Connect Faculty
Position Description

SMU

Program Overview
The Residential Commons (RC) provides an integrated academic and residential experience that incorporates faculty, staff, and student leaders who, together, shape the overall experience of each commons. Each Residential Commons has unique traditions as well as social and educational activities that build community, foster long-term bonds among residents, and strengthen student affiliation with the commons and SMU. This model supports a strong residential community with an emphasis on academic and social balance to enhance personal exploration and growth of students.

The Connect Faculty program is a collaboration between the offices of Residence Life & Student Housing (RLSH) and Social Change and Intercultural Engagement (SCIE). The Connect Mentorship Program (known by students as Connect) is a year-long mentorship program aimed at retaining students of color at SMU. Our Connect Faculty meet with Connect students who live in their affiliated commons to be a resource, build connections, and champion their success. Expectations include hosting a monthly gathering with a small group of 10-15 Connect students, sharing information and resources, helping students set and achieve goals, and providing support as they navigate their college experience. A program budget will be provided and extra compensation for fulfilling the expectations of the role.

Reports day-to-day to: Director of Academic Initiatives, Residence Life & Student Housing

Qualifications & Eligibility
- Full-time Instructional Faculty Status or equivalent as determined by the Provost.
- Prior experience engaging students outside of the classroom
- Demonstrated interest in the undergraduate residential educational experience
- Knowledgeable of general academic requirements, procedures, and campus resources

Goals of the program:
- Support student success initiatives for underserved student populations
- Increase opportunities for faculty engagement within the residential commons
- Advance the strategic plan initiatives for the university and Student Affairs
- Promote and celebrate the distinctive residential experience at SMU as a thriving residential commons program

Position Requirements
Although this varies by time of year, on average the commitment is 8-10 hours/month. The following are required responsibilities of the position unless granted exception by the Director of Academic Initiatives:

Training
- Attend a training for the position in spring semester before service begins
- Attend a training session to meet Mentees during the Connect Institute in August

Programmatic
- Be assigned to a residential commons and meet with a cohort of 10-15 students that are in the Connect Mentorship Program from that commons to support and do target outreach.
- Manage a $500 programming budget used for programming meals or supplies

Communication & Relationships
- Establish a strong relationship and communicate with the RLSH staff (including RCDs), residents, affiliates, and other Faculty-in-Residence (FiRs), who are invested in the success of the RCs
- Build individual relationships with Connect students by interacting with the cohort at least once a month, and provide resources, referrals, 1-1 meetings as needed.
- Leverage existing university and community relationships to connect students to educational or career opportunities

Appointment & Evaluation
The term of a Connect Faculty member is one academic year. At the conclusion of the academic year, Connect Faculty must opt in if they want to renew for another term the following year. The Director of Academic Initiatives and the Associate Director of Social Change and Intercultural Engagement reserve the right, at their discretion, to terminate immediately any Connect Faculty who violates any terms or conditions of their appointment, fails or neglects to perform satisfactorily the responsibilities of the position, or violates any University rules, regulations, policies, or procedures.

Compensation
Due to the commitment of the role, Connect Faculty are compensated with:
- $1,000 stipend per semester (to be added as extra comp)

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