



S.T.A.R.S.  
Program

Success. Transition. Academic. Retention. Support. Program

By: Daniel Dilling, Alexandra Kadell, Sean Spellman, Jordan Thompson  
Salem State University  
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Rozana Carducci

# Mission Statement

The S.T.A.R.S. program is a transitional summer program which extends into the academic year to engage all first-year students attending the institution. The program is geared towards students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to help acclimate them to the campus environment specifically providing social, emotional, and academic support throughout their first-year. However, we welcome all students who would like to participate in this program. S.T.A.R.S. will be coordinated by two full-time student affairs practitioners who will work with student peer advisors in the summer program and throughout the academic year. Their role is to create an engaging summer program as well as assist students in weekly one-on-one meetings and implementing two S.T.A.R.S. events.

# Staff Positions

## **Title: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Academic Inclusion Specialist**

### **Qualifications:**

- Masters In Special Education with Moderate Disabilities
- Autism Spectrum Disorder License
- Minimum of three (3) year's working with young adults with ASD in a post secondary educational setting.
- Transition Specialist Endorsement (Preferred not required)
- Commitment to maintaining current field knowledge, evaluation, and counseling strategies.

## **Title: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator**

### **Qualifications:**

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Master's Degree in Special Education or related field.
- Minimum of three (3) year's training and experience in Applied Behavioral Analysis and working with students at a post secondary educational level.
- Transition Specialist Endorsement
- Commitment to maintaining current field knowledge, evaluation, and counseling strategies.

# Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

## **Title: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Academic Inclusion Specialist**

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Designated Faculty liaison
  - To provide resources, materials, and inclusionary classroom strategies for professors with students on the spectrum.
- In charge of coordinating two (2) events within the academic year.
- Co-coordinator of the summer initiative.
- Tasked with co-leading the Transition Team
- 1 on 1 weekly meetings with S.T.A.R.S. Students
- Provides Optional Faculty Training
- Oversees Student Advising Staff

## **Title: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Coordinator**

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Designated Staff liaison
  - To provide resources, materials, and strategies for social engagement for staff with daily contact with student on the spectrum.
- In charge of coordinating two (2) events within the academic year.
- Co-coordinator of the summer initiative.
- Tasked with co-leading the Transition Team
- 1 on 1 weekly meetings with S.T.A.R.S. Students
- Provides Optional Staff and Residence Life Training
- Oversees Student Advising Staff

# Summer Program Details

The main purpose of the summer S.T.A.R.S. program is to expose, transition, and apply our students on the spectrum to the independence and challenges of a college student. It also serves as a foundation to establish relationships and encourage student to utilize the additional year long academic support that will be implemented following the summer program.

## **In order to attend the program:**

- Students have to apply by July and complete a one page application.
- Read the Summer S.T.A.R.S. book
- Be a full-time matriculated student attending the university in the Fall
- Pay a \$200.00 fee

## **Week Long Outline:**

- Pre-set workshops and Peer Advisors workshops
- Academically focused classes
- Other Activities
- Group Meetings led by Peer Advisors
- On campus living

## Example of S.T.A.R.S. Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Move into Residence Halls	Breakfast				
Social with Family and Friends	<b>Itinerary Day!</b> - Go over the next 5 days	<b>Health &amp; Wellness Workshops</b> - Counseling Services - Meal Plans Choices - Self-Care - Sex - Ed.	<b>How to Get Involved?/College Skills</b> - Student Involvement - How to do your laundry - Residence Hall Interactions	<b>Financing College</b> - S.A.L.T - Managing your budget - Loans	<b>Academic Support</b> - Study Tips - Professor Relationship Building - Welcome to S.T.A.R.S Year Long Academic Support Services
Say Goodbye to Family and Friends	Peer Advisor Workshop				
Night Social: Icebreakers	Debrief / Lunch		Peer Advisor Workshop		
	3 PM: Class with practitioner - Assign groups for presentation				1 PM Class Presentations
		with Eng. Prof.	With Hst. Prof.	With Bio. Prof.	Say Goodbye! We will see you in the Fall :)
	Night Event	Peer Advisor Workshop		Peer Advisor Workshops	

# Peer Advisor Qualifications

- Must be a full-time, matriculated student with sophomore to senior status.
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Attend two week long training over the summer and commit to weekly meetings during the academic year.
- Be knowledgeable of other campus offices and services that are provided by the institution to assist students in their transition.
- Commitment to helping first-year students transition to the institution.
- Compensation: Summer Session: Small stipend, free housing, and meals.  
Academic Year: Minimum wage for hours students worked.

# Peer Advisor's Responsibilities

## During the summer program:

Each day have a reflection time to talk about high/low of the day with their individual group

Plan a nightly event for students to participate in

i.e. paint night, karaoke, movie night, game night, star gazing

Students will get stipend in addition to free housing, food, and resume experience

Create workshops for all students (individual group)

Attend a training session two weeks before to go over ideas, planning, resources, how to work with students on the spectrum and the implementation of activities

## Throughout the year:

Meet with practitioner they are helping with advertising for S.T.A.R.S. events, on campus events

Meet with students during practitioner's open one-on-one meeting times

Host one academic/one social event per semester for one's individual group

Attending additional training in the spring semester



# Academic School Year Event Initiatives

- Initiative 1: Develop campus partnerships to utilize in creation of accessible events for all enrolled students
- Initiative 2: Creation of events that are exclusively for students enrolled within the (Name of Program). These events will focus on development of relationships with peers, building of community within the program, and preparation for future endeavors.

# Initiative 1: Campus Collaborations

•By emphasizing the importance of utilizing approaches that increase accessibility for students on the spectrum, the (Name of Program) can ensure all students receive equal experiences.

- Accommodation of sensory needs
- Recognizing importance of event size/attendance
- Maintaining appropriate agendas
- Use of accessible language and facilitation

•Examples of events to collaborate upon:

- Career Fairs
- Athletic Events
- Student Concerts

# Initiative 2: Events hosted by S.T.A.R.S. Program

Purpose: By providing designated times, locations, and opportunities for those enrolled within our program we hope to allow them the chance to reconnect and develop community amongst each other while preparing for the future.

Execution:

- The events will be planned and overseen by our Autism Specialist Disorder Academic Inclusion Specialist and Social Emotional Learning Coordinator. The employed student staff will be present during the events to assist in execution and implementation.
- With a total of 4 events during the academic year (2 within each semester) we hope to provide opportunities for extended relationships amongst those within the S.T.A.R.S. Program as well as continuous learning.

# Fall Semester Events

## **S.T.A.R.S. Day of Service**

Through numerous civic engagement projects both on and off campus, students within (Name of Program) can familiarize themselves with their new surroundings while continuing to build relationships with each other.

## **S.T.A.R.S. Business Etiquette Dinner**

Student will be educated on how to navigate the social etiquette of business dinners thereby receiving important preparation for future professional experiences.

# Spring Semester Events

## **S.T.A.R.S. Networking Mixer**

By bringing local business representatives to campus for this event, students enrolled within (Name of Program) will be granted the unique advantage of gathering solicited advice and development of professional relationships with members of the community.

## **S.T.A.R.S. End of the Year Banquet**

With the purpose of closing out the year, this event will allow our students to experience closure from their time within the (Name of Program) while also allowing for recognition to all who participated throughout the year.