

FSI 2 U

Distance Mentor Job Description Summer 2019

Summary

FSI 2 U Distance Mentors have the opportunity to teach a six-week, not-for-credit online seminar to a small cohort of incoming first-generation, low-income Princeton students. This critical thinking, reading, and writing course helps prepare students for the academic rigor of the Princeton undergraduate curriculum, while introducing them to key campus resources and a community of peers before their arrival. FSI 2 U is entering its fourth year as a core component of the Freshman Scholars Institute, and we expect to enroll more than 100 students this summer.

Freshman Scholars Institute, Residential Program Overview (FSI)

FSI Residential is a seven-week summer program that allows a cohort of entering students the chance to experience the intellectual, co-curricular, and social life at Princeton prior to the beginning of the fall semester. During the program, Freshman Scholars immerse themselves in the intellectually vibrant culture at Princeton through seminar-style courses and/or laboratory research experiences, to engage with fellow scholars in a variety of co-curricular, community-building activities, and to work closely with faculty members from a range of academic disciplines and fields. By experiencing early the many resources that Princeton has to offer, Freshman Scholars have the chance to prepare themselves to be future campus leaders, scholars, and peer mentors.

Freshman Scholars Institute, Distance Program Overview (FSI 2 U)

FSI serves as a crucial first segment of the longer pipeline to success for first-generation and lower-income freshman by providing students with an introduction to campus resources, academic enrichment, mentorship, and community. However, because the program is limited in size, and because many invited students are unable to attend due to family obligations or prior internship/travel commitments, it is only available to approximately 1/4 of our targeted student population.

FSI 2 U is a 6-week, non-credit-bearing critical thinking, reading, and writing course and mentorship experience. While it cannot recreate the benefits of the residential program entirely, FSI 2 U will provide students who cannot take part in FSI Residential with their own academic enrichment and mentorship experience. FSI 2 U will 1) give students an early opportunity to connect in structured exchanges with faculty, staff, and peers on campus; 2) gain familiarity with the various academic and co-curricular campus resources; and 3) to participate in an online, non-credit critical thinking and writing course. Through these experiences, students will be able to reflect upon the transition to college scholarship, learn to navigate the resources and unspoken expectations of the University, form an online community with fellow freshman, establish early mentorship relationships with experienced peer learners, graduate students, staff, and faculty, and develop the critical thinking, reading, and writing skills foundational to scholarly work across the University.

Throughout the course, students will video-conference weekly with their Distance Mentors. These conferences are intended to help students hone and develop their critical reading, thinking, and writing skills, to practice a process-oriented approach toward academic work, and to gain familiarity with the forms of scholarly exchange that are fundamental to the University community. Importantly, Distance Mentors will also work with students to develop a reflective practice about their own learning. Students will learn to identify and articulate their own personal, professional, and scholarly goals and to consider how their newly developed skillsets and University resources can best be put to use in service of these goals.

In the summer of 2019, FSI 2 U will run for 6 weeks, from July 15-August 23, with an open orientation module from July 10-July 15. Grad Mentors will also attend a training session in late June.

Distance Mentor Position

- 1. Reading Precepts:* Each Distance Mentor will lead weekly online “precepts” (1 hr/week with a group of 5-8 students through a Google Hangouts format. These precepts will focus on helping students develop critical reading and thinking strategies, to process and analyze challenging and complex reading assignments, and to hone the communication skills necessary to successfully and generously engage in a scholarly conversation. Mentors will be expected to prepare for these precepts in advance, attending weekly curriculum planning meetings with FSI staff and faculty. (~3 hours/week). ***Reading Precepts will take place on late Tuesdays through early Thursdays at a time to be determined by the collective schedules of students and mentors.***
- 2. Writing Conferences:* Each Distance Mentor will meet in weekly 30-minute individual writing and learning conferences with each student in their section. These conferences will focus on developing ideas and strategies for tackling weekly writing assignments and will ensure that each student is able to receive individualized feedback on their work-in-progress. These conferences will also provide a forum for students to reflect upon their individual learning process, to develop goals around that process, and to learn about Princeton resources for achieving those goals. Mentors will receive training through the FSI program and the Writing Program in order to prepare for these conferences. (4-5 hours/week) ***Writing Conferences will take place on Fridays and Saturdays at a time to be determined by the schedules of students and mentors.***
- 3. Written Feedback and online discussion monitoring:* Each Distance Mentor will provide written comments on student writing and on learning reflection pieces. In addition, they will monitor and participate in the online discussion forum and messages in their mentor “inbox,” providing ongoing informal mentorship and guidance to students as necessary. (2-3 hours/week).
- 4. Fall Follow-up:* Each FSI-Distance Mentor will meet the students in their section during the fall orientation period and will serve as an informal residential mentor to the students throughout the fall semester (~5-10 hours throughout the fall).

Training: In addition to these duties, Distance Mentors will engage in course development meetings and preparation in June and early July (approximately 20 hours total) and an optional FSI-wide pedagogy training on July 2nd and 3rd. There will be weekly faculty meetings with FSI staff throughout the program (~1 hour, on Tuesdays or Wednesdays). They will receive mentorship throughout the academic year in translating their experiences in inclusion and diversity work toward professional materials.

Compensation: Mentors will receive a stipend of \$2,500 for their course preparation work and their mentorship in the course during July and August (to be paid ½ in July and ½ in August). Mentors will receive an additional \$500 for their fall term follow-up, if they choose to commit to this aspect of the program. If FSI 2 U is oversubscribed, Distance Mentors may be offered the option to teach an additional section of 5-8 students. In such a case, Distance Mentors will be compensated an additional \$1,000 (half to be paid in July, and half in August).

To Apply: To apply for the Distance Mentor position, please send a cover letter and C.V. to Dr. Keith Shaw, Director of Transfer, Veteran, and Non-Traditional Student Programs, at kms Shaw@princeton.edu. The deadline to apply is Wednesday, March 13. In your cover letter, please reflect on your approach to teaching critical thinking, reading, and writing and your experience, if any, working with first-generation, low-income students. Experience teaching online is welcome, but not required.

If you would like to apply for *both* the Ways of Knowing course in FSI Residential *and* the Distance Mentor position, you only need to submit one cover letter. However, be aware that we discourage instructors from trying to teach in both programs simultaneously.