



A rural college access program at University of Wisconsin-Madison

Rural Peer Advisor Position Description

Overview

The College for Rural Wisconsin Program through UW-Madison's Division of Enrollment Management works to increase college access by rural, farm, and small-town students in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The program aims to address the barriers and challenges rural, small-town, and farm students face in pursuing higher education at a 2-year, 4-year, public or private institution. The program is part of the nationwide Small Town and Rural Students (STARS) College Network.

The Rural Peer Advisor position is a paid opportunity to support the outreach and educational efforts of the College for Rural Wisconsin Program and STARS College Network.

This position is supervised by the College for Rural Wisconsin (CRW) Program Director. This is not a recruiter position.

Essential Responsibilities

The Rural Peer Advisor position has two main responsibilities:

Peer Educator

Advisors create, teach, and support educational sessions and various college-access programs to support rural and small-town students and their families.

Advisors are integral in assisting the director with planning, logistics, and content development of these programs. Advisors take the lead in teaching and presenting these programs to share information and their own college-going experiences.

Most of these sessions and events will be in-person at high schools and other locations across Wisconsin. Some events will be on-campus. There are opportunities to be a part of activities and events reaching a national rural audience through CRW's involvement in the STARS Network.

collegefornruralwisc.org

Program funded by the STARS College Network

Peer Mentor

Advisors serve as peer mentors to individuals and groups of rural, small-town, and farm high school students to provide support and information around the college-going process. Advisors will utilize their unique strengths and backgrounds to share their experiences and knowledge about college by answering questions, advising high school students, and through outreach programming.

Mentoring is done virtually – through an app platform, emails, and video calls – and in-person visits to high schools and other locations across Wisconsin for in-person programming.

Duties

- Advise, answer questions, and provide resources to high school students on college-going from considering higher education to planning to attend to applying to belonging in college.
- Design, develop, and teach educational sessions using own college-going experience, research, and accurate resources and information.
- Inform and contribute to the development of rural-focused college-going resources based on own experience as a rural college student and the questions and concerns received through peer-to-peer mentoring.
- Develop on-campus programming to support rural and small-town college students with the goal of community-building, creating a sense of belonging, and student retention.
- Conduct research around rural and small-town students' college-going needs.
- Assist the director with donor and media relations.
- Attend work-related trainings.
- Attend a short, weekly team meeting with the College for Rural Wisconsin Program Director and other Rural Peer Advisors.

The CRW Program Director works with the advisor team to highlight individual strengths and interests to align the position with the advisors' personal and professional development goals.

Required Skills/Characteristics

- An enrolled college or university student in the Class of 2026, 2027, or 2028 for the fall 2025 semester.
- Must be from a rural area, small town, or a farm in Wisconsin. You can look up your home address in this tool: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/maped/LocaleLookup/> We are prioritizing students from the following categories: Rural-Remote, Rural-Distant, Rural-Fringe, Town-Remote, and Town-Distant.

- Be in good academic and conduct standing for the 2025 summer, fall, and 2026 spring semesters.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.7 or higher and a semester GPA of 2.7 or higher during semesters employed. Applicants who have under a 2.7 cumulative GPA may still apply; however, we will consult with your academic adviser.
- Most events are in-person in rural and small-town communities across the state. Specific dates aren't available at this time, but we will provide dates as early as possible. The director will work with the team to determine availability. You are not expected to attend all events; however, the goal is to have at least two advisors at each event.

Hours

Advisors can create a work schedule that helps balance academics, work, and family commitments. Advisors can expect to work between 150-350 hours in an academic year.

Most of the work is expected to be during the academic year (September through May); however, there is an opportunity for work during the summer months.

There are no set hours for work as much of the work can be done on your own schedule; however, due to school calendars and class schedules, many of our events and activities happen in the evenings. Also plan for some weekends (primarily Saturdays).

This position is renewable as long as you continue to be an enrolled college student, you maintain good academic and conduct standing as stated above, and you perform your work successfully.

Work Location

This position can be located anywhere in Wisconsin. Team meetings and most work can be done remotely.

Travel is required for in-person programs and events. Advisors are not required to have access to a car as transportation will be provided if needed.

Compensation

Advisors will be compensated at a rate of \$15.00 per hour.

Application

Apply by September 12, 2025. Please submit the following materials to Jennifer Blazek, College for Rural Wisconsin Program Director, at jennifer.blazek@wisc.edu :

- Resume
- Responses to the following question:
 - Why do you want to serve as a Rural Peer Advisor? (max 250 words)
- Contact and other information:
 - Name
 - Hometown
 - Email
 - Phone Number
 - Anticipated Graduation Date
 - College or University you are attending
 - Academic Program/Major you are enrolled in

Interviews

Selected candidates will be invited to interview with the Director and current Rural Peer Advisors. Interviews are generally 30 minutes long. Interview dates are yet to be determined but are expected to be held in mid-September.

There are multiple position openings.

Questions? Please reach out to Jennifer Blazek, College for Rural Wisconsin Program Director, at jennifer.blazek@wisc.edu.