attendance and distributing drink vouchers

## Student Linx Peer Mentoring in 2012

Planned changes, continued...

- Mentor training – Orientation Week
- Start of program – Week 1
- A compulsory information session will be held for Mentees followed by a social event to introduce Mentors and Mentees
- Mentors can select to attend 1 of 4 hour-long time slots
- Mentors to arrange alternative meeting times and locations if they cannot attend on a certain day or there is a public holiday

## Thank you

Any questions?

mentoring@griffith.edu.au  
studentlinx@gmail.com